



***How Can Staff and Partners of CARE Kosovo Enhance Capacity
in Strategic Peacebuilding and Conflict Sensitivity?***

Vasiliki Neofotistos, PhD
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Executive Summary

In this report, I present four case studies that draw on the extensive experience of CARE Kosovo in peace-building programming and focus on the following four thematic areas.

1. Peace-building through economic cooperation
2. Human rights and peace education activities with children and youth from the various ethnic communities in Kosovo/a
3. Democratic governance through peace-building initiatives
4. Impact of poverty reduction and/or empowerment of the R.A.E. communities on peace-building.

The objective of this report is twofold. First, it aims to document organizational lessons learned and good practices in CARE's program methodology and use of conflict sensitivity/transformation tools. Second, the report aims to determine how conflict transformation and sensitivity work together, and how CARE Kosovo program has been 'conflict-sensitized' until now and can become more 'conflict-sensitized' in the future. The term conflict sensitivity refers to "an approach that seeks to understand both the effects of development and humanitarian interventions on peace and conflict. It enables us to act on that understanding in order to maximize positive impact and to minimize negative impact of interventions"¹.

Recommendations in this report are not ranked in order of importance or according to a proposed timeline that has to be used for their implementation.

Background

Since 2007, CARE has been implementing the strategic peace-building program funded by CARE International UK, through the PPA program. The program aims at enhancing staff and partner organization capacities in the areas of conflict transformation and strategic peace-building. To date a lot of efforts in Kosovo have been made by International Agencies in various areas, such as conflict management, conflict resolution, and conflict mitigation; however, not much attention has been paid on the 'strategic fit' of these concepts. In other words, more work remains to be done on the concrete ways in which program methodology and the use of conflict sensitivity and conflict transformation tools have not only avoided negative impact but have also have maximized positive impact in everyday life in terms of peace-building and the strengthening of democratic principles. Moreover, more work remains to be done on the socio-political context in the various areas where CARE operates in order to determine the readiness of the various ethno-national communities in the country to work on projects addressing conflict management, conflict resolution, and conflict mitigation.

These issues become all the more important in light of Kosovo's independence in February 2008. The refusal of Serbia to recognize the independent political status of Kosovo and the continuing operation of Serbian extremists in the country encourage the sabotage of cooperation across ethno-national borders and promise to "punish" the more moderate Serbs (for example, by threatening to cut off the double salaries that more moderate Serbs receive from both Serbia and Kosovo or by threatening their physical safety) and other minority members who adopt the "multi-ethnicity in Kosovo" vision of the international community.

In 2004-2005, CARE commissioned CDA-Collaborative Learning Projects to conduct a study and identify whether peace-building programming generally (not limited to CARE's programs) contributed to communities' avoidance of, or resistance to, violence, especially violence that occurred in March 2004. The study indicated that there was very different perception of the peace-building by various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Governmental Organizations. The study proposed that there has been very little or no work with key actors in conflict, that agencies haven't dealt

¹ See *Toward a Conflict Sensitive CARE, Final Report and Learning Manual* (Ohrid, Macedonia, 2008), p. 6.

with the key issue or real issues that hinder the ethnic reconciliation process, that there was a lack of community-driven peace-building processes, and other alarming findings.

In light of the above-mentioned findings, CARE's projects aimed at addressing some of these issues and incorporating into its programming the lessons learned from CDA's study, with specific focus on strengthening the contribution of civil society to peace-building². To achieve this objective, CARE engaged in activities in two stages. In the first stage, emphasis was placed on working with staff and partners to integrate conflict sensitivity into all of CARE Kosovo programming. Activities included: applied training on conflict sensitivity for staff and partners, the development of a plan to improve, monitor, and evaluate the conflict sensitivity of programs, implementation of the plan, and review and reflection on the implementation of the plan. The second phase of the Enhance Capacity in Conflict Sensitivity and Strategic Peace-building for Staff and Partners of CARE Kosovo Project has assisted the following four CARE Kosovo projects in strengthening their contribution towards "peace writ large": Education for Peace and Tolerance (EPT) III, Empowerment of Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptian communities, Regional Economic Growth for Stabilization (REGS), and Strengthening Democracy Efforts in Kosovo through Peace-building initiatives. Activities included the implementation of conflict sensitivity planning and follow-up that took place concomitantly with applied training on conflict transformation and strategic peace-building for staff and partners, the development of a baseline conflict analysis, and reflection on the progress in the program and on the lessons learned in the process.

The present assessment is a detailed evaluation of whether the application of principles of conflict sensitivity and strategic peace-building has improved the impact of CARE's programming on peace-building. The assessment covers the above-mentioned four projects in CARE's program portfolio (the strawberry production, bee production, and rural tourism/ eco-tourism initiatives in Novobërdë/ Novobrdo, which are part of the Regional Economic Growth for Stabilization Project, the Education for Peace and Tolerance Project, the Empowerment of RAE communities Project, and the Strengthening Democracy in Kosovo through Peace-building Initiatives Project). Some of the results of the implementation of CDA's recommendations in CARE programming are quite encouraging even though, as the recommendations at the end of each case study and the overall recommendations at the end of this report show, a lot remains to be achieved in the near future.

About this Report

The draft report was prepared within 5 days after the visit. Comments to the draft report were provided by CARE via e-mail and incorporated by the evaluator in the final version of the report. Importantly, the case studies that are presented in this report highlight the good practices, that is to say, what has worked well in terms of promoting peace-building, and also recommendations for the future. The good practices are based on the evaluator's assessments of the direct impact that project activities have had on strategic peace-building. The evaluator made these assessments based on her conversations and interactions with people in the communities visited, their thoughts on

² See Strategic Agreement to Enhance Capacity in Conflict Sensitivity and Strategic Peacebuilding for Staff and Partners of CARE Kosovo.

the impact that project activities had on peace-building, and their experiences and challenges in the ethnic reconciliation and peace-building process. Assessments were also made based on the effective use of conflict sensitivity tools with reference to peace-building –to put it differently, questions that the evaluator asked to present the good practices listed in this report included if and how the use of conflict sensitivity tools has helped strengthen peace-building in Kosovo.

Research Methodology

The time frame for the visit was 10 working days starting from July 9, 2008. CARE Kosovo staff working on each of the four projects, which are evaluated in this report, selected all interviewees, made arrangements for all meetings, and selected the sites where field research for the evaluation of the four case-studies was conducted. The questions addressed in this report were identified primarily by CARE Kosovo staff and finalized in consultation with the evaluator. To familiarize herself with each of the projects in question, the evaluator at first reviewed all relevant project documentation (see Annex 1 for the list of documents), and then met and spoke with CARE Kosovo staff who worked on the projects discussed in this report and provided background information. The literature review and meetings with CARE staff were essential for the design on the field questionnaires. Qualitative research methods, such as individual and small group structured and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders (See Annex 2 for sample interview questions) were used in the research. Interviews were conducted in the municipalities of Malishevë/ Mališevo, Novobërdë/ Novobrdo, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Kline/ Klina, Istog/ Istok, and Prishtinë/Priština. The total number of interviewees was thirty-six, the majority of which were individual interviews. The evaluator is fluent in Albanian but Mr. Murlan Jasiqi provided translation services from Albanian to English and Serbian to English at times when translation was needed (for example, when speaking with Albanians whose dialect the translator could not understand or when speaking with members of the Serbian community).

Research for each case study was completed in the course of two days (eight days were spent on research for all four case-studies). After the completion of the field research, the evaluator spent one day in Prishtinë/Priština preparing for the workshop that took place on the tenth and final day of her stay in Kosovo. During the workshop, research findings and recommendations, based on the experiences of people in the communities visited, were shared and discussed with CARE staff and stakeholders. The evaluator has incorporated into the preparation of both the draft and the final reports the feedback regarding good practices and recommendations provided by CARE staff and stakeholders during the workshop, and has also added information that emerged as important after she had had a chance to sort through her field data after she left Kosovo.

Socio-political Specificities

It is important to note here that the socio-political particularities of towns and villages, as those were shaped by the war, should inform any type of work that aims at

peace-building in Kosovo. Areas that were greatly affected by the war continue to witness heightened tensions among the country's various ethnic groups, whereas areas that were not greatly affected by violence during the war witness better multi-ethnic cooperation. To avoid building on existing and/or generating new tensions, project development and implementation need to take into account the particular concerns and needs of people who live in any given area.

Timing of this study

Since the end of the war nine years ago, and the presence of Kosovo Forces (KFOR) under the auspices of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), incidents of ethnic violence have for the most part remained constrained and infrequent. Nonetheless, peace remains fragile and threatened due to different K-Serb, K-Albanian, and K-RAE interpretations of the origins of the war and also due to the fact that each group continues to view its members as the victims and all others as the perpetrators of violence. Additionally, the reorganization of the K-Serbian community, with the continuous support of the Serbian government in Belgrade, into enclaves that have parallel health and education systems and undermine all kinds of inter-ethnic interaction continues to pose a challenge to sustainable peace and democracy in Kosovo. Moreover, the legacy of the socialist past, the inexperience of governmental institutions in effectively addressing ethnic grievances, and the absence of a robust civil society, which would allow citizens to raise their concerns with the government, pose additional challenges.

The declaration of independence in February 2008 has further complicated peace-building and minority integration in Kosovo. Specifically, the Serbian government in Belgrade has recently requested that, as a declaration of opposition to Kosovo's independence, Serbs withdraw from their positions in Kosovar state institutions; most Serbs have complied with the request either because they themselves oppose the country's independence, or mostly for fear of retribution from Belgrade authorities and Serb radicals in Kosovo. Also, Roma individuals in ethnically mixed areas have reportedly been under pressure by Serb individuals not to cooperate with government structures and international organizations working on peace-building.

In areas where low violence unfolded during the war and multi-ethnic communication has not been a major issue, Albanians tend to empathise with the plight of members of the Serbian community in Kosovo. In those areas, Serb and Albanian individuals continue to visit with each other and openly discuss the political situation in the country. Nonetheless, especially in areas that witnessed high violence during the war, a significantly large number of Albanians view the political position of Serbia and the stance of Serbs in Kosovo as deliberate boycott of Kosovo's future and an obstacle to the country's European development. At the same time, among the Albanian population there is widespread satisfaction that Kosovo has finally been granted independence and also an understanding that the country cannot become a member of the European Union unless minority rights are protected.

About the Author

The evaluation has been completed by external evaluation consultant Vasiliki Neofotistos. Dr. Neofotistos holds a Ph.D. in Anthropology from Harvard University (2003) and currently works as an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the State University of New York at Buffalo. She has conducted fieldwork, and published scholarly work, on issues of ethnicity and conflict in the Balkans, especially Macedonia, Kosovo, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. She has also worked as an independent consultant with the United Nations Development Programme, and Collaborative for Development Action. Dr. Neofotistos is fluent in Greek, Macedonian, and Albanian.

Case Study: Education for Peace and Tolerance (EPT) Project, Phase III

(Human rights and peace education activities with children and youth from the various ethnic communities in Kosovo/a).

Main Questions

One of the recommendations made in the study conducted by CDA was that there is need to “rethink targeting of areas and beneficiaries of programming [and] focus not on targeting the more moderate people –the ‘easy to reach’ but on facilitating their evolution into a peace constituency, while simultaneously address the ‘hard to reach’ [that is to say, less moderate people and groups who play a key role in the success of the peace process³]”. (p. 17). Incorporating this recommendation, and also building on the previous experiences and lessons learned from projects on education and peace-building and on the recommendations of the final evaluation of the Education for Peace and Tolerance (EPT), Phase II project, EPT Phase III aims to expand the peace and human rights education in areas with hard-liners where lack of inclusiveness persists (usually mono-ethnic areas where people suffered great material losses and casualties during the 1998-1999 war or areas where ethno-national communities remain polarized and therefore efforts geared toward peace-building are usually met with hostility). This case study evaluates the impact of human rights and peace education programming in mono- ethnic areas on creating a favorable environment for the development of a democratic society and the integration of minorities.

Field Site

Malishevë/ Malisevo

Program Overview

The EPT project aims to promote a change of attitude toward the “other” and encourage a behavior of tolerance of respect that can be conducive to minority integration and sustainable peace in those areas. More generally, by bridging the gaps that separate ethno-national communities, promoting a culture of tolerance, and generating a climate of diversity and inclusion, the project aims to contribute to the process of reconciliation, democracy strengthening, and sustainable peace in Kosovo.

The specific objectives of the program are the following⁴: 1) Build and enhance teachers’ capacity to transmit democratic principles and human rights, and create a positive learning environment in their respective schools. 2) Empower children and youth to actively promote and demonstrate an attitude of respect for diversity and inclusiveness. 3) Promote community and parental involvement in creating a child friendly environment where human rights values are respected. 4) Build and strengthen the capacity and

³ See Mary Anderson and Lara Olson, *Confronting War* (Cambridge, MA: Collaborative for Development Action, 2003), p. 59.

⁴ See *Education for Peace and Tolerance Phase III, Project Description*.

competencies of the local partner organizations and stakeholders around peace and human rights education for ensuring sustainability of project interventions.

Continuing from Phases I and II its emphasis on the training of adolescents as Youth Promoters of democratic principles and human and children's rights, Phase III of the EPT project has focused on three target mono-ethnic areas (Gjakova/Djakovica, Skenderaj/Srbica and Malishevë/Malisevo), each involving four primary schools, where ethnic intolerance persists. The project has targeted approximately 7,300 primary school students (grades I-IX, 6-15/16 years of age) 120 youth (13 to 16 years of age), 300 schoolteachers and school board members, community members, and representatives of central and municipal government institutions. The idea behind the selection of the target groups was that the stakeholders would help spread the knowledge gained and raise awareness regarding tolerance and human rights. In total twelve students–Youth Promoters of the school “Afrim Buqaj” primary school in the village Lladroc, which is a mono-ethnic Albanian community, from grades six, seven, eight, and ninth (between 12 and 15 years of age) were involved in the program activities dedicated for Youth of the schools. The criteria used to select these students were gender, and communication and leadership skills. In line with its Youth Promoters component, the Program has introduced a wide range of educational activities, such as seminars on the harmful effects of drinking, smoking, and taking illegal drugs, seminars on student centered teaching, sexual education, human rights, and tolerance, and trainings on how to cope with stress and conflict and communicate effectively with teachers and parents. In addition, the Program has supported activities that Youth Promoters have themselves identified, such as the building of a garden, in order to create a child-friendly school environment. With specific reference to human rights education, the project has build on the emphasis paid on human dignity and equality during Phases I and II, and aimed to strengthen peoples' democratic outlook in life, thereby contributing to sustainable peace in Kosovo. Moreover, Youth Promoters from “Afrim Buqaj” have had opportunities, organized by CARE staff, to come together with Youth Promoters from different ethnic communities in regions where the project operated before and participate in diverse in groups in which they interacted with people from different gender, age, and ethnic background.

In order to build the capacity of teachers and education officials, the project has also offered trainings on psychosocial assistance, and human rights and peace education with a special focus on child-centered, interactive learning methodologies. Parents/family members were also included in project activities. Besides interactions among students from different ethnic backgrounds, cooperation between students and teachers also took place. Through promoting interactive learning and encouraging networking among Youth Promoters, teachers tried to cultivate a culture of tolerance and respect for human rights.

Findings: Good Practices

Three are the main findings regarding the impact of human rights and peace education programming on creating an environment that is conducive to the development of a democratic society and the integration of minorities in Kosovo/a.

1) Albanian Youth Promoters from the village of Lladroc have been receptive to, and appreciative of, a training in which Youth Promoters (trained in Phases I and II) from the Roma, Bosnian, and Turkish communities participated --as a Youth Promoter put it "I thought that I would not get along with people from other communities because I had never met with Turks and Bosnians before. The training has helped me learn that I should accept other communities and not discriminate against others, and that it is better to work together because only that way can we have a better future". The language barrier (given that they are all members of younger generations, Youth Promoters do not speak all three languages, i.e. Serbian, Bosnian, and Turkish, and are usually fluent only in their mother tongue) did not interfere with the positive outcome of the training; on the contrary, the attempts made by CARE staff to interpret from one language to the other reportedly created a pleasant atmosphere during the training as it gave participants something that they could all smile about.

In a group interview, some Youth Promoters acknowledged the fact that prior to the training they were exposed to their parents' prejudices, especially prejudices against members of the Roma and Serbian communities, and that they themselves had endorsed such prejudices believing that they would not get along well with non-Albanians. They claimed that the training gave them the opportunity to interact socially for the first time with Roma, Bosnian, and Turkish Youth Promoters, and helped them learn that all people should enjoy human rights irrespective of gender, religion, and ethnicity. Also, a few Youth Promoters argued that they were open to the idea of meeting with Serb youth explaining that people should think about the future and not focus on what has happened in the past; such comments, however, were met with chuckles and whispers on the part of the rest of the Youth Promoters present. The majority of Youth Promoters with whom the evaluator conversed argued that they would simply not want to meet with Serbs: "I do not fancy meeting Serbs!" a Youth Promoter said self-assuredly. They also believed that it would be difficult for their parents to let them participate in activities with Serbian youth.

At the same time, Youth Promoters argued that in case they came across an adolescent who spoke badly about Roma, Bosnians, and Turks (and not an adult who spoke badly about the Serbs; see recommendation number four below), they would ask why he/she spoke negatively and whether members of the ethnic community in question had done anything wrong to him/her personally. They also suggested that they would try to convince their interlocutors that a bad personal experience with a single member of a specific ethnic community is not indicative of the character of all members of the community in question. Moreover, some Youth Promoters suggested that they would have never known that people from other ethnic communities do not bother them unless they had participated in the program activities. In addition, they argued that it was better to live together with people from other ethnic communities rather than interact only with people from one's own community because one always learns something new from people with different ethnic backgrounds.

2) Obtaining permission from parents to have their children participate in project activities involving children from different ethnic backgrounds. Transparency about the project, and its activities and goals, together with the determination of CARE staff to circumvent the obstacle of communicating in different languages during project activities

in which Youth Promoters participated, got the third phase of the project off to a promising start.

3) The parents of Albanian Youth Promoters, with whom the evaluator met, have become open to the idea of their children's participating in extracurricular educational and social activities with children from other communities. In the words of the grandparent of a Youth promoter, "It is fine [for children to be] with friends. Before the project there was no tolerance, but now there is tolerance toward women and children; that is to say, women and children can now go out, they can go to school, whereas before they could not."

According to Albanian Youth Promoters who narrated to their parents and grandparents their positive experiences interacting with teenagers from the Roma, Bosnian, and Turkish communities during the training in Malishevë/ Malisevo, children can help elder family members revise their negative attitudes toward people from different ethnic backgrounds. For their part, most of the parents with whom the evaluator spoke argued that they did not mind letting their children socialize with children from other ethnic communities, and viewed CARE program activities as opportunities for all children to learn, work together, and have fun.

When asked how they would feel about program activities involving children from the Serbian community, most of them (with some exceptions; see recommendation number four below) were supportive of such activities because, as they argued, children are not guilty for what has happened in the past, and are the future of Kosovo. "Let them get together and enjoy", a parent commented, "All children should be happy and able to meet with Serbs, Albanians, Americans! Children are not at fault for what has happened in the past". Most of the parents also suggested that activities that target Serbian youth have become all the more important after the independence of Kosovo when Serbs, in compliance with the dictates of the Serbian government in Belgrade, have withdrawn from their jobs in state institutions. Parents argued that against this background activities that target Serb youth provide a stimulus to the integration of the Serbian community and a forum for inter-ethnic interaction and better understanding of one another.

4) School teachers, who had participated in program activities and with whom the evaluator conversed, argued that the change in the everyday attitudes and behaviors of Youth Promoters is now evident: Youth Promoters think before they react, cooperate more amongst themselves, and are more peaceful and communicative with teachers in class.

For schoolteachers, these changes are a step in the right direction for the development of a democratic society and the integration of minorities in Kosovo/a in the sense that they help children accept others and provide a good basis for the Program to build on in the future. It was also argued that CARE activities have helped raise public awareness regarding the importance of inter-ethnic relations. Like Albanian parents, Albanian teachers identified two reasons why Kosovo cannot move forward without the integration of Serbs: first, Albanians have committed to the Ahtisaari plan, which clearly states that Kosovo/a needs to integrate its minorities and respect human rights in order to become a member of the European Union; and second, from a moral standpoint Albanians should not do to Serbs what Serbs did to Albanians. As a schoolteacher put it,

“Minority integration? Absolutely! Why not? They [Serbs] are also people, we Albanians respect everyone, the Albanian people know how to appreciate each other. There will be integration, soon we will be in Europe and there will be no borders.”

Recommendations I: How to Enhance Capacity in Strategic Peace-building

1) Be specific as to how the program contributes to the development of a democratic society and the integration of minorities, and not take for granted the “step-by-step” approach of the Program (whereby Albanian Youth Promoters first gain skills and knowledge that are needed for them to be tolerant and feel empowered in their school environments, and are subsequently introduced to Roma, Bosnian, and Turkish youth before they are introduced to Serbian youth).

Granted, the program has helped youth, parents, and teachers communicate more effectively, cooperate, address conflict peacefully, be receptive to viewpoints and lifestyles that might be different from one’s own, and more generally create harmonious social relations at school and at home. Nonetheless, it is not clear exactly *how* CARE staff address, or plan to address, issues of peace-building and minority re-integration. It is important to identify the activities that will allow CARE to build on the results achieved thus far and potentially introduce additional activities that will address directly the above-mentioned issues.

2) Emphasize in trainings with parents and teachers the already existing ideas within the Albanian community that children are not guilty for what has happened and that children are the future of Kosovo/a.

Emphasis on these ideas could prove helpful when working with family members who have traumatic memories of the war and are reluctant to allow their children to socialize with youth from other ethnic communities.

3) Identify figures of authority (for example, the Prime Minister, Municipality Officers, a member of the village council, a priest, or an imam) whom local people look up to, and capitalize on actions these figures might have taken to promote the development of a democratic society and the integration of minorities in Kosovo/a.

In their conversations with the evaluator, some Albanian parents brought up the example of the Prime Minister who recently donated a tractor to a Serbian family as an act of goodwill. Underlying such goodwill gestures could help strengthen peace-building efforts in the sense that it could inspire parents and teachers to endorse minority integration and follow in the footsteps of people they respect. At the same time, in order to avoid doing more harm than good, it is very important to note here that only goodwill gestures of individuals that communities themselves have identified as influential should be mentioned. For instance, describing to a group of Serbian youth the Prime Minister’s tractor donation as an effort to promote minority integration might be perceived as political propaganda and hence generate tensions between CARE staff and project participants.

4) Even though most parents and teachers of Albanian Youth Promoters have endorsed the vision of a multi-ethnic Kosovo since Kosovo’s independence in February 2008

because they feel that it is high time they focused on European development, there are cases of parents and teachers who are having a hard time putting the past behind and focusing on the future. In this context, it would be helpful to introduce individual therapy and trauma counseling sessions with parents and teachers who have traumatic memories of the war and hence might resist peace-building efforts and/or engage in actions meant to polarize the communities.

Even though most Albanian parents supported the idea of social interactions across ethnic borders and acknowledged that children are not to blame for past misdeeds, they spoke about war crimes that Serbs had committed and seemed very distraught when they remembered the war (for example, their voices trembled and a few of them were nearly in tears) or chance encounters they had with Serb individuals after the war. Unless they have the opportunity to work through their emotions with the help of trained psychologists, these parents could prejudice their children against members of other ethnic communities and therefore potentially hamper the work of CARE. Also, a few family members with traumatic memories argued that it would be very difficult for them to allow their children to socialize with Serbian youth. Individual therapy sessions with trained psychologists could help these parents support, or at least not stand in the way of, the work of peace practitioners. The need to introduce individual therapy sessions becomes all the more important in light of the finding that Youth Promoters would not use a corrective approach toward an adult who spoke badly about members of the Serbian community because they believed that the adult in question probably had bad experiences from the war and would not tell a lie about the character of members of the Serbian community.

5) Organize and chair informational sessions between Youth Promoters and their classmates who did not receive CARE training or did not participate in CARE-organized activities.

Even though Youth Promoters mentioned that they discuss with their friends and classmates the lessons learned during CARE trainings and some of their experiences from meeting youth with different ethnic backgrounds, a guided discussion with the help of CARE staff would accomplish the following. First, it would empower Youth Promoters to handle potential questions from their peers regarding tolerance, human rights, and peace-building; and second, it would help disseminate detailed information about positive social interactions Youth Promoters had with youth from other ethnic communities.

6) During a group interview with Youth Promoters, some voiced the opinion that they would not mind having Serbs participate in project workshops, while some others reacted mockingly to the suggestion and subsequently silenced the more open-minded Youth Promoters. Given the positive influence that Youth Promoters can exercise regarding peace-building on their parents, CARE needs to continue its work with Youth Promoters. At the same time, it is necessary to develop a special focus on hard-line students whose opinions and behaviors not only do not support peace-building efforts but also can undermine the positive results thus far achieved. To target these students, the participant selection process would need to be modified.

7) With reference to program sustainability, it is important to focus on follow-up trainings with the aim to build on the knowledge participants have acquired. For example, computer trainings, especially MSN Messenger and Chat, could be introduced that would help enable Youth Promoters to stay in touch after the program activities end. When asked if they had stayed in contact with youth from other ethnic communities whom they met during program activities, Youth Promoters replied negatively and added that they would have liked to sustain the friendships fostered. The fundamental premise of the recommendation to introduce computer training is that Internet cafes and chat rooms are becoming increasingly popular among Kosovo/a' s youth.

Additionally, given the widespread attitudes of intolerance in mono-ethnic areas, project activities that would help expand the target group, and hence disseminate the good practices, are indispensable. Otherwise, the positive results that the project has thus far achieved could potentially be undermined due to the still overwhelming presence of hard-line individuals in these areas or in areas where ethnic relations between K-Serbs and K-Albanians remain polarized. Unless project activities target larger numbers of hard-line individuals directly, these individuals might exercise social pressures on individuals who have become more open-minded after participating in CARE project activities.

Recommendations II: How to Enhance Capacity in Conflict Sensitivity

1) When CARE staff/ partners organize outdoor activities with Youth Promoters it is important to inquire about activities that might be organized by other international and/or local non-governmental and/or governmental organizations in the exact same location where, and at the exact same time when, CARE plans to implement its own activities.

An activity involving Youth Promoters from Phases I, II, and III was inadvertently held in a location where a youth camp was organized on the initiative of a different organization in Kosovo/a. Participants in the youth camp included youth from the Serbian community. Youth Promoters from Phase III, however, had never met with Serbian youth due to the fact that Serbian youth who had participated in program Phases I and II had moved away from the program targeted areas (the villages of Mamusha, Lubizhda, and Pagarushe) and could not have therefore been integrated into any Phase III activities. Even though there were no incidents of violence at the time, the chance encounter of Youth Promoters from Phase III with Serbian youth participating in the camp *could* have resulted in conflict, especially in the light of some Youth Promoters' arguments that they were not at all interested in meeting Serbian youth. In this framework, and in order to avoid the possibility of conflict breaking out, it is important to check if and what kind of activities other organizations, which work on building peace, promoting inter-ethnic dialogue, and promoting a democratic society in Kosovo/a, have planned in the location that CARE plans to hold its own activities.

Case Study: Peace-building Through Economic Cooperation

Main Questions

An alarming finding in the study conducted by CDA was that “areas worst affected by the March [2004] violence were also the relatively more economically developed” (p. 27). In other words, economic cooperation and development do not play a major role in helping communities avoid violence. The CDA study also mentioned certain “rules of the inter-ethnic game” (p. 47) with relation to the circumstances under which (when, how, and why) people can and/or should interact across ethnic lines: these “rules of the game” challenge the viewpoint that joint work between K-Serbs and K-Albanians on issues of mutual benefit will lead to improved inter-ethnic relations.

In line with CDA’s findings that economic cooperation is not a major factor helping communities avoid violence and that economic projects emphasizing peace-building and multi-ethnicity are often perceived by communities as a conditionality⁵, thus generating opportunism and cynicism about multi-ethnicity, CARE has worked with a view to increase trust and interdependence in areas that already boast good social relations and interactions between K-Albanians and K-Serbs on the individual level. In these areas, the implementation of projects that require multi-ethnic cooperation is perceived as a reward for good relations across ethnic borders. It is against this background, that this evaluation now explores the connections between economic development and the peace-building process and examines how economic cooperation/development can support the peace-building process in Kosovo. When is the use of economic development or cooperation appropriate? What has been the impact of CARE’s economic development programming on the peace-building process after the findings of the CDA report have been incorporated into CARE programming?

Field Site

Novobërdë/ Novobrdo

Program Overview

The “Regional Economic Growth for Stabilization” (REGS) project, which started in 2006, is being implemented by the Kosovo Enterprise Programme, and the Education, Planning and Innovation center, Macedonia, and is led by CARE International. The overall goal of the project is to increase employment opportunities by creating a business environment that promotes sustainable economic growth and investment opportunities at the local level and in targeted municipalities in Kosovo and Macedonia, thereby adding to the development of a more stable, inclusive, and peaceful social environment that supports inter-ethnic cooperation and the development of a democratic society⁶.

The stated specific objectives of REGS, which contribute to the above-mentioned overall goal, are the following four. The first objective is to lend support to municipalities

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 15.

⁶ See CARE, Short Project Summary and Short Project Impact Summary for REGS.

so that they can become a partner of local businesses, provide help in an advisory capacity, and also create and nurture preconditions for investment opportunities through the generation of Local Economic Development Planning. Municipal support is important for the economic wellbeing of local businesses and sustainable economic development. The second objective is to strengthen business associations in targeted municipalities in Kosovo and Macedonia so that they can represent and advocate on behalf of local businesses at the municipal, state, and regional levels. At the same time, the aim is to strengthen business associations so that they can cooperate with local authorities in designing and delivering local economic development strategies and transferring experience and knowledge throughout the region. The third objective of REGS is to provide support to micro and small-sized local enterprises and their associations by offering training, mentoring, and coaching, and start-up business support, thereby generating increased employment opportunities. Finally, REGS aims to help develop cross border and regional relations by supporting the economic cooperation among different business actors in the region and helping prepare them for eventual integration with the EU.

In Kosovo, the project operates in the following five commercial sectors in the municipalities of Gjilan/Gnjilane, Kamenicë/ Kamenica, Novobrdó/Novobërdë, and Viti/Vitina.

1) Off-season production of strawberries; the objective is to help farmers grow strawberries in greenhouses during the winter in order for farmers to enjoy a competitive advantage in the market when the strawberries are ready for sale in early spring. The project has included in total 30 farmers, who have been the only farmers/ the first farmers in the market before the on-season production of strawberries started being out in the market. The second year has been more successful than the first year during which the project was implemented –for example, 10 demo farmers from the 2007 season have tripled their production and farmers from the 2008 season have been very successful. Even the isolated cases of three farmers who did not have a particularly high yield were successful in terms of the overall project objective in the sense that they were supported emotionally by the network of other farmers that the project helped create and were given suggestions on how to have a higher year's growth in the following season.

2) Bee-keeping; the objective is to help beekeepers produce honey and enriched honey products, such as honey with royal jelly or bee propolis, and raise awareness among beekeepers of the potentially high earnings that honey products, such as pollen, propolis, and wax, can yield. Thus far, 23 producers have participated in the project and have all had satisfactory production, despite the fact that the 2007 season was very dry. Project participants and stakeholders were successful not only in producing high value honey byproducts but also in marketing and selling their products. For example, one farmer has organized other farmers and with project support has been able to sell in supermarkets 400 jars of 'Royal Jelly with Honey' and 'Propolis with Honey' within the course of three months.

3) Broiler industry; the project aims to supply the market with fresh chicken meat and therefore provide consumers with additional options regarding the purchase of chicken meat (currently consumers can only purchase frozen chicken meat). In light of the fact

that traditionally there has not been infrastructure for broiler industry in Kosovo, a lot of elements, for example, incubators, broiler feed supplies, and growing farms, were missing before the project could yield any results. Due to the non-existence of a slaughtering house, project implementation has been delayed. Nonetheless, the integrator (the person who supplies 1-day chickens to farmers) has invested in a slaughter -house, which has been installed and has started working recently.

4) Non-timber forest product production, such as the production of mushrooms (the focus in Macedonia), wild berries and various kinds of wild herbs (the focus in Kosovo); the objective is to help develop and support a sector that has high economic potential. Project activities include training of collectors on how to recognize various species and how to collect the products, establishing and equipping collection plants, providing packaging and cooling equipment to companies, certifying, and facilitation marketing for the sale of the products in EU countries. In the course of the first two and a half months after the set up of the collection points, about 40 tons of dried herbs and berries from Kosovo municipalities have been collected and exported.

5) Rural tourism⁷; the project aims to help develop and support the rural tourism sector in Novobrdo/ Novobërdë, a mountainous area with mild climate in Kosovo that also boasts excellent cooperation among the various ethnic communities, such as K-Albanians, K-Serbs, and Roma, living in the area (and also Zrnovci in Macedonia). The aim of the project is to increase employment opportunities by creating a robust business environment that promotes economic growth and attracts investment initiatives, and hence help prevent youth migration from Novobrdo/ Novobërdë to urban centers in Kosovo. The project also aims to strengthen the capacity of the partner municipalities and their business communities to support local and regional economic development and local and regional trade links. Through these objectives, CARE expects the project to contribute to regional economic integration, regional stability, and the generation of the conditions for economic integration with the EU. The project is developed by implementing partners ICCED (International Center for the Development of Business and Communities)-Prishtina, Kosovo and Epi Center-Skopje Macedonia. In Kosovo, the project has thus far helped fifteen households provide bed and breakfast accommodations, catering (offering home-cooked meals using locally produced fresh ingredients), and entertainment services, with a potential for the involvement of a larger number of service providers in the near future. The rural tourism project is managed by the Novo Brdo Youth Network. Information regarding the project is provided to visitors at the training/ tourist center. Additionally, the project has organized for project participants and stakeholders involved several study visits to Slovenia, Macedonia, and Montenegro for them to see, and exchange information on, how coordination among the service providers in practice works there. The municipal representative took part in the study visit to Slovenia and helped collect information that was later used to design the project strategy.

⁷ For more information, see Rural Tourism Development Strategy in the Municipality of Novo Brdo 2008-2015, Prishtina, March 2008.

Findings: Good Practices

The evaluator spoke with CARE beneficiaries who worked in the strawberry production, bee production, and rural tourism/ eco-tourism development sectors. Two are the main findings regarding the impact of CARE's economic development programming on the peace-building process.

1) The program has given K-Serbs and K-Albanians the opportunity to work together toward common goals, namely sector development and financial profit, and create new/ strengthen existing relations across ethnic borders. To quote a Serb stakeholder, "Albanians whom I knew before the project come and buy my products and they also bring along Albanians whom I did not know before".

Even though communication across ethnic lines has not been an issue in the area of Novobrdo/Novobërdë (see section below), the program has created additional forums for inter-ethnic communication, for example, trainings, meetings, and tradeshows. Also, with specific reference to the strawberry production project, Serb and Albanian producers decided to create an association through which they could purchase in low price the plastic boxes needed for the packaging of strawberries. Serb and Albanian beneficiaries alike suggested that their participation in joint activities, and working together to achieve common goals are directly related to strengthening the process of peace-building in Kosovo/a.

2) The program has encouraged people to focus on the future and leave the past behind.

With its emphasis on sector development and financial profit, the program has given Albanians and Serbs hope for a better future. In their conversations with the evaluator, Serb and Albanian beneficiaries themselves underlined the need for program activities that direct people's energy and attention on the future. As a Serb stakeholder put it, "Whatever happened, happened, now let's live in this place!".

When is it appropriate to focus on economic development/ cooperation?

The program on economic cooperation in Novobrdo/ Novobërdë has certainly benefited from the relatively relaxed social relations that existed between Serbs and Albanians in the area prior to the implementation of the program. The low violence that took place during the war has contributed to sustainable communication across ethnic borders. Additionally, even though following Kosovo's declaration of independence most Serbs have felt compelled to comply with the directives issued by the government in Belgrade and withdraw from their positions in state institutions, Serbs in the area openly discuss their predicament with their Albanian friends and the latter appear to be empathetic. For example, Albanians in the municipality have kept their Serb colleagues on the payroll and Serbs pay coffee visits to their former colleagues in the municipality.

In this framework, it seems appropriate to focus on economic development/cooperation in areas where people have experienced low violence during the war, and inter-ethnic communication has been consistent despite political problems between the government in Belgrade and the government in Prishtinë/Priština. CARE program implementation in the area of Novobrdo/Novobërdë has successfully created

additional forums for inter-ethnic communication, thereby strengthening the peace-building process. Also, the good social relations that Serbs and Albanians enjoyed prior to program implementation activities in the area have contributed to the success of the program. For example, Serbs and Albanians tend to call each other more or pay more visits to each other in order to discuss potential problems they might be facing/ helpful measures they might have deployed regarding the production of goods. At the same time, Serb and Albanian beneficiaries in Novobrdo/Novobërdë suggested that it is “always” appropriate to engage in activities that focus on economic development/ cooperation irrespective of whether people have experienced low or high violence during the war. As one interviewee put it, “economic interest always brings people together”. To test this assumption, future field visits need to be scheduled in areas where people have experienced high violence during the war, such as Zheger/Zegra, Drenica or Dukagjin.

Recommendations I: How to Enhance Capacity in Strategic Peace-building

1) Be prepared to act as a mediator or a link between beneficiaries from different ethnic communities in case communication breaks down. Alternatively, CARE might want to consider working with individuals or organizations who can provide mediation or negotiation support.

In a conversation with an Albanian women’s NGO that had received CARE training on how to make soap using natural products, such as olive oil and minerals, in the village of Bostan, the evaluator was told that the Serbian NGO-project counterpart had recently cut off all lines of communication. Even though lack of communication with the Serbian counterpart did not put the Albanian NGO at a disadvantage, there was uncertainty among NGO members about the reasons why the Serbian NGO had lost interest in the project. Some women speculated that the Serbian counterpart had given in to pressures from Belgrade after the declaration of Kosovo/a’ s independence and withdrawn from the project, while others suggested that the project was not financially successful and hence Serbian women had no reason to continue the cooperation.

Even though the activities of the women’s NGO are not related to the “Regional Economic Growth” program, which is the main focus of this case study, the example reminds us that CARE staff need to be alert and prepared to take action, for example, telephone or pay a visit to beneficiaries who might have a change of heart regarding participation in the project. Also, in case multi-ethnic cooperation falls through CARE staff should explain the reasons why a party has decided to withdraw and, if they think it is appropriate, try and restore communication between the parties involved.

2) Be transparent; explain clearly your expectations, and the terms and conditions of cooperation in order to ensure harmonious cooperation among all parties involved in the project, thereby increasing the chances of success.

Drawing on the findings from the above-mentioned visit with the Albanian women’s NGO, I argue that beneficiaries tend to be confused and uncertain about how to proceed when things go wrong regarding the implementation of a multi-ethnic project. In this context, it is important for CARE staff to explain their expectations regarding peace-building clearly to beneficiaries, for example, what CARE would hope to see beneficiaries achieve in terms of peace-building, and also the terms and conditions of

cooperation, for example, what procedures are to be followed in case a party decides to stop attending trainings and/or other meetings or withdraw from the project altogether.

A clear explanation of CARE expectations, together with the beneficiaries' understanding of the terms and conditions of cooperation, will ensure that all parties involved in the project know what they should expect from each other and are on the same page regarding the implementation of the project. Harmonious cooperation can contribute to the success of the project and consequently the fostering/ strengthening of good relations among participants from different ethnic backgrounds can help strengthen peace-building.

3) A few of the program beneficiaries, especially those involved in the rural tourism project, had a lot of experience participating in projects funded by various international organizations that operate in the area. If one of the objectives of CARE is to reach with its work as many people as possible and generate large networks of multi-ethnic cooperation, it will be beneficial to work with "new", and potentially less project-savvy people, that is to say with those who have not worked with international organizations in the past and do not have any project experience.

4) To better address the challenges that the boycott by the Serb community currently poses to the achievement of project objectives and the promotion of a multi-ethnic milieu, it is significant to coordinate with actors in Serbia, such as CARE Serbia, who share the same principles and vision for a multicultural Kosovo and European development for both countries.

5) In some cases, economic cooperation has moved beyond interaction on the individual level and has resulted in the creation of inter-ethnic associations that protect and serve the economic interests of all project beneficiaries. For example, strawberry producers have created an association to purchase in low price the plastic boxes needed for the packaging of strawberries. Such associations, however, remain in the service of economic profit and have not turned into networks of socio-political engagement that could hamper efforts (currently made mostly by politicians in Serbia) to polarize communities. Therefore, peace-building through economic cooperation continues to be defined by existing "rules of the game" regarding when inter-ethnic interaction between K-Albanians and K-Serbs is acceptable. According to these unwritten rules, inter-ethnic interaction is acceptable for economic, but not for social or political purposes.

In this framework, the need remains for the development of a strategy that would transform economic relationships into strong socio-political relationships, which could help prevent and/ or mitigate potential violence, between K-Albanians and K-Serbs in Kosovo. For example, CARE could initiate open discussions among its beneficiaries regarding what they think the relationship between K-Serbs and K-Albanians will look like in the future.

Recommendations II: How to Enhance Capacity in Conflict Sensitivity

1) Explain clearly to beneficiaries the criteria for the allocation of resources and the reasons why some people might receive greater support from CARE than others.

A few beneficiaries complained that they had received a smaller amount of resources than others, and even accused some CARE staff of preferential treatment. The same beneficiaries alleged that when they asked CARE staff why they had received less than expected, they were told that there was no more money in the budget. Such answers were not satisfactory, and neglect or failure to explain to the beneficiaries the logic behind the allocation of means generates resentment not only toward CARE staff but also toward other beneficiaries, and leaves ample room for the generation of tensions.

2) Beware of water issues.

During a visit with beekeepers, the evaluator was told about water supply problems in the village. Specifically, a man who is a CARE beneficiary and cultivates strawberries in a neighboring village reportedly also works with the City Water Utility. The beekeepers suspected that the strawberry production beneficiary in the neighboring village was connected with water shortages in their village because allegedly they had water only when the man watered his strawberries. At the same time, the beekeepers acknowledged the possibility that children who played in the vicinity of the water reservoir might be the ones who turn the valve on and off. Irrespective of who the culprit is or whether there is a culprit, the situation has been so difficult that beekeepers contemplated moving out of the village; in the end, however, they decided to have a well installed in their yard in order to have their water needs met.

Rumors or suspicions regarding the interference of the strawberry beneficiary with the water supply in Labian need to be addressed in order to mitigate tensions that potentially exist among CARE beneficiaries. More generally, CARE staff need to be vigilant when it comes to the implementation of projects that involve the use of water.

Case Study: Impact of poverty reduction/empowerment of most marginalized groups on peace-building, with special emphasis on the R.A.E. communities

Main Questions:

What impact has CARE's poverty reduction programming had on peace-building and inter-ethnic reconciliation in Kosovo/a? Look at how poverty reduction or empowerment of most marginalized groups can have an effect on peace-building and inter-ethnic reconciliation in Kosovo/a.

Field site:

Regions of Gjilan/Gnjilane and Prishtinë/Priština.

Program Overview

CARE programming that aims to empower members of the R.A.E. communities includes the following three components: economic, social and civil society development.

The economic development component focuses on the development of small and medium sized enterprises and offers trainings on business organization and marketing. Given that human poverty levels are highest among RAE communities (58% unemployment, 78% of the population live on less than 2 USD per day, absence of land ownership and involvement in agricultural activities⁸), economic development projects aim to improve the existing economic situation, create employment opportunities, and generate income. Economic development projects, for example economic support given to a member of the Egyptian community in Klina for the development of a greenhouse, have had a significant impact on the improvement of living conditions and empowerment among members of the RAE communities.

The social development component focuses on health and education and offers a wide range of trainings and seminars, such as psychosocial trainings, and seminars on general and reproductive health, stress and emotion management, decision-making, leadership, and communication skills. Activities include Youth Promoters' trainings on the development of life skills and the incorporation of Youth Promoters from RAE NGOs with the Youth Promoters from all targeted sites in the above-mentioned trainings (in all, 450 Youth Promoters). At the end of the training, the 13 best RAE NGO participants (seven Ashkaeli, three Roma, and three Egyptians) were selected based on their performance in trainings, communication skills, motivation, and open-mindedness to become peer trainers themselves.

Moreover, the civil society development component focuses on strengthening the relations between R.A.E community-based and civil society organizations on the one hand and municipal structures on the other. Given the unique challenges that RAE NGOs face, for example they usually operate with a tiny number of volunteers do not have

⁸ See Empowerment of Roma, Ashhaeli, and Egyptian communities in Kosovo, CARE Project Description.

permanent staff, project emphasis is placed on capacity building, specifically trainings on literacy and education, human rights, integration, peace-building, social development, and advocacy. Project activities have included capacity building for 13 RAE NGOs. In addition, CARE works with local authorities in the health, education, and governance areas and also with central government representatives to ensure the provision of public services. CARE staff also facilitate meetings with the municipality, and present the needs and concerns of R.A.E. community members to the President of the Municipality and at community gatherings. The overall aim is to help them participate in decision-making structures at the local and state levels, and become active members of civil society in Kosovo.

All in all, the project aims to reduce inequalities between groups that face discrimination and social exclusion, and to tackle factors that prevent the integration of RAE members into Kosovo society, such as unequal access to education and health services, unemployment, poverty, and lack of strong civil society organizations that can play a significant role in the advocacy of RAE rights. The project also aims to help RAE communities improve their socio-economic wellbeing, assess their conditions, identify their needs and obstacles to their development, and design appropriate ways to address these needs and confront these obstacles. The long-term goal of the project is to empower RAE communities and subsequently to help them become advocates of the rights and the inclusion of RAE communities in Kosovo and participate in decision-making processes geared toward the development of a democratic and multi-ethnic society in Kosovo.

The project is working with RAE communities at 21 sites in the Prishtinë/ Prishtina, Pejë/ Pec, Gjilan/ Gnjilane, and Mitrovicë/ Mitrovica regions and is expected to reach directly about 225 RAE families or 1,700 individuals, including about 150 business entrepreneurs. Additionally, about 50 primary school teachers from different ethnic backgrounds (there are very few RAE school teachers in Kosovo) and 30 public health workers in the selected communities will take part in activities geared toward capacity building and the sensitization of larger society to the challenges and needs RAE communities are currently facing in Kosovo.

Findings: Good Practices

Three are the main findings regarding the impact of poverty reduction/empowerment of members of the Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptian communities on peace-building and inter-ethnic reconciliation.

1) Trainings have helped members of the Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptian communities feel empowered and more in control of their lives. In the words of a female stakeholder, “I went through training regarding how to start a business and how to keep it running. I even got a diploma when I finished the training and that was important to me because I only have one year of schooling. It is great to have something to do, I feel like I have more power as a woman now.” In general, people agreed that the basic problem they face in Kosovo is unemployment, and some mentioned that there is discrimination against them when it comes to hiring. In this sense, employment opportunities and the focus on education help members of the Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptian communities feel like they

are an integral part of Kosovo. As a CSO representative who works with students said, “Without education there is no future!”

2) Trainings with parents and teachers from R.A.E. communities have raised awareness regarding the importance of education for integration and peace-building in Kosovo/a.

Most teachers and parents with whom the evaluator met suggested that integration of the Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptian communities has to start from the communities themselves. Also, they suggested that projects that focus on education help combat the prejudices that members of the K-Serb and K-Albanian communities have against K-R.A.E. communities, specifically that Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians are uneducated, thereby directly contributing to peace-building, minority integration, and inter-ethnic reconciliation and cooperation.

For example, the work of the Qendra e Komunitetit Ashkanli (The Center of the Ashkaeli Community), which operates in the village Dubravë/ a in the Ferizaj/ Urosevac municipality, has raised awareness among parents regarding the importance of school education. The Center also monitors closely the progress of children in school, which is a very important activity given that the biggest challenge facing the R.A.E. communities is the high rate of school dropouts. A different example concerns the region of Gjakovë/ Djakovica where the project operates. In particular, thanks to project activities, no school dropouts have been reported this past year; 34 Egyptian students from Gjakovë/ Djakovica who had withdrawn from school have returned to school with material support (school books and school supplies) offered by Municipal Education authorities and CARE project staff.

3) CARE invitations to Serb municipality officers (in areas where R.A.E. communities live together with Serbs) to attend trainings and seminars on empowerment in which Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians participate has helped avoid the generation of tensions between people with Serbian background on the one hand and members of the R.A.E. communities on the other.

The invitations to Serb municipality officers were meant to convince members of the Serbian community that during CARE trainings there is no discussion of politics whatsoever. Even though they are not directly related to peace-building and inter-ethnic reconciliation, such practices help create the social conditions that might enable the rapprochement of the Serbian and R.A.E. communities in areas where tensions ethnic tensions exist.

4) CARE trainings in various locations in Kosovo have given members of the R.A.E. communities, especially Roma, the chance to meet with people from other communities and feel safer traveling within Kosovo. At times when incidents of violence against Roma individuals continue to take place (the evaluator was told, for example, that ten Roma teenagers were recently beaten up by Albanian individuals in the town of Obiliq/Obilic), such initiatives are all the more important.

Recommendations I: How to Enhance Capacity in Strategic Peace-building

1) Work on the empowerment and integration of recent Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptian returnees from Europe.

After the declaration of Kosovo's independence in February 2008, Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians who originate from Kosovo/a and had been living in Europe as political refugees since the war have been sent back home. In many cases, the children of these returnees do not speak Serbian or Albanian and therefore face discrimination in larger society. Therefore, it is necessary to develop projects that target and enable recent returnees, whose needs are different from the needs of those Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians who did not leave Kosovo, to use any skills that they may already have/develop new skills and therefore help them to better integrate in society.

2) Include in trainings and seminars members of other ethnic communities with whom members of the R.A.E. communities were acquainted prior to the implementation of a specific project.

Some R.A.E. civil-society and community-based organizations have been engaging in joint activities, such as playing football and music, with members of ethnic communities other than Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians, for example Bosnians. In order to help strengthen social ties across ethnic borders, members of the R.A.E. communities should be encouraged to invite to trainings and seminars, when appropriate (that is to say, when the discussion topic is broad enough --for example, health-- to attract the interest of), friends and acquaintances from other communities.

3) Introduce (more) music events where Serbian, Albanian, and also Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians can perform together and attend.

Such events provide the opportunity for people from different ethnic communities to get together. Also, most people with whom the evaluator spoke suggested that such events give everyone present a hopeful message that it is possible to live together peacefully in Kosovo/a. In the words, of a Roma CSO representative, "When you see everyone gathered, you feel happy, you are hopeful, you say 'finally together!' and you expect something good to happen."

4) Include MSN Messenger and Chat trainings when working with children.

Even though they learn to work together during trainings with teachers, children from different communities tend to drift out of touch after the trainings end. On the basis of an interview that the evaluator had with a fourth-grader, however, it seems that children who have learned with the help of their elder siblings how to use MSN Messenger and Chat have stayed in touch with friends from different ethnic backgrounds whom they met during the trainings. Introducing primary school children to such tools could help strengthen multi-ethnic communication and cooperation.

5) The final recommendation builds on the last finding (see previous section). In areas where there are social tensions between members of the Serbian and R.A.E. communities, especially in the aftermath of Kosovo's independence, it will be helpful to develop mechanisms aimed at informing community members about the character of CARE-

organized meetings in which members of the R.A.E. communities participate. For example, CARE could hold informational meetings once every couple of months, which will be open for all communities to attend, about its projects with Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians. Developing such initiatives will be more effective than relying on the goodwill of Serbian municipality officials to spread to the Serbian community the word about CARE trainings and seminars involving R.A.E. communities.

Recommendations II: How to Enhance Capacity in Conflict Sensitivity

1) If people self-identify as Roma, Ashkaeli, or Egyptians refer to them as such. Some people were very upfront about the specific group to which they belonged and underlined that the cultural differences among Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians are vast.

2) In order to avoid tensions between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, explain clearly why project proposals are often turned down.

CARE beneficiaries mentioned that neighbors who had not received support were jealous of the support that beneficiaries enjoyed. In order to avoid tense relations among neighbors, CARE needs to explain to people whose projects are not funded the rationale behind its funding decisions. Besides being conflict sensitive, CARE also increases public awareness of its programming and encourages Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians to reapply for funding next time around.

3) To avoid creating misunderstandings and the impression that CARE views members of the R.A.E. communities as less important than others, CARE staff should explain clearly what the project budget covers and also remind beneficiaries that CARE has approved the exact amount of money that they themselves requested in their applications for NGO grants. Some teachers who worked with children after school hours seemed to believe that salaries were part of CARE project support and also complained in passing that their alleged salaries were too small, despite the fact that all teachers who participated in after school activities with students were compensated with the same amounts of money.

4) In areas where inter-ethnic tensions persist after the war, peace-practitioners should learn to speak some Serbian and be prepared to use it in the presence of onlookers and after a meeting with Roma/Ashkaeli/ Egyptians ends.

Against the background of Kosovo's independence, meetings with staff of international/ local organizations that work on peace-building and reconciliation can give the (false) impression that Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians support the Albanian government and state institutions in Kosovo/a and oppose the Serbian government's decision not to acknowledge Kosovo as an independent state. In areas where inter-ethnic tensions persist, especially areas that are multi-ethnic, members of the R.A.E. communities have recently found themselves under extreme pressure from Serb individuals not only to abstain from voting in the recent Kosovo elections, but also not to work on any projects that support the development of a democratic society. For example, as the evaluator was told, they are meaningfully told "you are not my brother anymore", and even receive death threats if/ when they are seen in meetings with CARE (or any

other international organization) staff. A few members of a Roma NGO in the Obiliq/Obilic municipality mentioned that they found it very helpful when international/local organization staff that could only converse in the English (for example, consultants) or the Albanian language used a few words of Serbian in public. In case Serb individuals eavesdropped and heard that the conversation, albeit briefly, unfolded in the Serbian language, they would be happy that Roma individuals had taught some Serbian to non-Serbs and happily remark, “you are my brother again”.

5) Take into account the social specificities of the area where you work. Events that took place during the war and the amount of violence experienced at that time seem to be factors that continue to inform the practice of everyday life. With specific reference to members of the R.A.E. communities, and in order to avoid creating/ adding to existing tensions, project development and implementation need to take into account that there are Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians who speak in the Albanian language, and Roma, Ashkaeli, and Egyptians who speak Serbian. For example, relations between Albanians and Roma in central Kosovo tend to be strained as Roma tend to integrate better with the Serbian community (for example, they send their children to Serbian schools). On the contrary, in areas where the majority of the population was Albanian before the war, such as Prizren/ Prizren, Peja/ Pec, Klinë/ Klina, Gjakovë/ Djakovica, Istog/ Istok, and Ferizaj/ Urosevac, Roma tend to integrate better with Albanians (for example, they send their children to Albanian schools). This is not to downplay the prejudices that Serbian and Albanian individuals harbor against members of the R.A.E. communities.

Case study: Democratic governance through peace-building initiatives

Main Questions

Assess how effective civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and municipal governments are in supporting the peace-building process and addressing key drivers of conflict in Kosovo. How effective are municipal governments with regard to the development of local capacity that supports and contributes to international organizations' peace-building efforts in Kosovo?

Field Sites

Gjilan/Gnjilane, Klinë/ Klina, and Istog/ Istok

Program Overview

In order to help strengthen the links between communities and municipal government structures, the program has focused since its beginning in April 2007 mainly on activities, such as trainings familiarizing participants with the advocacy process, that aim to build the capacities of CSOs and CBOs and help CSOs and CBOs take a leading role in promoting inter-ethnic dialogue between K-Serbs, K-Albanians, and K-RAE communities, addressing and managing inter-ethnic conflict at the community level, and jointly advocating their rights and needs. During advocacy trainings, CSOs and CBOs representatives have the opportunity to identify the problems that they would like to address and design the action plan that would help them achieve their objectives. Participants from each targeted site have worked on different problems and have designed action plans for those projects that they have identified as priorities.

For example,⁹ the reconstruction of the road that passes through one of the upper neighborhoods in Shtupel/ Stupel and the renovation of the secondary school were priorities that CBO representatives from Shtupel/ Stupel identified in the action plan. They subsequently organized a meeting with a number of villagers during which they unanimously agreed to use an advocacy approach, contact the municipal authorities in Klinë/ Klina, and advocate the reconstruction of the road, which is 1.5 km long, and the renovation of the secondary school. The advocacy trainings organized by CARE were effective not only in that they made CBO representatives aware of the fact that their priorities could be addressed through the advocacy process and provided them with the advocacy skills to approach the municipal authorities, but also in that they helped actors feel empowered and capable of taking such an initiative. CBO representatives from Shtupel/ Stupel eventually succeeded in having the road rehabilitated; also, with the cooperation of the Municipal Community Office, they contacted different NGOs in Kosovo and managed to secure funds from the International Organization for Migration for the renovation of the school in the village.

⁹ See CARE description for the case study advocacy initiative, Shtupel/ Stupel.

Additionally, as a way of establishing trust and good working relations between municipalities and communities, the project has focused on capacity-building interventions that aim to improve the quality of the services that the local government offers to communities with ethnically mixed populations. Through support provided regarding the return process, and trainings and guidance in inter-ethnic dialogue facilitation and minority integration, the project also supports communities and municipal governments identify the causes of inter-ethnic conflict and address them effectively. In light of Kosovo's independence and the recent decision of the Serbian government in Belgrade to build housing for Serb internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the minority enclave of Gracanica, an act that could complicate inter-ethnic communication and cooperation and potentially give rise to ethnic violence, work with municipal governments becomes all the more important.

Findings: Good Practices

1) Members of the Serbian community continue to view the return issue as the major obstacle to peace. In this context, the visit of the Serbian Vice President of the Gjilan/Gnjilane Municipality with internally displaced Serbian families and his asking whether the families would want to go back to Zhegër/ Zegra, where they lived before the 1998-1999 war, was largely viewed as a "good practice". Most Serb IDPs argued that for the time being (due to pressures from Belgrade not to return), and until they felt safer to return (see recommendations below for the role that the municipality can play in this regard), were interested in integrating with other Serbs in areas where they had been living since the end of the war. Nonetheless, the visit of a municipality official was viewed as an act that supported the peace-building process because reportedly the municipality took interest in their plight.

2) Some IDPs mentioned participation in a CARE training where they were shown a documentary film about conflicts in Indonesia and Pakistan. Even though the film was actually about conflict in Kenya, the important thing to keep in mind here is that it is helpful when people in Kosovo/a learn about conflicts in other parts of the world and see how people elsewhere cope with conflict. The screening of films on rebuilding life after war seems to be an effective way to help IDPs put matters into perspective, and importantly present them with ways in which people affected by war can themselves become involved in the peace-building process.

3) Some Serb IDPs suggested that joint activities, such as meetings and workshops that are supported by the local government, are an opportunity to bring Serbs and Albanians together. A Serb municipal official to whom the evaluator spoke seemed to share the same opinion: "Support for multi-ethnic projects, such as canalization, sports activities, and infrastructure projects, are the best way for people to come together. Serb IDPs also mentioned that thanks to project implementation they now have opportunities to discuss the issues of return and freedom of movement; they argued that such opportunities were important because they convinced the other side that there was common interest in peace-building and minority integration.

Recommendations I: How to Enhance Capacity in Strategic Peace-building

1) Recommendations for municipalities

- The creation of a budget line exclusively for multi-ethnic activities and projects addressing peace-building and minority integration would only enhance capacity in strategic peace-building.

Some municipalities have no/ limited municipal funds for multi-ethnic activities and/ or projects addressing peace-building and minority integration. In such cases, civil society organizations and community-based organizations can only tap (if they are successful) into municipal funds allocated to “cultural activities”. As a CSO representative argued, “The municipality is only interested in getting something from the NGOs and not giving back anything. They forget that their mission is to collect our taxes and use that money to fund projects. They have never funded *any* projects of our organization, even though we have proposed inter-ethnic social activities. The municipality says that there is no money for ‘cultural activities’.”

- Some Serb IDPs mentioned they needed a clear statement from municipal officials that the municipality remained committed to Serbs’ return home, especially in light of incidents, such as statements publicly made by Albanian individuals against the return, that stall the entire process.

Some Serb IDPs mentioned that during a recently held municipality meeting in which they participated, a female Albanian representative made strong statements against the return of Serbs in Zhegër/ Zegra. Specifically, the woman reportedly said that she could not recognize any of the Serbs present in the meeting and that they were not welcome in the village. For Serb IDPs, it was not clear if the woman expressed her own personal views or spoke on behalf of other Albanians. As IDPs mentioned, unless strongly condemned by the municipality, such comments generate fears for safe return, especially in light of the violence that broke out in March 2004.

- Channels of communication between CSOs, CBOs, and the municipality, especially with regard to progress toward returns, need to be open at all times.

Some Albanian members of civil-society organizations in Zhegër/ Zegra complained that municipality officials did not cooperate well with them, and were indifferent to queries regarding the progress of the minority return process. For CSOs who are strongly interested in, and truly committed to, minority return, indifference on the part of the municipality is counterproductive and deals a blow to the return process.

- New municipality officials reportedly do not build on the initiatives of their predecessors and do not push ahead with new initiatives to enable minority returns; instead, they allegedly repeat the earlier course of action that their predecessors took. Therefore, it seems that better coordination is needed between municipality officers who take office on the one hand and municipality officers who leave/ CARE staff who have worked with them.

The evaluator was told, for example, that the Advisor of the Mayor held a meeting about minority returns in the municipality after he took office and invited only Serbs and no Albanians from Zhegër/ Zegra. Reportedly, he was worried that the participation of both Serbs and Albanians in the meeting would have resulted in trouble, and did not take into account the fact that Albanians had told the municipality before he took office that they would not oppose the Serb return process. In the words of a CSO representative, “It is always the same old activities, and the new political leaders do not pick up from where others have left off. I do not know what they are waiting for, the return process should happen now not after 100 years!”

2) Recommendations for civil society organizations

- Minority community members sometimes decline invitations to participate in project activities of civil society organizations because they are not interested in the activities proposed and not necessarily because they do not support peace-building and minority integration.

For example, an Albanian NGO organized both computer training and social activities, such as movie screenings, sports activities, and excursions, and invited Serbs from other villages to participate. While Serbian individuals did not attend the computer training sessions, they came to the village to play sports. In this context, civil society organizations could benefit from identifying project participants across ethnic borders and their interests *before* they submit a project proposal/ project implementation starts.

Recommendations II: How to Enhance Capacity in Conflict Sensitivity

1) Unless adequate preparatory work has been done, do not invite IDPs to participate in activities organized in the areas where they lived prior to the war.

Some Serb IDPs from Zhegër/ Zegra expressed the wish to have CARE project activities organized there so that they can have the opportunity to return to their home village, albeit briefly. Such readiness, however, can be compromised when inadequate preparatory work is done for the organization of activities in the areas where IDPs lived prior to the war. For example, during a recent CARE workshop in which Serb IDPs were invited to participate in Zhegër/ Zegra, the tires of Serb-owned cars were slashed. Consultations with village residents and the village council, and a guarantee that Serbs would be welcome to attend the workshop in Zhegër/ Zegra could have prevented the violent incidents that took place at the time.

Overall Findings and Recommendations

Based on the above case-studies, the following general conclusions can be drawn with reference to the use of conflict sensitivity and transformation tools in CARE programming, and the impact of CARE programming on sustainable peace-building in Kosovo. The first two conclusions also mark the changes that have occurred in CARE's programming after the incorporation of the lessons learned from CDA's study into project design and implementation (see Strategic Agreement to Enhance Capacity in Conflict Sensitivity and Strategic Peace-building for Staff and Partners of CARE Kosovo). The remainder of the conclusions (three through seven) emerge from the implementation of the specific four projects under discussion in this report and not from the implementation of lessons learned from CDA's study into CARE programming.

1. The goals of projects remain broadly defined, and it is still unclear how the work done on a small scale contributes to sustainable peace-building in society at large. With reference to the Education for Peace and Tolerance Project, for example, it is not clear how educating students and teachers about human rights and tolerance, or ending "negative" peace, will contribute to a larger climate of tolerance and inclusion, or fostering "positive peace", in Kosovo. Similarly, with reference to the Empowerment of the RAE communities project, it is unclear exactly how the achievement of project objectives, such as empowerment, the creation of employment opportunities, and the generation of income, promotes the vision of the RAE communities for minority inclusion and peace-building. As far as projects that aim to strengthen peace-building through economic cooperation are concerned, it is unclear how economic relations can be transformed into, or lead to, robust socio-political relations that go beyond economic profit and directly support the vision of a multi-ethnic and democratic Kosovo. Similarly, it is not clear exactly how the strengthening of the capacities of local governance structures, CSOs, and CBOs through peace-building activities can lead to the sustainability of ethnic cooperation and can establish attitudes and behaviors that are required to prevent future violence and build a multi-ethnic society in Kosovo.

Therefore, it is necessary to develop detailed strategies that will help address these questions explicitly, outline the expectations for the future, and delineate the concrete steps that need to be taken to bridge these two arenas (the local/ small-scale and the national/ large-scale) and move from project success to the project's larger impact on society. Such detailed strategies will ultimately be more beneficial than working under the assumption or in hopes that the project will somehow lead to better relations, increased trust, and a more peaceful society at large and structural change more generally.

2. Some projects have engaged key actors and targeted key areas, such as Youth Promoters for Peace and Tolerance in mono-ethnic areas and Serbian municipal officials in multi-ethnic areas. Nonetheless, other projects, such as the rural tourism and the empowerment of RAE communities projects, maintain emphasis not so much on key

actors and areas as on reaching as many people as possible (and sometimes, people who have been selected as beneficiaries in the past, if not by CARE then by different organizations, as they might be more project- savvy or “easier” to work with in terms of project implementation) without regard to the degree of influence these people can exercise in their communities. It is important to be aware of the two different approaches to peace-building in order to think through the advantages and disadvantages (for example, short-term vs. long-term change) and the different results (slow and potentially more sustainable vs. quick and potentially less sustainable change) that these two approaches can bring about, and consequently tailor expectations and project objectives accordingly.

3. Focus on the objectives of a specific project has led to some missed opportunities regarding the incorporation into the project of elements that aim to change the culture of exclusion and intolerance. For example, the empowerment of the RAE communities project has not made the most out of the social connections that members of the RAE communities enjoy with the Bosnian community and has missed the opportunity to actively strengthen economic cooperation and social interface across ethnic borders. The incorporation of such conflict transformation tools in the strategy of specific projects will help toward a more sustainable peace, even if that means that the focus of the project has to shift.

4. Emphasis on work geared toward project implementation often does not include conflict analysis. Project-focused work, in other words, overlooks possible negative scenarios that might become a reality in the future, and ways to prevent them from taking place/ address them when they take place and to promote “positive peace”. Exercises in possible negative scenarios, which might unfold and interfere with project implementation, need to be built in project design.

5. People with moderate viewpoints often feel compelled to follow people who advocate extreme socio-political action. People who did not want to boycott Kosovar institutions, for example, felt that they would be “blacklisted” by Serb extremists if they did not follow extremists’ directives. In this framework, CARE should consider initiating and facilitating dialogue between moderates and extremists *within* each ethnic community (for example, bring people from mono-ethnic areas in contact with people from ethnically mixed areas or facilitate dialogue between moderates and extremists in mono-ethnic areas) in order to provide a forum for the discussion of sensitive topics and underline the short-term and long-term benefits from participating in projects, thereby strengthening people’s willingness to participate.

6. In light of Kosovo’s independence and the current boycott of Kosovo’s institutions by K-Serbs, efforts geared toward peace-building need to include key Serb actors, such as community leaders, priests, and municipality officers, not only from Kosovo but also from Serbia. Programming therefore, perhaps more than ever before, needs to span the borders between Kosovo and Serbia.

7. Evidence collected from fieldwork suggests that K-Serbs and K-Albanians

currently have different understandings of “minority integration”. For the former, especially Serbs who have been Internally Displaced Persons since the 1998-99 war, integration entails incorporation in their host communities in the form of privately owned housing (not rental properties) and return home when the political climate in Kosovo is more conducive to minority returns (i.e. IDPs mentioned that they would need to feel secure and enjoy freedom of movement). The latter on the other hand tend to associate minority integration with coexistence and view it as a precondition for integration in the European Union and NATO. Against the background of these divergent visions, it is necessary to bring communities together and openly discuss their visions of Kosovo, viewpoints regarding what relations among people will look like in the future, and issues that affect inter-ethnic relations, such as property and security.

Annex 1: Documents Reviewed

- Diana Chigas, *Has Peacebuilding Made a Difference in Kosovo?* CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, 2006.
- Education for Peace and Tolerance Phase III, Project Description
- Rural Tourism Development Strategy in the Municipality of Novo Brdo 2008-2015, Prishtina, March 2008
- Strategic Agreement to Enhance Capacity in Conflict Sensitivity and Strategic Peace-building for Staff and Partners of CARE Kosovo
- Mary Anderson and Lara Olson, *Confronting War* (Cambridge, MA: Collaborative for Development Action, 2003), p. 59.
- START II Mid-Term project Evaluation by Cheyanne A. Church
- START II Impact Assessment by Tristi C. Nichols
- CARE International in Kosovo, 1 August 2007
- CARE description for the case study advocacy initiative, Shtupel/ Stupel.

Annex 2: Sample Interview Questions

Prior to initiating the interview, the evaluation consultant stated her name, the fact that she was hired by CARE to evaluate the project under examination, and that her objective was to understand the specifics of project (from design to implementation) and the impact that the project had on peace-building. The consultant also asked the interviewee if they wanted to engage in a conversation during which they could discuss the project and their experiences from participating in it. The following are sample interview questions, which were used as a guideline and were complemented by additional questions that emerged as important in the course of the interviews.

1) Case Study: Education for Peace and Tolerance Project, Phase III

a) Questions for Youth Promoters:

- What have you learned from participating in the project?
- How did you feel about the participation of people with different ethnic backgrounds in project activities prior to trainings and after the trainings?
- How would you feel about the participation of K-Serbs in the trainings?
- Are your feelings about other ethnic groups more positive than the feelings of your parents?
- What does the term “tolerance” mean to you? What would a person with a different ethnic background need to do in order for you to think that he is tolerant and respectful?
- How would you react if someone who belongs to the age group as you/ an adult whom you know spoke badly about, or urged people to commit violence against, people from different ethnic backgrounds?
- Have you stayed in touch/ would you like to keep in touch with Youth Promoters from different ethnic backgrounds whom you have met in the trainings?

b) Questions for the parents of Youth Promoters:

- Have you noticed changes in the opinions and behavior of your child?
- How do you feel about your child’s participation in activities that involve children from different ethnic backgrounds? Were you at first reluctant to give permission for participation in project activities? If so, what changed your mind?
- Are your feelings about other ethnic groups more positive than the feelings of your children?
- What would a person with a different ethnic background need to do in order for you to think that he is tolerant and respectful?
- Would you endorse EPT project activities that involve children from the K-Serb community?
- What are your hopes and dreams regarding Kosovo in the future?
- How do you think relations between K-Serbs and K-Albanians will be like in the future?
- Do you think that the project has an impact on peace-building, and if so how?

c) Questions for the teachers of Youth Promoters:

- Have you noticed a difference in the opinions and behavior of students who have participated in project activities?
- Are your feelings about other ethnic groups more positive than the feelings of your children?
- What would a person with a different ethnic background need to do in order for you to think that he is tolerant and respectful?
- What is the role that education can play in peace-building?
- Would you endorse EPT project activities that involve children from the K-Serb community?
- What are your hopes and dreams regarding Kosovo in the future?
- How do you think relations between K-Serbs and K-Albanians will be like in the future?
- Do you think that EPT project activities are important for the future of the country? What effect do you think they have?

2) Case Study: Peace-building through economic cooperation

- Have you cooperated with people from different ethnic backgrounds prior to your participation in CARE's project?
- What changes has participation in the project brought about in your life?
- How do you feel about working on economic projects together with K-Serbs/ K-Albanians?
- Do you interact with project participants on occasions other than project activities?
- When is it appropriate for people from different ethnic communities to work together?
- Has economic cooperation led to increased social interaction and/ or political mobilization of any sort?

3) Case Study: Impact of poverty reduction/empowerment of the R.A.E. communities on peace-building

- What difference has participation in the project made in your life?
- What did you expect you would gain from participating in the project? Were your expectations met/ exceeded?
- Has the project affected your relationships with family members or with other people in your community in any way?
- Through participation in project activities/ project implementation do you interact with people from different ethnic backgrounds whom you did not know before?
- What are your plans after the project ends?
- What impact do you think that projects focusing on poverty reduction/ empowerment of the R.A.E. communities have on peace-building?

4) Case study: Democratic governance through peace-building initiatives

- What are some of the activities in which you engage to strengthen peace-building?
- What are your relations with municipal officials/ CSOs representatives/ CBOs representatives?
- What are some of the challenges that the peace-building process in Kosovo faces?
- In what areas has CARE helped build your capacities?
- What effect has participation in CARE activities had on peace-building and the creation of a multi-ethnic Kosovo?
- In your opinion, what are the obstacles to peace?