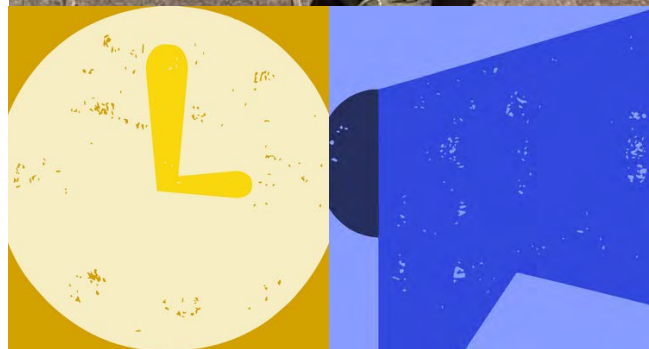




2023!

Annual Report

SCHÜLER HELFEN LEBEN SARAJEVO OFFICE



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LEBEN**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2023**

Sarajevo, March 2024.



**Schüler Helfen Leben Sarajevo Office
Annual Report 2023**

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I Aim of the document

The Annual Report outlines the results of the activities and operations of the SHL Sarajevo office for 2023. This report is written following milestones, goals and outcomes presented in the Strategy, approved project proposals to external donors and activities financed from the SHL budget. The document presents work areas, including program, financial, administrative, cooperative, and promotional aspects. We would like to thank for generous support for our activities to the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Sarajevo and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany in Berlin.



II Social and Political Context of Operations

Long term unstable political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is still not changing. This year (2023), the European Commission decided not to open negotiations with BiH until it reaches the appropriate level of compliance for membership in the European Union. The Commission emphasized that Bosnia and Herzegovina need to undertake additional efforts to fulfill the key priorities from the European Commission's opinion on EU membership[1]. Furthermore, they claim that this includes adopting essential rule of law and judicial reforms and moving forward with constitutional and electoral reforms, which are of utmost priority to ensure equal rights for all citizens. It is also essential, they say, to preserve the constitutional order of the country... "Further efforts are required for Bosnia and Herzegovina to fulfill the key priorities set out in the Commission's Opinion on its member application." [2]

According to the Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina 2023, the education and innovation sector continues to be of low quality, and there is a continuing mismatch in skills. The report says: "Teaching curricula continue to be outdated and are still not sufficiently aligned with the country's needs." [3] Also, the report emphasizes that "Bosnia and Herzegovina need to complete and adopt the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan swiftly. The education system lacks common standards for the different levels of education, as well as for teacher training and performance evaluation. Although there are youth strategies at some levels of government, Bosnia and Herzegovina should work on a country-wide youth strategy that would ensure equal treatment of young people." [4] Data confirming these recommendations are collected in a research paper [5] (soon) published by SHL and written by Academy students (2022-2024). In this research paper, students emphasize the recognition of youth needs at different levels of government and creating a strategy for young people. "Young people as a category are not sufficiently recognized to strengthen their influence on decisions, actively and consistently encourage their capacities and provide them adequate opportunities, rights, and space.", stands in the research.

When it comes to the human rights section, the Report for Bosnia and Herzegovina says that there is "still a lack of a comprehensive policy framework on the promotion and enforcement of human rights, including countrywide strategies on human rights, non-discrimination, and the protection of minorities. Consequently, the protection of human rights continues to be uneven across the country". [6]

[1] Article Commission adopts 2023 Enlargement package, recommends to open negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova, to grant candidate status to Georgia and to open accession negotiations with BiH, once the necessary degree of compliance is achieved, published on November 08, 2023

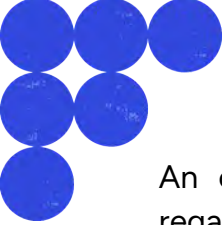
[2] Ibid

[3] Key findings of the 2023 Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina, published on November 08, 2023

[4] Ibid

[5] Na mladima ostaje ... zagovaranje, Istraživanje o potrebama za zagovaranje iz perspektive mladih u Bosni i Hercegovini, A. Madunić, J. Dragaš, A. Rizvan, A. Karahasanović, E. Tutić, A. Šehić

[6] Key findings of the 2023 Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina, published on November 08, 2023



An obvious concern of the International Community for Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the Draft Law of Republika Srpska on the Special Registry and Publicity of the Work of Non-Profit Organisations. “The law threatens the stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of BiH as well as the country’s prospects for integration into Euro-Atlantic and European institutions.” All these concerns and opinions in the abovementioned reports confirm the need for our commitment and fight for an equal place for young people in society.

The political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is increasingly tense, with a surge of nationalism and separatism continuing to threaten peace, stability, and the country’s integrity, including the functioning of state institutions. The country seems to be in unrest and instability due to constant political turmoil, making it challenging to predict social and political developments of the country or expect any meaningful economic growth and application of standards in the process of European integration. When it comes to the security and prevention of possible extremism in last week’s (November 2023) visit of NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg (8) to BiH, it is clearly stated that the secessionist and divisive rhetoric threatens to undermine stability and hamper reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Stoltenberg said that all political leaders must work to preserve unity, build national institutions, and achieve reconciliation.

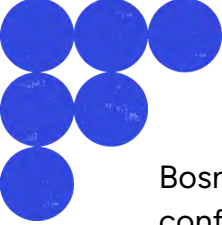
According to the report[9] of High Representative Christian Schmidt, Bosnia and Herzegovina still must deal with the many important issues that occupy their citizens and governments. Some of the important topics that Schmidt mentioned are the divisive and inflammatory rhetoric of leaders in RS, violent attacks against returnees (provocations, property damage, damage to and desecration of religious facilities and graveyards, and the use of offensive symbols), inter-ethnic tensions; call for the dissolution of BiH or for the “peaceful separation” of the two entities of BiH; discrimination against religious communities; genocide denial, glorification of war criminals, and commemoration; gender-based violence and discrimination and others. Schmidt says that some of the tensions triggered by the RS President and other political fights created distractions from crucial reforms, particularly those aiming to enhance election integrity.

An Austrian former diplomat, Klaus Wölfer, said that Bosnia and Herzegovina is the most complicated regional issue that has dominated SEE in the past decade. He predicts three scenarios for BiH: Realistic, Optimistic, and Pessimistic[10].

(8) Article [NATO Secretary General underscores importance of stability in the Western Balkans at the start of his visit to the region](#), published on November 20, 2023

[9] [64th Report](#) of the High Representative for Implementation of the Peace Agreement on BiH to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, published on November 02, 2023

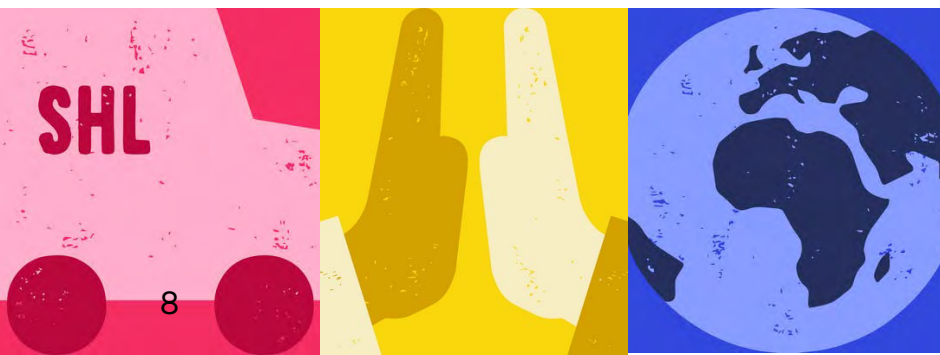
[10] Article [Bosnia and Herzegovina: Untying the Balkans’ Gordian knot](#), published on September 07, 2023



Bosnia and Herzegovina, a war-torn country, is still healing its wounds from the 1990s conflict. It takes very little to “stir up” the passion among the citizens. Each additional division or external influence may tear apart the invisible peace built so far. That is how the ongoing war in Gaza works on BiH. This war, with the apocalyptic scenes, can further divide the population in BiH, especially political party supporters and people who listen to only one side of the story. The incendiary statements of politicians regarding this war and its actors further deepen relations between people. Any change in the political scene will contribute to the ethnic and religious discord of the population.

It is essential to notice that the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is further complicated by the war in Ukraine, destabilizing the global political landscape and resulting in a profound political and psychological impact on domestic developments. The current situation activates PTSD in the first (survivors of the war - parents) and second-generation (young people) to respond to perceived crises by stocking food supplies, sanitary products, fuel, and the presence of increased anxiety and fear of war. These behaviours show that the country's sense of security and stability is deficient. This development directly impacts young people, who feel hopeless, lacking the capacity and knowledge to deal with the situation they find themselves in. In this situation, additional support is needed for the youth, as actors on whom the country's future depends. Through increased presence within communities, support for activities, and informal education, it is possible to open the way to create resilience among BiH citizens.

We intend to address the above-mentioned societal problems, especially for young people, through civic responsibility and supporting the development of active young people. Local (in)formal initiatives show that resistance and continuous struggle can make a difference in BiH's living standard. These initiatives emphasize the need for civic engagement in decision-making processes and give the tool to influence decision-makers. Therefore, we conceived the Academy with a primary mission to empower, support, and connect outstanding young individuals, fostering them as catalysts for change in their communities. This involves honing their skills and unraveling imposed narratives within the intricate tapestry of collective memory.





III Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the Schüler Helfen Leben Sarajevo Office is to provide opportunities to the young of Bosnia and Herzegovina to become educated, active, and engaged citizens while increasing the mobility of youth on the in-country level and internationally.

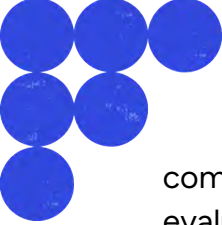
III.1 Strategic Objectives

The work of Schüler Helfen Leben Sarajevo Office is grounded in the “Strategic Plan of the SHL Sarajevo Office” for the period 2022-2027, focusing on three major areas of intervention, perceived as the guiding principles embodied in the following themes and commitments: Education, Mobility and Activism.

Through a commitment to the personal education of participants at our educational events, we will provide quality education resulting in the empowerment of young people in BiH to become active citizens and change advocates by supporting them in challenging divisive, discriminatory, and oppressive social constructs and narratives. This commitment has been fulfilled by providing educational events that enable our participants to take an active role in their local communities. In an ex-post evaluation (conducted for the period 2020-2023), as high as 95% of respondents claim that educational activities organized by the Schüler Helfen Leben Foundation provided them with knowledge and skills that they did not have the opportunity to acquire in school. At the same time, 97% of them claim that acquired knowledge during the educational activities of the Schüler Helfen Leben Foundation was useful even after attending the activities in their everyday life. Similarly, 89% of respondents claim that at the activities of the SHL, they made friends with whom they could work together on future projects/activities.

Through a commitment to reducing division in society and delivering purposeful mobility opportunities for young people of different ethnic, religious and political backgrounds, we will strive to enable conditions for young people to have intercultural experiences aiming at the reduction of prejudices and stereotypes and fostering understanding resulting in strengthening trust-building and reconciliation processes within BiH. This commitment has been fulfilled by enabling youth encounters from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even though 69% of our respondents in ex-post evaluation say that during the activities of the SHL, they did not socialize/make contact for the first time with members of another ethnic group, at the same time, 92% note that through socializing at activities, they had the opportunity to learn something new/positive about their peers who are members of another ethnic group.

Through a commitment to empowering young people to implement their ideas and projects in local communities (after learning and moving), we are offering grant schemes suitable for different levels and types of youth ideas and projects. This



commitment has been fulfilled by supporting small-scale projects. In the ex-post evaluation, 81% of our respondents claim that their idea is more visible in the community after the implementation of the project. In comparison, a similar percentage of our respondents (85%) claim that their project/idea inspired other young people to become active in the local community.

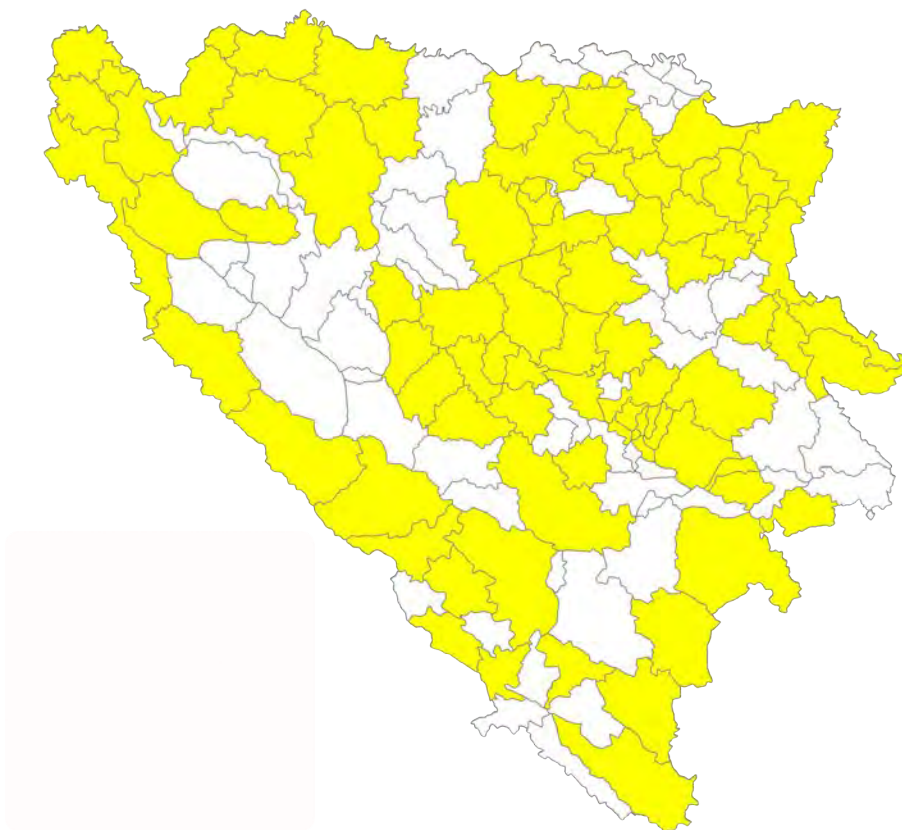
III.2 Specific Objectives

Specific objectives are transposed from approved project applications, which follow the organization's strategic orientation. Specific objectives are fulfilled, corresponding with the statements and findings of the Ex-post evaluation, whose outline is described in section III.1 of this Report. Detailed analysis can be found in the accompanying document titled Ex-post Evaluation of Youth Education Program 2020-2023.

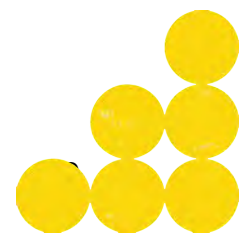
III.3 Milestones (Targets) reached in 2023

During 2022 we have implemented and supported a total of 79 activities that directly engaged 749 participants that were coming from 80 communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our secondary target population were citizens of BiH, who were indirectly reached through knowledge sharing and youth-led initiatives supported within the program. We estimate that we reached around 60.000 individuals (ultimate beneficiaries of the positive social change) in at least 100 communities in BiH.

The territorial distribution of participants is given below:



Map of Bosnia and Herzegovina municipality showing local communities (80) in yellow from where participants of the SHL activities were coming.



IV Activities

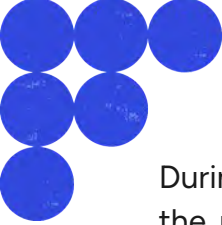
Activities realized during 2023 are tracked throughout the year, resulting in a monitoring data matrix. Monitoring data shows that all planned activities are performed according to the schedule outlined in an Annual Work Plan for 2023.

All activities planned are executed following assigned task lists. All tasks comply with donor regulations and expected results, grant and contract requirements, local governmental regulations and laws, and ethical standards.

When it comes to participation and event organization/deployment, monitoring data indicates full compliance with grant and contract requirements (see table of activities in section III.3 Milestones (Targets) reached in 2023).

Below is presented performance matrix with type of activity and related tasks/processes needed for activity to be executed from preparation to evaluation phase.

Tasks/Processes	Youth Education								Youth Policy				Academy								
	Activities	Promotional tour	Stand Up Seminar	Move On Seminar	Boost Up Seminar TOT	Boost Up Seminar Follow Up	Power Up Seminar	Development new PUS	Activities	Quartal meeting ASuBIH	Quartal meeting ONAuBIH	Mentorship meeting ASuBIH	Mentorship meeting ONAuBIH	Activities	Enrollment process	Preparation Sesion	Meeting of council of teachers	Education sessions	Study visit		
Preparation																					
Registration opening			NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA								Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Selection of Participants			NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Selection of Trainers			NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Seminar material Procurement / Stock			NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Trainer Contract Documentation Ensurance			NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Contract Preparation			NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Contract calculation			NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Documentation Control			NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Handkasse			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Food and Supplies procurement			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Contracts Signed			NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Implementation																					
Seminar Attendance			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Coordination of Group and Trainers			NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Travel Cost Payment			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Food Control and maintenance			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Reporting																					
Trainer Reporting			NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Coordinator Reporting			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Coordinator and Trainers			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Administration / Finance / Support																					
Handkasse Settlement			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Accounting			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Maintenance			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Evaluation																					
Programme Evaluation Meeting			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
MEL Report			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		NA	NA	NA	NA			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y



During 2023, process (activity) monitoring has tracked the use of inputs and resources, the progress of activities and the delivery of outputs following the approved budget. Items marked with Y indicated that the activity had been successfully completed, while the NA mark signifies that action was not applicable/nor planned for task/process within the given activity.

Critical Path analysis is performed to predict project duration by analyzing which sequence of activities has the least scheduling flexibility. Early dates are calculated by performing a forward pass using a specific start date, and late dates are calculated by performing a backward pass starting from the completion date. Analysis indicates that no risk has been identified since we registered increased activities and participants versus planned ones.



Participants of the SHL Academy during one of the sessions

IV.1 Youth Activist Education

Youth activist education in SHL Sarajevo Office is conducted according to four pillars of education developed by Jacques Delors for report Learning: the treasure within; report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century (ED.96/WS/9, 1996):

- Learning to know, by combining a sufficiently broad general knowledge with the opportunity to work in depth on a small number of subjects. This also means learning to learn, so as to benefit from the opportunities education provides throughout life.
- Learning to do, in order to acquire not only an occupational skill but also, more broadly, the competence to deal with many situations and work in teams. It also means learning to do in the context of young peoples' various social and work experiences which may be informal, as a result of the local or national context, or formal, involving courses, alternating study and work.
- Learning to live together, by developing an understanding of other people and an appreciation of interdependence – carrying out joint projects and learning to manage conflicts - in a spirit of respect for the values of pluralism, mutual understanding and peace.

- Learning to be, so as better to develop one's personality and be able to act with ever greater autonomy, judgement and personal responsibility. In that connection, education must not disregard any aspect of a person's potential: memory, reasoning, aesthetic sense, physical capacities and communication skills.



Participants of Youth Education Program

IV.1.1. Aim of Youth Activist Education

The program's overall goal was to empower young people in BiH to become active citizens and change advocates by supporting them in challenging divisive, discriminatory and oppressive social constructs and narratives. It was accomplished through a specific aim which implies engaging and motivating young people through educational activities to lead social change initiatives, get involved in decision-making processes, and demand political responsibility for problems that concern them. Our educational activity model was based on young people's skills and knowledge development in civic competence and active participation in society. The target population was young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina, aged 14 to 30 years, with different levels of civic engagement experience, knowledge and educational background. All educational activities were tailored to the specific needs of youth with different experience backgrounds to encourage active participation in the community.

The program's specific target groups of the program were:

- Youth with no or minimum experience in civic engagement;
- Youth with certain experience in civic engagement;
- Supporters of youth in civic engagement (youth workers, professors, young professionals).



Youth Activist Education aimed at target groups is guided by two recommendations of the Committee on Culture and Education of The Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe (Non-Formal Education Report, Doc. 8595, 15 December 1999), who:

(1) acknowledges that formal educational systems alone cannot respond to rapid and constant technological, social and economic change in society; thus, they should be reinforced by non-formal educational practices, and

(2) non-formal education is an integral part of a lifelong learning concept that ensures that young people and adults acquire and maintain the skills, abilities and dispositions needed to adapt to a continuously changing environment. It can be acquired on the personal initiative of each individual through different learning activities outside the formal educational system. An important part of non-formal education is carried out by non-governmental organizations involved in community and youth work.

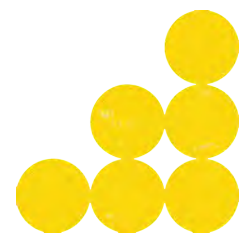
IV.1.2. Educational Activities: Scope, Monitoring and Evaluation

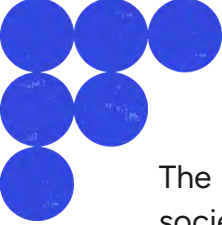
Youth Activist Education had a focus on the different backgrounds and experiences of specific target groups of the program.

Regarding basic education for youth with no or minimum experience in civic engagement, we organized four seminars (one in-class and three online on Moodle platform). Within this series of seminars, 103 participants took part in all planned activities.



Participants of Youth Education Program





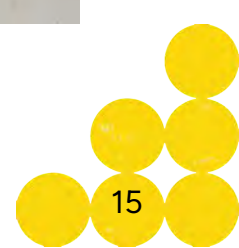
The sessions aimed to educate youth on the ways and possibilities of engagement in society, such as activism and volunteering. The approach of the work was such that it encouraged the participants to think critically about their local environment, increasing the participants' interest in getting to know others and reducing differences in the ethnic, religious, and socio-economic sense. Ultimately, the program stimulated participants to implement their first volunteer action addressing a local community's relevant problems.

Seminar participants also got the opportunity to get in touch and connect with peers from different communities (administrative-political, urban-rural, and ethnic and religious) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They learned to recognize the social context in which they study, live and act, and to discuss the needs of young people in their local communities, including challenges, needs, and obstacles they encounter in everyday life, ultimately creating a vision of the desired future.

Throughout the process, the participants are supervised by experienced young trainers, who serve as role models for the participants. Through attending SHL's educational activities, trainers transformed from inactive young people to role models of youth work by implementing activities in the field (volunteer actions, grassroots projects), providing participants with a model of youth activists with whom they can identify.



Participants of Youth Education Program

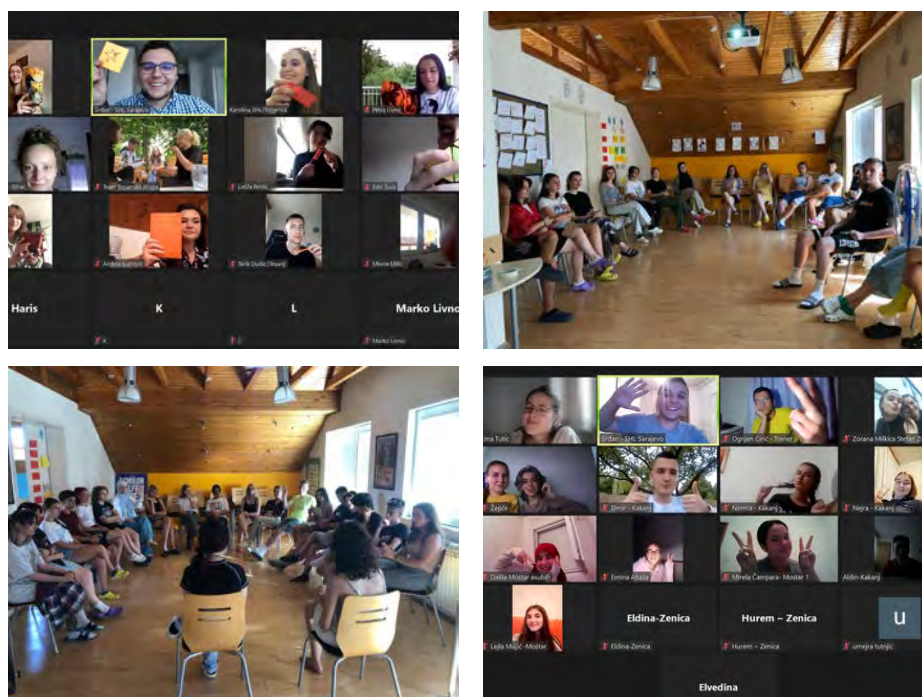




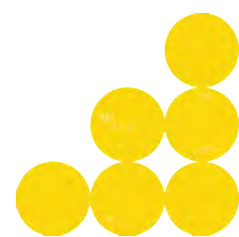
Education for youth with certain engagement experiences on civic engagement was delivered in the frame of four seminars (one in-class and three online on Moodle platform), and allowed 92 participants to develop specific skills, such as project proposal writing, project management and implementation, volunteer recruitment, knowledge of the political system, and awareness of activist-social trends. In the end, all participants completed all the activities that the seminar foresees. In this way, we increased the project skills of active young people and their level of participation in their local communities by implementing independent initiatives. As a result, the number of available opportunities for the participation of young people in local communities has increased.

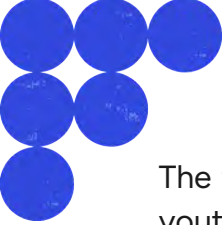
Participants apply to the seminar in groups of four members with a proposal for a specific initiative in the community tailored to their needs. During the seminar, through practical experience and under the guidance of trainers, they transform their ideas into feasible projects for which they can achieve financial and mentoring support to implement the same. The financial support is not big (up to 200 €) because we encourage participants to introduce the local community to their idea after the seminar and collect additional contributions (financial or material).

Four online seminars were implemented to provide knowledge and skills necessary for youth to write and implement small-scale youth projects. They used the SHL's Moodle platform and Zoom sessions to develop and implement their original project ideas. In total, 9 teams were supported and participated in in-class seminars to increase their readiness for implementing small-scale projects in their respective communities. Compared to the previous year, a notable change was that we managed to motivate many participants from seminars intended for inactive youth to continue their activist path in this seminar.



Participants of Youth Education Program during "Move On Seminar" (Online and Inclass)



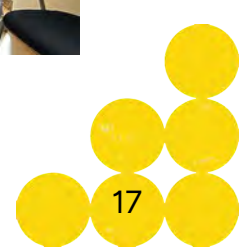


The third focus of educational activities was intensive capacity development training of youth workers and teachers – supporters of youth in civic engagement. Within this component, youth workers, who dealt with youth issues throughout the civil sector, were given the opportunity to learn more about youth work and organizational and development strategies to improve their personal and organizational capacities. Alongside youth workers, professors who coordinated student councils or led extracurricular activities in secondary schools were trained. This category of our target group represents the only available mentors and youth leaders in small rural communities where civil society structures are not developed. A total of 5 seminars were organized for all three subgroups (seven in-class and six online), gathering 170 participants, of which all participants completed all activities that this seminar foresees.

Before the implementation, we surveyed the youth organization sector and concluded their education and capacity-building needs. Seminars were offered in four packages (one online phase, followed by an in-class seminar) covering topics of Advocacy and Public Relations. We noticed a significant positive impact on the organizations and their development, which participants reported during the evaluation of the seminars. These seminars were essential for small youth organizations in the



Participants of Power Up Seminars for teachers and youth workers





When it comes to the seminar implemented for the youth workers (peer to peer educators), project coordinators and trainers conducted a direct observation of participants, indicating that:

- This type of non-formal education enabled young people who participated in our programs in previous years to become trainers and transfer the acquired knowledge and experience to the new generations. In this way, a real peer-to-peer approach is created that gives desirable results.
- Continuous support to trainers through additional activities and training (online training and meetings) enabled the creation of a cohesive group ready to implement the activities of our and other organizations in the coming period.
- Throughout the program implementation, in addition to conducting seminars, the group followed and supported the program participants. Through the implementation of volunteer actions and small projects, the participants of this component (trainers) additionally educated and supported the participants, enabling the more straightforward and better implementation of the supported activities.



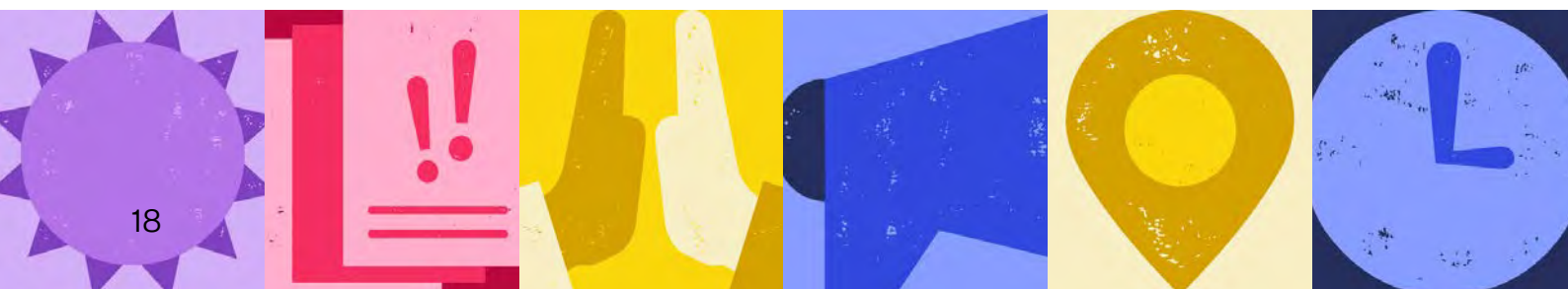
Participants of Boost Up Seminar "TOT"



Team building for Support group / Trainers



Session on visual facilitation for young trainers



IV.2 Youth Leadership Education

The Youth Leadership project is designed to facilitate the development of young activists with a strong sense of responsibility for solving social problems and engaging in constructive civic participation. Youth leadership education is a multi-modular construct grounded in needs-based curriculum development. Needs-based curriculum development is a highly dynamic process based on three significant instigators:

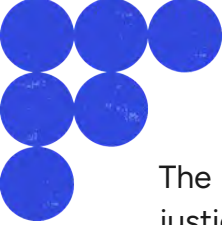
1. Education needs to be reported by former participants of SHL education programs (historical perspective).
2. External evaluation recommendations.
3. Needs aim to alleviate risks identified/predicted in relevant analyses of today's society.



5th Generation of SHL Academy

IV.2.1. Aim of Youth Leadership Education

The Academy for Young Leaders in Civil Society aims to empower and civically engage young people who build trust and lead social change initiatives within and between communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, resulting in prepared young people who envision a shared future and act together. The aim is to be achieved through two dimensions. First, by enabling critical thinking and confrontation of different opinions about the past and future among young leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina by activating mechanisms for the reduction of xenophobia, homophobia, and hatred towards "others" based on religious, ethnic, or other prejudices and stereotypes among young people from different backgrounds will result in the prevention of social cohesion erosion. This will be continued by the second dimension, which is supporting young leaders influencing community issues significant to them by using democratic mechanisms for civic participation through advocacy, research, mobility, and networking resulting in the prevention of youth disillusionment and prolonged stagnation.



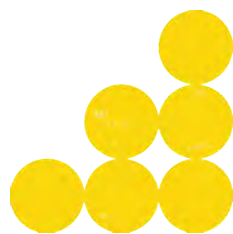
The Academy and its components are built on values of empathy, tolerance, solidarity, justice, morality, antifascism, anti-nationalism, human dignity, and human rights. Along with education and empowerment, the Academy will support the growth of its participants in the light of fellowship and unity. The Academy will provide a sense of shared identity; graduates of the Academy will make a cohesive group of young people ready to face the challenges together and, when in doubt, lean on the values of the Academy to prevent possible conflicts in the future.

18 students attend our intensive leadership program. During 2023, the following topics, among others, were elaborated: strategies of activism, methods and techniques of activism, the activism of interest groups, local self-government, personal development, civic responsibility, European and regional integrations, economy and economic development, interest groups activism, leadership, critical analysis of social reality, peace work, deconstruction of narratives, activism and media literacy in the frame of ten (10) education activities (five in-class and five online on Moodle platform) in which 18 participants take part. To increase the quality of educational activities and harmonize the participants' needs with the educational activities' goals, in 2022, we organized one (1) Study trip to the SHL Office in Lübeck, Germany.

Highlighting the remarkable success so far of the Academy project, it is noteworthy that it has been identified as a key contributor to the European conference titled "Local Youth Work and Democracy." Scheduled from February 20 to 23, 2024, and under the sponsorship of the Belgian EU presidency, this event aims to align with the goals of fostering youth work and youth policy. The conference's primary objective is to explore the role of local youth work in enhancing youth engagement and participation within communities. This initiative leverages the collaborative efforts of the Strategic National Agency, Europe Goes Local (coordinated by JINT vzw), and Democracy Reloading (coordinated by BIJ). Notably, the Academy for Young Leaders in Civil Society has been acknowledged by Europe Goes Local (EGL) as a best practice that can significantly contribute to advancing youth work at the local level; for more info, please visit the published best practice: <https://europegoeslocal.eu/good-practice-short/academy-for-young-leaders-in-civil-society/>. As a testament to its impact, SHL staff has been selected to present a case study on the Academy during the conference in Brussels in February 2024. The Academy program is supported by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Sarajevo and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany in Berlin.



Participants of 5th generation of SHL Academy





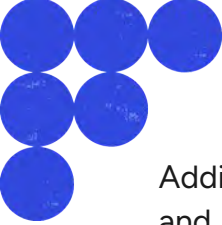
IV.2.2. Teaching and Learning

Built on the activities during 2022 and 2023, the Academy continued its mission of equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to catalyze lasting change in their activism and communities. Recognizing that effective leadership in activism requires understanding mainstream narratives and the ability to question and challenge them, the curriculum covered topics that are not frequently present in formal education system, such as peace work, narrative deconstruction, critical analysis of social reality, and the role of fact and fiction in literature as a means for engagement. The Academy's overarching goal is to cultivate socially conscious, empowered individuals capable of positively impacting their communities and society. The central module, Activism, along with supporting modules on leadership and personal development, forms the foundation for this transformative journey. Below is presented an outline of major areas covered with thematic areas given as sublist/ontology:

In line with the belief that a holistic approach fosters a comprehensive understanding of collaborative solutions and intersectionality, the Academy introduced a lecture on environmental sustainability and eco-activists' struggles in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This session aimed to prompt students to reconsider the environmental impact of their actions and sparked discussions on the importance of environmentally conscious behavior across various fields of interest. Key topics included urban mobility, energy and climate change, and ecological activism, specifically focusing on clean energy, sustainable transport, and concrete initiatives initiated by activists to preserve and enhance the environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the subsequent sessions of the Academy, participants delved into modules that provided them with practical insights and tools for effective activism. The module "Basics of Peace Work" explored the foundations of promoting peace and conflict resolution strategies, equipping participants with the skills necessary for fostering dialogue and understanding in conflict-ridden environments. The "Narrative Deconstruction" module offered a nuanced exploration of examining and deconstructing narratives, cultivating critical thinking and a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives. Simultaneously, the "Activism of Interest Groups" module went beyond theoretical concepts, offering participants hands-on strategies and tools for impactful advocacy within specific interest areas, encouraging them to engage with real-world issues actively.

Literary exploration continued with the module "Fact and Fiction: Literature as Strategy," wherein participants investigated the transformative power of literature in driving social change. Discussions centered around how literature can challenge prevailing perceptions, inspire action, and contribute to broader societal shifts. As the sessions progressed, the curriculum expanded to include a "Practicum of Narrative Deconstruction," providing participants with practical, hands-on experience in applying narrative analysis techniques, reinforcing their ability to critically assess and interpret narratives in various contexts.



Additionally, the modules explored the role of creative expression in activism. The "Music and Performative Arts as Strategies for Activism" module emphasized the potential of artistic mediums in fostering social change, encouraging participants to leverage music and performative arts in their activist endeavors. This holistic approach aimed to nurture participants' understanding of the diverse avenues through which activism can be expressed, fostering a well-rounded skill set for creating positive social impact.

IV.2.3. Study Visits

In 2023, two extracurricular activities were organized to support the learning process.

As the first half of 2023 was mainly devoted to challenging power narratives, teachers and SHL staff suggested screening the movie *Tár*, a 2022 psychological drama film written and directed by Todd Field. Cate Blanchett stars as Lydia Tár, a world-renowned conductor facing misconduct accusations. The students were instructed to observe the abuse of power position of the main character. Later, they discussed the movie and referred to the public (mainly political) figures from BiH society who abused their power positions to secure a mandate and financial benefits.



Participants of 5th generation of SHL Academy during study visit to Germany

As an added value to the project, we have organized a study trip to the SHL Office in Lübeck, Germany. Throughout the week of 25.-27.09., the agenda was carefully designed to address challenges faced by both EU and non-EU youth, primarily focusing on providing access to opportunities, fostering youth activism, policy advocacy, and encouraging participation in local and global change. Cultural exchange and collaboration were central themes shaping the activities. On 25.09, Monday, designated as the arrival day, no scheduled activities occurred. Moving to 26.09, on Tuesday, participants commenced the day with breakfast at the office, followed by an interactive session to get acquainted. The agenda included overviews of SHL Sarajevo Academy and SHL Neumünster, along with a Global Snap discussion. The schedule for 27.09., Wednesday began with breakfast at the office, followed by sessions to get to know the Solidarity Action Day Movement in Europe (SAME) and its projects. Participants then embarked on a City Center Tour, visiting local projects. No scheduled activities occurred on Thursday, 28.09., which was designated as the departure day. Cost is entirely covered by the SHL Office in Lübeck without having any additional impact on budgeted and received funds from AA.

IV.3 Youth Policy

The purpose of youth development policy program is to encourage the use of youth development principles that help youth achieve developmental assets and skills that support a successful transition to self-sufficiency (Hamilton, S. et.al. Principles for Youth Development, In S. Hamilton M. Hamilton, & K. Pittman Principles for youth development (pp. 3-22), sage, 2004):

- Help youth to build their strengths and develop the competencies, values, and connections;
- Support youth voice and engagement;
- Encourage youth to develop strategies that involve their peers;
- Promote community involvement and collaboration with youth organizations;
- Provide long-term commitment to youth development.



Steering boards of ASuBiH and ONAuBiH in 2023

IV.3.1. Aim of Youth Policy

Through Youth Policy Program, we actively worked towards empowering youth-led organizations with young leaders who possess critical thinking, have the skills and knowledge necessary to make an impact on decision-makers, and are competent representatives of the youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Using education, mentoring and financial support as a tool, we supported the development of youth organizations for independent work on issues related to their target groups. Also, by encouraging and supporting independent projects or initiatives that aimed to improve their status in society, we inspired and equipped leaders of these youth organizations to empower their membership and structures in purposeful youth participation.

The focus of youth policy intervention was on two of our spin-off organizations – the Association of Secondary School Students in BiH (ASuBiH) and the Youth Press Association in BiH (ONAuBiH).

IV.3.2. Strengthening of the Capacities

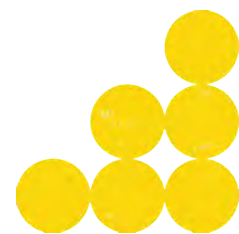
The development of organizational competencies through the youth policy program aims to empower and position youth organizations as relevant actors in society. The key areas for developing organizational capacities concern planning, management and supervision within the organization, orientation towards users, human resource management, public relations, and monitoring and evaluation.

Through active work with the leadership structures of organizations, in the year, we based our work on the perceived needs of each organization.

During 2023, in addition to activities related to improving administrative and financial procedures (explained in IV.3.5.), an important aspect of development was ensuring the continuity of development of the steering board members. Through work with the organizations' management structures, creating a suitable environment for the organizations' development, both in working with employees and with the members of the organization itself, was ensured. The focus was placed on onboarding new personnel that occurred in both organizations, which included the transfer of knowledge, regular meetings, and monitoring visits.



Gallery of photos from implementation of various activities within Youth Policy programm





When it comes to the organization's development as an influencing factor in society, it is important to note that establishing new partnerships and continuing cooperation with partners and donors was an important aspect of work within the organizations. To ensure the sustainability of organizations, we focused additional time and effort on this specific topic. As a result, in 2023, they established cooperation with institutions such as European Commission and USAID, DW Akademie and many more local partners.

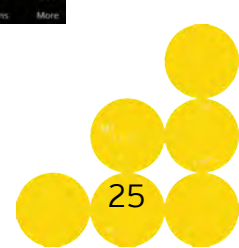
Regarding additional capacity building, we ensured that educational opportunities were available for both the members of the organizations and for members of steering boards. In this way, using online and in-class activities/training, we ensured knowledge and experience transfer that helped in better and smoother work with organizations.

IV.3.3. Project Work

Keeping in mind that the organizations that are part of the Youth policy program are led by high school students and young people, continuous support to the leadership structures was given in addressing problems and adequate project planning, implementation, and evaluation. Through our activities, we provide adequate support to ASuBiH and ONAuBiH in preparing, implementing, and reporting four (4) projects, which directly included 320 young people. Projects implemented were ranging from "Social day in BiH" implemented by ASuBiH, to "Month of media literacy" and "Youth magazine Karike" implemented by ONAuBiH, encompassing topics related to students and media activism.



Gallery of photos from implementation of various activities within Youth Policy program





IV.4 Promotion and Outreach

IV.4.1. Aim of promotion and outreach

Knowledge of the activism strategies and their role is a precondition for youth to be active in society, to claim their voice to be heard (through the deployment of efficient and effective activist strategies) and participate in youth work. The existence of non-formal education and small grant opportunities that SHL Sarajevo offers conveys an important message to youth: that they can engage in their local communities, and there are means within their reach to ensure these actions are visible and impactful in their immediate surroundings.

For SHL, promotion and outreach for and with youth is a means of interacting with them and having direct knowledge of their experiences. It, therefore, needs to be understood as an instrument for a two-way exchange with young people, which enables the SHL to access information from youngsters rather than see such activities as a one-way exercise in which the SHL only imparts information to children.

Outreach presents a double advantage:

- (1) it helps to ensure that messages and the channels through which they are conveyed are defined by those they target and therefore reach them more effectively;
- (2) it contributes to building youth competencies for learning and communicating about their activist engagement and the mechanisms to deploy activist initiatives.

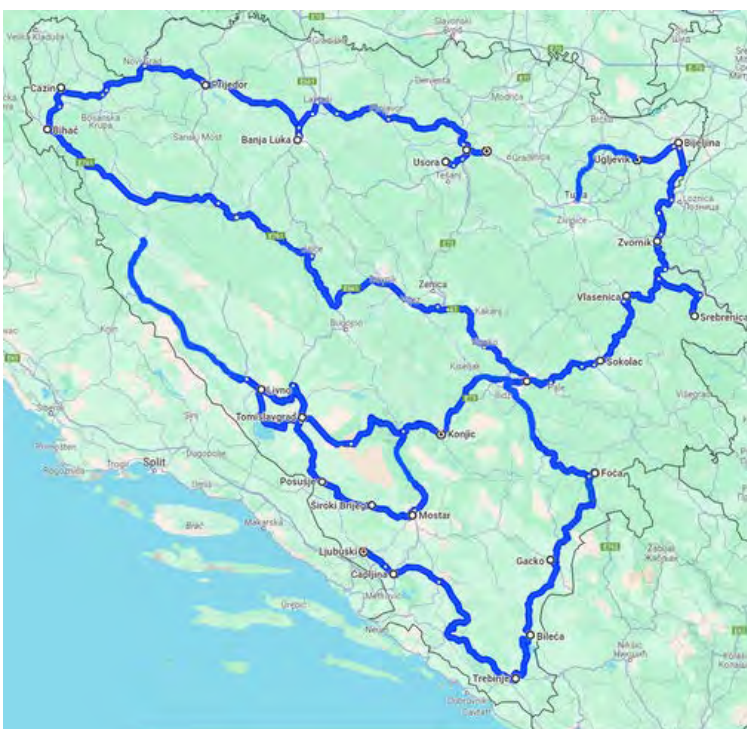
This is also critical to the youth's right to be heard and participate in the local community. During 2023, we visited 29 local communities engaging in promoting SHL activities to 184 participants. Besides visits, via e-outreach schema using social media, we have broadcasted 449 posts reaching an audience of 1.1M.



IV.4.2. Promotional Tours

ping a resilient and harmonious future amidst the challenges posed by international conflicts. To gain insight into the socio-political environment in which young people live, operate, work, learn and engage, we have organised a fact-finding mission (instead of a traditional promotional tour aimed at mobilisation and recruitment of participants for our events) which gave us an invaluable opportunity to meet young people in their communities and get firsthand information on the trends and status of young people in BiH, as well as the needs of the community, while at the same time encouraging young people in their unsupportive environments. Instead of solely advertising our work, we have expanded our approach and organized in-depth interviews with our informants on the field.

During the three-month (April-Jun 2023) mission organised in four rounds, we met with 261 young people (representatives of youth-led NGOs, civil society organisations, employees in the public sector, representatives of high schools, non-formal youth groups, high school students and youth in general). This is follow up mission on the missions conducted in April – May 2022. In the 2022 mission, it was identified that local organizations in smaller communities were facing closure or impending shutdowns due to insufficient funding and support from local authorities and other institutions. The post-COVID period exacerbated the situation, leading to a persistent generation gap within organizations. The lack of intensive gatherings hindered the capacity-building of new generations, resulting in fewer opportunities for young people to engage actively. A concerning trend was the establishment of youth organizations by political parties, diverting funds intended for young people. In response, the 2023 mission focused on expanding spaces for youth through mobility, mentorship, and projects combating disillusionment, along with shaping the education landscape.



Promotional tours were executed according to the following tours:

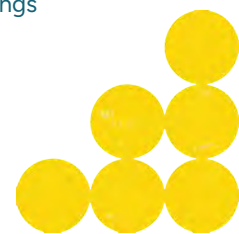
- Mission I – 04.-07.04.2023. / Pale, Sokolac, Milići, Vlasenica, Srebrenica, Zvornik, Bijeljina, Ugljevik.
- Mission II – 11.-14.04.2023. / Drvar, Tomislavgrad, Livno, Posušje, Široki Brijeg, Mostar, Konjic.
- Mission III – 29.05.-01.06.2023. / Foča, Gacko, Bileća, Trebinje, Čapljina, Ljubuški.,
- Mission IV – Bihać, Cazin, Banja Luka, Prijedor, Doboj, Doboj – Istok, Usora

The 2023 mission served as a follow-up, revealing that financial challenges and organizational closures persist in smaller communities, primarily due to inadequate funding and support from local authorities and institutions. The discontinuation of support programs by larger organizations has contributed to the decline in the activities of organizations unable to secure additional funding. A noticeable lack of active youth engagement is observed in youth organizations, although entities like the Red Cross show a shift toward increased involvement.

Positive examples, such as in Ljubuški, highlight the recognition by young leaders of the importance of supporting the youth sector by local authorities. Building upon the 2022 conclusion, there has been a discernible shift in narrowing the generation gap. New and active youth have emerged within youth organizations, as seen in examples from Milići and Vlasenica, where successful efforts attracted engaged young individuals. However, additional training is deemed necessary to ensure their sustained commitment. Encounters during the 2023 mission highlighted the increasing influence of political entities on youth organizations. For example, an informal group in Bijeljina initially operated independently but later received non-standard support from a local politician.



Members of SHL team on different meetings during Promotional tour



IV.4.3. Public Relations

The goal of public relations is advertising to the target audience to inform them about the activities and general work of SHL in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through different channels (primarily social media), we share information about open calls and current activities, promote good practices and value of non-formal education and personal development, and present positive examples, both of activities and of young people who are successful in their field of activity.

The primary target audience to whom SHL Sarajevo addresses in its communication through social media networks is young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina aged 15 to 25. Currently, 40% of our followers on social media networks are aged 15 to 18, and 47% of 19-25 years old. The secondary target audiences are teachers and professors and more experienced youth workers and parents of the participants, who, in the structure of current followers together, make up to 13% of the total number of followers. Most of the target audience is students in secondary schools, who make up 44.3% of followers. A somewhat less significant audience segment is students, represented by 28.7% and employed young people make up 18.3% of the total number of followers. A higher percentage of gender representation in the target audience belongs to the female population (62.6%).

In total, we published 449 public releases on social media networks and the SHL website, with a reach of 1.1. M. On average, we had around 40 posts per month, reaching about 100 000 individuals per month via social media channels of SHL.



SHL Social media landing pages (Youtube, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram)

IV.5 Small Grants Schema

In 2023, SHL Sarajevo demonstrated its unwavering commitment to youth empowerment and engagement by supporting a remarkable number of 55 youth-led and managed initiatives in 40[1] local communities across BiH. These projects successfully reached an impressive total of 59,391 young individuals, showcasing SHL Sarajevo's significant impact on the youth community. The organization's efforts were geared towards fostering innovation, leadership, and community development among young people, providing them with the necessary tools and platforms to lead change effectively.

Furthermore, SHL Sarajevo took a strategic step to amplify the voices of young people by supporting the content creation of the Youth Journal "Karika." This initiative proved to be a powerful medium for disseminating the most current and relevant youth-related news across Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). By doing so, SHL Sarajevo not only enhanced the visibility of young individuals' perspectives and ideas but also connected them with a broader audience comprising 350,000 young people and actors dedicated to youth issues. The collaboration with "Karika" has been instrumental in creating a more informed and engaged youth community, equipped with knowledge about opportunities, challenges, and developments pertinent to their growth and participation in society. Through these strategic interventions, SHL Sarajevo has significantly contributed to building a more vibrant, informed, and active youth community in BiH.



Pictures from the implementation of the projects supported by SHL Small Grants Schema

[1] During 2023, SHL supported youth projects and activities in: Gornji Vakuf, Donji Vakuf, Goražde, Široki Brijeg, Međugorije, Posušje, Čapljina, Ilijaš, Visoko, Kiseljak, Mostar, Vlasenica, Tomislavgrad, Banja Luka, Fojnica, Sarajevo, Istočno Sarajevo, Doboj, Doboj Istok, Livno, Tuzla, Sokolac, Tešanj, Cazin, Teslić, Bihać, Usora, Bugojno, Velika Kladuša, Foča, Trebinje, Kalesija, Zenica, Ustikolna, Pale, Konjic, Stolac, Jablanica and Prozor-Rama.

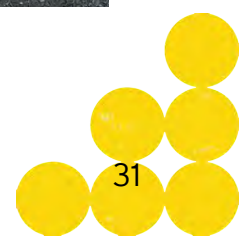


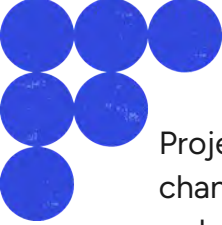
Sarajevo, known for its rich cultural tapestry, saw transformative projects like the insightful translation of the comic book "Mama šta je to rat," offering a unique lens into Sarajevo's wartime reality through the eyes of its citizens. Initiatives such as "Together We Can" and "Kulturica" empowered youth through innovative workshops that encouraged artistic expression and community engagement, highlighting the crucial role of art in societal development.

In the Herzegovina-Neretva and West Herzegovina cantons, "CROA Education" instilled a culture of volunteerism, while "Magic Corner" enriched library collections, broadening students' access to diverse knowledge. The "Vladimir Prelog Science Society" worked to democratize science education, sparking interest among children in underprivileged areas, with "Education Builds BiH" focusing on ecological literacy through urban gardening, connecting young people with environmental stewardship.



Pictures from the implementation of the projects supported by SHL Small Grants Schema





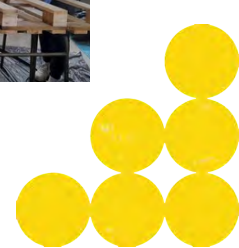
Projects like "New Woman" in Ilijaš and the "Impact" initiative in Mostar and Sarajevo championed environmental activism and sustainable practices, including waste reduction and sustainable fashion. The Academy of Performing Arts in Sarajevo and the "Sarajevo Olympic Caravan" project aimed at enhancing educational and cultural experiences, emphasizing the value of sportsmanship and Olympic heritage.

In Banja Luka, "Music Builds the Space" revitalized urban areas into cultural hubs, while in Tomislavgrad, initiatives focused on addiction prevention among the youth. Bugojno's digitalization of cultural heritage and Velika Kladuša's "SportFort" project highlighted the importance of preserving history and promoting physical well-being through sports.

Efforts in Usora and Bihać to create and renovate recreational spaces underscored the community's commitment to ensuring safe, engaging environments for youth to play, learn, and grow. Collectively, these initiatives represent a dynamic movement towards a future where youth empowerment, community engagement, cultural enrichment, and environmental consciousness form the core of BiH's identity, paving the way for a sustainable, vibrant society.



Pictures from the implementation of the projects supported by SHL Small Grants Schema





IV.6 SHL's Regional Advisory Role for SEE Countries with the Franco-German Youth Office

Executive Summary:

In 2023, Schuler Helfen Leben (SHL) embraced a pivotal Regional Advisory Role for South-Eastern Europe (SEE) countries, working closely with the Franco-German Youth Office (FGYO).

Organizational Context and Regional Focus:

This report highlights the significant contributions and strategic initiatives during the period of December 2023. Our mission has fostered regional cooperation, cultural exchange, and educational enrichment across several Balkan countries, including Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Comprehensive Achievements and Strategic Impact:

A cornerstone of our success this year has been the strategic expansion of our network, establishing initial contacts with 99 different organizations across the Western Balkans. Our efforts to promote FGYO's programs have led to direct engagement with 35 organizations in Bosnia and Serbia, demonstrating our commitment to fostering partnerships that enhance cultural and educational exchanges. Our work with cultural and educational institutions, particularly in Sarajevo and Belgrade, underscores our dedication to broadening the impact of intercultural education.

Visibility and Engagement Initiatives:

Our approach to increasing visibility and engagement has been comprehensive. We participated in significant events such as the Scholarships Fair at the University of Sarajevo and the 'Permanents pédagogique' meeting in Lyon, France. These platforms have been instrumental in promoting our initiatives and establishing valuable partnerships, highlighting our commitment to fostering dialogues that support the sustainability of educational and cultural exchange programs.

Addressing Challenges and Strategic Outlook for 2024:

Despite our achievements, we acknowledge the challenges posed by the region's political instability and economic uncertainties. In response, our strategy for 2024 includes organizing a series of regional and online events to foster dialogue and collaboration. We plan to conduct promotional tours to enhance engagement with NGOs and other key stakeholders. Strengthening partnerships will be a critical focus, aiming to build a robust support network that facilitates impactful youth exchange programs and addresses the systemic challenges in the SEE region.



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