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## Annual report 2017

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## 1. Executive Summary

Covering period January – December 2017, Amica Educa projects' activities have directly supported empowerment process of 1789 individuals through different group and individual activities / services contributing to improvement of their social and professional functionality as well as their rights and position in education, health and socioeconomic system.

Having different activities in the projects leading to achieving specific goals Amica Educa has provided comprehensive support to the target groups. The empowerment effects have been seen on personal level / mental health but also on the level of social interactions in family, workplace, labor market, community.

Professionals from helping and other disciplines (including students) have gained personal benefits from education experiences. Having their social and inter-personal skills improved, professionals are more capable to provide more qualitative services for their beneficiaries, but also to positively influence the work of the institutions they work in by making multiplication effects within their colleagues.

By gaining the experienced knowledge and improving the skills related to their social interactions, family functioning, parenting, gender equality, labor market and business, women at risk have been learning the ways for improving the mental and social health as well as their employability. They became more self-aware and self-confident with more enthusiasm and life motivation for actions and changes they want to make.

Gender equality and women's rights issue have been incorporated in all of the project activities contributing to empowerment of women in family, society, labour market.

Public actions such as round table, street campaign and 94 media appearances as well as various types of cooperation with education, health and social services institutions enabled Amica Educa's visibility and projects' effects spreading contributing to awareness raising of citizens of Tuzla canton regarding mental health and psychological empowerment of women and children, socio-economic empowerment of women's and gender equality.

## 2. Context Analysis and Justification

Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) is still experiencing lack of functionality, and inefficiency at all levels of government. The political system in BiH is complex, reflecting the provisions of the country's constitution developed to end ethnic conflict, as well as subsequent changes to the system introduced under the guidance of the international community through the Office of the High Representative. BiH's key economic challenge is the imbalance of its economic model: public policies and incentives are skewed toward the public rather than the private sector, consumption rather than investment, and imports rather than exports.<sup>1</sup>

Based on project staff previous experience of in work with people from Tuzla Canton and B&H, it is observed that everyday living situations that citizens face have the huge impact on their mental health. Economic stagnation of the country, political tensions are ones of major causes of personal insecurity of citizens leading to intense acute and chronic stress. Additionally, accumulated frustration and trauma to which the citizens are being exposed during last two decades, from war to transition, left significant consequences on their mental health. Not one social group or individual is immune to mental disorders, but risk of mental health issues is higher among poor, unemployed and people with low educational status, as well as among victims of violence and older people.<sup>2</sup> Considering that in the above mentioned

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/bosniaandherzegovina/overview>

<sup>2</sup> Department of Mental Health and Substance Dependence, Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health, World Health Organization, Investing in mental health, Geneva, 2003. [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/media/investing\\_mnh.pdf](http://www.who.int/mental_health/media/investing_mnh.pdf)

groups at risk is more women than men it is not surprising that women are under the higher risk of experiencing and developing the mental health illnesses and difficulties.

The poverty is one of the most important factors connected with socioeconomic status that influence the health, and the term *feminization of the poverty* clearly indicates that women as social group are much more exposed to the poverty. This affects women's security, confidence and leads to social exclusion and stigmatization. The high level of unemployment is one of major risk factors related to mental health. Although women make 51,1% of working age population, only 37,6% of employed persons are women (BH Labor force survey 2017, Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina)<sup>3</sup>. This situation at the labor market results to unfavourable conditions for development of economy and society. Opportunity for these women to respond to the demands dictated by the labour market is significantly limited. There are no special training programs or work guidance for women in order to increase their employability or income generation while contributing to the fulfilment of their rights for equal employment opportunities. This lead to women having less approach and control over material resources, less access to various possibilities, as well as less opportunities to make decisions.

These are some of the characteristics of traditional way of living present in the region that contribute to subordinate position of women. Subordinate position of women to men and, related to that, unequal distribution of power in family and society put the women under the risk of developing the mental health difficulties and illnesses. The gender stereotypes and division of gender roles influence social models in which women are often mainly responsible for family and private life (unpaid work) and men for the professional and public work (paid work). This results in an unequal division of domestic and family responsibilities, which is one of the main reasons for discrimination against women in the labour market and for their limited social and political participation: it limits their possibilities for education, improvement of competences and skills, limits proactive approach to job searching, or if they work, limit their possibilities for carrier building, for engagement in community and politics. There are no measures for the harmonization of private and professional life, such as, the development of business practice that respects family life and is equally available to women and men. The pressure created by women's multiple roles, gender inequality, factors related to poverty, overwork and violence influence their mental health. This topic has not been enough thematised in the community.

The relevant institutions are unsuccessful to prevent mental health and social issues and report about insufficient capacities to respond to increasing number of problems and clients who need support, as well as educational needs of professionals employed in these institutions. Support services for professionals, employees of the Centres of social work, schools, institutions for children without parental care, NGOs in the field, offered by governmental authorities in Tuzla Canton are not developed and adapted to the extend to meet their actual needs for skilled educational support. One of the reasons is non-existence of system and network of providers of skilled education to professionals in these fields. Professionals in field od social work, education, rehabilitation, health are not provided with any organized skilled education (by governmental institutions), but only with some workshops and seminars organized by nongovernmental organizations that is not sufficient as well and not give the real practical experience. Due to professional and social context they live in, many of these professionals themselves have untreated (sometimes even traumatic) issues that inevitable influence the quality of their work and services they provide. They do not possess adequate social and interpersonal skills and practical knowledge needed for counselling and direct work with clients (children, youth and adults). Due to lack of adequate skills and knowledge they are not in position to support the development of children to their fullest potential through direct service of supporting children and/or their parents in institutions/organizations they work. Family situations are endangered to a worrying scale, including lower birth rates and an increase in family violence. Juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, and a destruction of basic social values are consequences of unhealthy developments in raising children, both

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<sup>3</sup> <http://fzs.ba/index.php/publikacije/saopcenjapriopcenja/ankete/anketa-o-radnoj-snazi/>

in school and at home. Basic behavioural norms are neglected; aggression, physical violence and violent communication are more prevalent among children and also between adults and children.

### 3. Amica Schweiz supported projects (project organization, achievement of objectives/results, monitoring/evaluation measures, lessons learnt)

#### 3.1. Education of professionals (including project Tandem University – Amica Educa)

The project has been implemented according to plan. Within the education program for professionals basic education consisting of three modules have been completed in following field:

Art therapy, Art History, Creative support to the teachers of Religion Education, Music therapy with Drums, Sexual Abuse in Childhood, Tandem (1st module). Two advanced seminars has been implemented in the field of Dances of Universal Peace and Creative Expressive Painting (organized in Switzerland).

Feedbacks of the seminars participants (total number is 154) have been emphasising personal and professional benefits (mainly social and interpersonal skills leading to better everyday functioning) of experiences gained at the seminars. Professionals come from different “helping” professions (teachers, psychologist, social workers.....) and have school knowledge and work experience about social relationships and supporting people in need.

Participation in seminars on these topics enables all participants to realize their rights for further education. Professionals reported about increase of knowledge and understanding of relationships with others, children’s behaviour, contexts that influence the development of personality, self-presentation, and generally communications. As they make personal experiences, they are more capable to connect with the clients and school children and understand the context they are coming from. This was the impression of 39% participants who work with children and adults (mainly in schools and kindergartens, NGOs...). In that way they are more observable and capable to understand the behaviours of children and clients. Having their social and inter-personal skills improved their counselling skills greatly contribute to providing more qualitative services they provide. Professionals report on the application of new methods in their work and reported improved results in providing psychosocial, pedagogical services for children and adults.

Multiplication effects with colleagues have been reported by with 90% (out of 60 employed) of seminars’ participants achieving positive changes in institutions and organizations they work in.

Analysing the needs of seminar participants it was evident that they have been accepting the seminars as opportunity for psychological empowerment that can give them tool for dealing with problems and alleviating everyday challenges they encounter in society, family and work, beside their professional improvements. The effects are seen in increase self-confidence, recognizing and expressing needs, emotions, intentions, increase of tolerance and acceptance and related to that more efficient connections with others, more adequate reactions to stress, setting boundaries and clear personal goals, improved motivation, the feeling of freedom and openness for new insights. Beside that they have emphasised effects of the relaxation techniques. They became aware of importance of spending time doing something they like in order to reduce stress and anxiety. Creative techniques as painting, drawing, modelling, music instruments playing have been observed as resource that can give the inner peace but also feelings of fulfilment and success (as they succeed to learn something they thought they

do not have talents). As mostly nonverbal approach creative techniques has allowed the approach to an issue that participants are not ready or capable to talk about. It approached their personal difficulties from a multi-sensory point, tapping into their visual, auditory and experiential learning style. Including more of the participants' senses, creative techniques enhance the learning process and in some cases made the support process faster.

Participants estimated following empowering impacts of the seminar: increased awareness about choice opportunity, acceptance of themselves (as they are), connection with inner self and advocating own interests and rights. They have understood that their personality has been developed under the influence of their family, surrounding, education, society, but that they have the opportunity (and know the way) to set personal goals and make the choices and actions towards achieving them. They also understood the importance of the gender equality for personal developments and society.

Project activities for professionals were planned on the basis of long term experience of Amica Educa in analysing the needs of participants.

Participants applying to participate at the **seminars** have been filling out the application form/questionnaire at the beginning of each seminar. By analysing the answers of these participants leaders measured the level of specific knowledge, level of understanding and managing of different mental functions and processes as well as motivation for participation. Collected data are used for adaptation of content and method of workshop that corresponds to most participants/women. During and after completion on seminars, women are individually monitored in achieving progress. If necessary, leaders in consultation with women recommend them inclusion in other project activities that can contribute to the further improvement of their mental and social health.

After each seminar module, in evaluation questioners and conversations professionals are encouraged to express their critical opinion as well as to ask any additional questions which would contribute to their better understanding and easier multiplication and application in their professional (and personal) surroundings. Their needs are mainly related to learning additional methods and ways to deal with different deviant behaviour in beneficiaries (clients, school children, ...) along with increase in conflicts, as well as apathy and hopelessness that is predominant among B&H citizens. Beside that, their needs are also related to improving their personal functionality and well being.

### 3.2. Psychological counselling

All of Psychological Counselling activities are aimed at empowerment of beneficiaries to develop their inner strengths necessary for overcoming life crisis.

After the first contact made by beneficiaries on SOS telephone or their visit in Amica Educa the support to beneficiaries is provided through following services:

The **services of estimation and planning** are the first support provided to the beneficiaries and include: the estimation of the actual situation, their needs, strengths and risks for beneficiaries as well as creation of the individual plan related to services offered in Amica Educa (such as psychotherapy, psychoeducative workshops or other specific treatments).

**Counselling and psychotherapy** include individual, partners, family or group support to children, youth, partners and families. In 2017 sessions were organized once a week with 4 therapists, 1 counsellor and 3 trainee therapists (trainee therapists were engaged within counselling centre from January to July 2017). All professionals along with team members (in total 12 of them) have been

supervised during 35 supervision sessions. Regular meetings of therapists with Program director and Social worker are organized aiming at monitoring and evaluation of the work leading to adaptations (if necessary) and improvement of the whole supporting process.

During 2017, 507 **psychotherapeutic sessions** (439 individual, 22 partners/family, 46 group sessions) were organized for 52 clients (45 women and 7 men). The beneficiaries have been expressing difficulties in their functionality in family, work place, society personal and relational problems: depressive and anxiety related disorders, emotional shut-down, marital crisis, after divorce period, single-parenting, grieving, sexual abuse in childhood, physical abuse, suicide attempt, war trauma - loss of a brother, psychoactive substances addiction and other numerous problems related to low self-esteem, sexual orientation, illness and financial issues. Support provided through individual and group psycho-therapy improved their ability to deal with emotions in terms of recognizing, allowing and expressing emotions, increasing motivation to learn and integrate stress management skills and to adequately respond to everyday life challenges, gradually changing their position in family, workplace/school and society. Marital crisis, after-divorce period, single-parenting and emotional shut-down of several clients that have caused certain negative beliefs, feelings of worthlessness and defence mechanisms were challenged and replaced with positive ones, which allowed them to view situation realistically and from different perspectives and motivated them to focus on their resources and competencies. Most of the elderly women were dealing with deeply seated patterns of behaviour taken from their parent families that became transgenerational "heritage" passed unconsciously and negatively affecting relationships mostly with their children. Major progress in these cases was to encourage them to take action regardless of their age which resulted in improved quality of social and emotional relations with others and lessened psychosomatic difficulties after engaging in exercises for women, Dances of Universal Peace, etc.

Some of the beneficiaries have been included previously in other Amica Educa activities. Although not being fully aware of their psychical conditions before, some women participating in seminars and workshops recognized the need for additional (individual) support. These women being additionally supported in individual and group psychotherapy sessions developed their capacities for overcoming depressive and anxiety related disorders, marital crisis, sexual and physical abuse, different kinds of traumas, etc.

Implementation of other Amica Educa projects in cooperation with schools in Tuzla (Breaking the Silence on Gender Based Violence and Family Group Conference) empowered 6 high-school/university students to seek professional support to overcome consequences of bullying, long-term exposure to domestic violence, non-acceptance of their sexual orientation and to treat early symptoms of depression. 6 (high school / university) students were encouraged to overcome the negative attitude of society towards seeking a professional psychological help and to regularly attend sessions in order to increase their self-awareness and self-confidence, acknowledge emotions and understand how past effects their present behaviour as well as their results in school and relations with others. 2 of them (17 and 20 yrs old) were empowered to work towards authenticity and self - acceptance regarding their sexual orientation by embracing homosexual identity which can help recovery from long term depression and panic attacks they were exposed to. Clients acknowledged they must be taking into account support of extended social network, since they are being rejected from their own families.

**Psychoeducative and creative workshops for children** organized for 4 groups of children (23 children in total) continuously during 2017. The work with one group has been organized on weekly basis during 4 months (56 workshops have been organized in total)

Psychoeducative and creative workshops have included use of innovative pedagogical and methodical approaches aiming at psychosocial empowerment of children to be able to develop their stable and strong personalities capable to confront different life challenges. Topics and games have been adapted to their age and each workshop addressed the specific topic encouraging their creativity, imagination and self-confidence.

The cooperation and trust within the groups have been developed very fast through games and creative work what resulted with children' increased openness and freedom to express their emotions, increased self-respect and selfconfidence during their verbal expression in the groups.

The children have been motivated and eager to draw (and paint); the development of hand motility, creativity, trust in their own intuition and satisfaction with the results achieved have been noticed. The techniques of drawing, painting, modelling, games have had the positive influence on their awareness about inner and out world, concentration, social learning, their self-respect, and self-confidence, , but also mutual trust, mutual respect and tolerance. Preschool children (age 5-7) have increased their hand motility needed for writing, concentration, imagination.

Beside this, using the art therapy techniques, children have adopted the life values related to empathy, friendships, trust and other moral values. Every child has learned to respect the differences and to express her/him without fear of being estimated.

### **Psychoeducative support for women - My Majesty The Women**

In the period March – June 2017 12 workshops "My Majesty Women" were realised. The group has completed work with 14 participants / women. The diversity of the group in terms of age, financial, cultural, religious, and educational differences, contributed to quality discussions during the workshops. Although there were a large number of members in the group, with their creative engagement and activity during work on specific topics, the group entered into a deeper mode of work on themselves. They had the opportunity to work on raising awareness and improving the following content: limitations in personal development, personal boundaries, personal motivations, basic human needs, engagement and relaxation of their own senses; communication style, resources (natural, personal and material), their own special skills, meeting their own needs, connecting with a inner child... During the workshop, women shared their concerns about neglecting, suppressing or denying their own needs, as well as the existence of an *inner child*. But they also showed determination to engage themself in future to be more closely connected to their own (psychological, physical and spiritual) needs. In addition, women have recognized and then began to actively work in increasing their own responsibility in using the available resources as well as in improving their own style of communication that influences their quality of life.

At the level of the whole group there was evident improvement in setting the boundaries (it is easier to them to say NO), the level of confidence and the importance of personal development and empowerment. In order to measure the effects and results of the workshop, a survey was conducted at the beginning and end of the workshop, which in most women recorded an increase in the self-perception of the following items: A general sense of security in life, satisfaction in setting boundaries with other people, articulating their own needs, (verbal) expression of their own opinions and suggestions, level of confidence and motivation to continue working on themselves and making changes to the better.

The effects of acitivities such as **Psychosocial support for women - Dances and Reiki, Psychosocial support for women in Snagovo village, Self-help group Family Dynamics, Physical recreation exercises for women and Relaxation massages** are seen in establishing the psycho-physical balance, improved socialisation, improving wellbeing and the quality of life in general.

## 3.3. Gender equality

### 3.3.1. Breaking the Silence on Gender Based Violence

In period July – December 2017 Amica Educa has implemented the first year of the project Breaking the Silence on Gender Based Violence at Elementary School Kreka in Tuzla. Kreka school children live



in a low income area, in traditional, patriarchal past-oriented community with unequal power relations between adults and children. Gender stereotypes and roles attributed to girls and boys leave children especially vulnerable to Gender Based Violence (in further text GBV). Project has been addressing this issue and educating school children about gender and GBV in order to prevent perpetuation of cycle of violence across generations. School professionals (teachers and staff) are educated on the topic of gender, gender equality and GBV. The goal of the school professional's education is continuation / multiplication of the work on prevention of gender based violence after the end of project activities and support of the project activities during project. 6 young unemployed people have been educated on group leading and GBV and are engaged as volunteers in leading workshops with children. Elementary school Kreka is located on the outskirts of Tuzla and among children enrolled are a significant number of children at risk and Roma children.

- 12 potential volunteers completed 5 day training on GBV, 5 day training on Pedagogical and Creative Methods for Working with Children, and with the assistance of mentors completed 10 day individual workshop creation. Best workshop scenarios and presentations were selected and first 6 volunteers were selected to work on the project.
- Two groups of teachers and professional staff attended one day training on Prevention of GBV. 30 teachers finished training and received Manuals for Prevention of GBV created specifically for elementary and high school teachers that can be used in classes for promotion of Gender Equality and prevention of GBV.
- 6 volunteers, project staff and members of Theatre Group created and performed two Forum plays and a puppet play for approximately 300 elementary school children.
- 5 two hour psycho-educative workshops on the topic of prevention of Gender based Violence were held for total of 85 students.

### **3.3.2. Digital Inclusion of Marginalized Women - Ein Klick zum starken Ich**

From January – July 2017, last two groups of women completed digital literacy trainings and psycho-educative workshops. 5<sup>th</sup> group completed its work and 6<sup>th</sup> groups started and finished its educations. Women who applied to participate in project have gone through several interviews, were monitored during the project by project coordinator and leaders of training and workshops. Exchange of information between project staff was consistent and it allowed project staff to recognize participants' needs in different areas and to adapt the project according to their needs.

Like in the previous groups women who took part in last two groups of Klick are different ages, different educational levels but all do have common purpose which is "getting out of the house" finding a job and finding a supportive environment. Two women out of 24 in total who participated in last two groups did not complete the training one due to illness and one due to finding employment

The 5<sup>th</sup> group was very special from the start, one of the group members during an introductory meeting shared that she was going through a divorce due to abuse and more than half of the group after her shared their experiences with the spousal abuse. All of the participants emphasized what a positive experience it was to be a part of the group. Most of the women started to attend and use activities in other Amica Educa programs (individual therapy, Dances of Universal Peace group, workshops).

Two of the women who were part of the 6<sup>th</sup> group have completed their Competency Passports, two are attending individual therapy sessions within Psychological Counselling, two have signed up for other Amica Educa psycho-educative seminars, three women have found employment which is not interfering with their attendance and after one woman suffered a heart attack the rest of the group organized a visit to the hospital and a nice get well gift. These women did not know each other before, but have shown to be very supportive of each other in times of need. The group was finished with the work in July.

**Three year project end results** - From August 2014 to July 2017, 6 groups of women completed digital literacy trainings. During 3 years 72 women in groups of 12 attended each 6 months training. During last two groups there was an overlap between the groups due to illness of one of the education leaders.

Aside from providing women with digital skills, empowering them through psycho-social education “Digital Inclusion of Marginalized Women”, has helped 19% of the participants find employment after completing the program and 24% of the participants to start creating income through sale of their products, caretaking of the elder or providing domestic services for others. Several participants were able to realize their retirement benefits and several started volunteering in Amica Educa and other local organizations.

### **3.3.3. Empowered Women – Active in the Labour Market (financed by Amica Schweiz and DVV)**

From July 2017 to December 2017 Association Amica Educa with the financial support by the DVV International – Country Office BiH and Amica Schweiz implemented project Empowered Woman – Active in the Labour Market.

12 long term unemployed women from different backgrounds, different level of education, coming from different parts of Tuzla Canton attended 12 workshops of Personal Skills, 12 workshops of Business Skills and 12 Digital Literacy trainings. 11 women completed 72 hours of various educations over a 6 month period. Different backgrounds, education levels project wise mean that educations and support had to be individually tailored per participants needs. Needs of a participant who completed elementary education are completely different from one who completed University education and while they have numerous similarities in regards to social exclusion due to long term employment their employment plans and opportunities significantly differ.

Participants had an opportunity to develop their self-confidence, communication skills, self-esteem and raise their gender awareness through Personal Skills workshops. During Business Skills trainings participants had an opportunity to identify their skills, create a CV and learn how to develop a business idea and turn it into a business plan. During Digital Literacy training participants learned how to use computers and Windows application and gain a certificate of digital literacy which is one of the requirements that employers often request.

Upon completion of all three workshops and training, participants prepared their “sales pitch” where they used their digital literacy skills to create a CV or a business plan and used skills learned in Personal and Business Skills training to present themselves to a potential employer or to present their business idea. Presentations were done in front of the group and workshop and training instructors which provided participants with an opportunity to practice their presentation skills. Participants were provided further mentoring and individual counselling for job applications and development of business plans.

Upon completion of the project three participants created and are developing their business plans which range from founding an Association focused on organic and healthy living, starting an online business focused on designing and producing unique scarfs and raising goats in order to create various products from goat milk. One participant who left University in her 4<sup>th</sup> year of studies decided to go back to school and finish her degree. One participant found employment as an administrator with a local party, another participant found employment as a salesperson and five participants are actively looking for employment and are sending job applications on regular bases. When describing changes that they experienced through participation in the project, they said: “I feel better, more confident”, “I have a better ability to express my own thoughts, feelings and needs”, “Changes in thinking, acting and functioning” etc.

## **4. Lessons learned**

**Education of professionals:**

- Application forms that are filled by participants who have applied on seminars prove to be a good tool on several levels (not only for selection participants). By writing a motivation for participation, women already do introspection which is an important part of every workshop and it serve as a good preparation for their further participation. On the other hand, filled application also serves in preparation of workshop leaders as they gain the insight into different expectations of women/participants.
- For each seminar, specific questioners were created which should measure and quantify progress in empowerment of the target group. Even with the detailed and specific creation, after the questioner analysis (beginning and end of work results), it was evident that results do not reflect the level of the empowerment that is witnessed in the verbal statements of the participant or noticeable in their behaviour and functioning. The improvement of the questionnaires which will be able to measure and quantify progress in regards to empowerment of the target group is constant discussion topic and relevant experts are being consulted for this issue.

**Digital Inclusion of Marginalized Women:** Due to constant monitoring of groups and women in them, project staff was able to adapt plans and serve the needs of women in groups, i.e. providing safe space for women to talk about abuse they experienced, changing focus of the modules to foster self-reliance, emphasizing need for personal responsibility or providing extra time to discuss participants needs. Project results in Klick have shown that this type of support provides women with higher chances for employment therefore extra education on Business Skills was added to the new project Empowered and the focus of the project is improving employability of women. Due to findings in this project it was decided to work with women from the ages of 30 to 45-50 in order to give women best possible chances for employment.

**Empowered Women – Active in the Labour Market:** From the application process, interview and selection it was obvious that participants need individualized approaches, through communication between project staff, evaluation of project participants' needs and plans, additional encouragement and support was provided through individual feedback meetings with each of the participants in which participants were provided with individual mentoring and psycho-educative support. Another excellent tool used in this project cycle was formation of a closed FB group in which project staff was posting information from and about educations, available jobs and provided space for participants to share information outside of scheduled educations.

## 5. Other donors supported projects: (brief summary of important developments)

### 5.1. Mental and social health of women (cfd financed)

Covering period January – December 2017, the project Mental and Social Health of Women has provided holistic support services to women from Tuzla and Tuzla Canton empowering them to become self-responsible and initiators of changes in their surroundings.

**Project participants** were directly supported through different group and individual activities / services: psychoeducative workshops (nonviolent communication, family dynamics, positive discipline in raising

the children, creative expressive painting, gender equality), training Personal Business Skills, Competency Passport for unemployed women, individual psychotherapy. All of the support services contributed to improvement of their rights and position in education, health and socioeconomic system in Tuzla Canton. The empowerment effects have been seen on personal level/ mental health but also on the level of social interactions in family, workplace, labour market and community.

By gaining the experienced knowledge and improving the skills related to their social interactions, family functioning, parenting, gender equality, labour market and business, women have been learning the ways for improving the mental and social health as well as their employability. They became more self-aware and self-confident with more enthusiasm and life motivation for actions and changes they want to make

Gender equality and women's rights (mainly right for education, family planning, economic) have been incorporated in all of the project activities contributing to empowerment of women in family, society, labour market. Seminars and PBS training have induced activism of unemployed women making them more self-confidence for taking responsibility and advocating their rights.

Cooperation with different organizations / institutions on mezzo and macro level contributed to Amica Educa's advocacy efforts and visibility in supporting vulnerable groups and providing services that are lacking in community.

## 5.2. Family Group Conferences (financed by IN Fondacija)

The Family Group Conferences (FGC) project is planned to be implemented in period May 2016 – April 2019. After the first project year (completed in April 2017) that has been implemented in cooperation with Social Work Center (SWC) Tuzla, the project was enlarged in second year by including elementary schools and one high school from Tuzla as initiators of FGCs beside SWC. Namely, in second project year partnership was also developed with 7 schools from area of Tuzla (Memorandums of Understanding were signed with 6 elementary schools: Kiseljak, Bukinje, Miladije, Kreka, Pazar, Simin Han and Economic High School, as well as Anex of Cooperation Agreement with SWC). The representatives of the schools attended 2-day training for FGC initiation and application of this model in educational practice at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> project year.

This model of work is being used as a tool for prevention in certain cases of children and youth at risk before they escalate to major issue and become Social Work Centre beneficiaries. In accordance to aim, during 2017, 11 families including 137 participants (23 children and youth under 21, 16 parents, 59 members of their wider social network and 39 professionals) have been supported through 11 FGC's. FGC's have been supporting families experiencing different issues such as social isolation of children caused by frequent school changing and moving, bullying, irregular attendance caused by irresponsible parenting (one Roma family), severe illness of parents, violence against children, divorce and financial difficulties in most of these cases.

Implementation Plan developed at the FGCs showing the concrete steps in supporting and solving (alleviating) problems has been monitored through follow up sessions two months after the the Plans were adopted (at FGCs).

All Amica Educa resources were used in order to engage family members in socially reinforcing and learning activities (Psychological Counselling Centre – psychotherapy, psycho-educational and creative workshops for children, activities aiming to improve mental and physical health, seminars and other projects such as Digital Inclusion of Marginalized Women). Apart from these services, professionals from other NGO's, Center for Mental Health, Educational Centre, schools, Social Work Centre were attending first, informational part of the meeting when needed in order to provide information in line with central issue of the family.

Results for some families were achieved in terms of improved quality of social and emotional relations. Negative beliefs, feelings of worthlessness and defense mechanisms were challenged and replaced with positive ones, which motivated them to focus on their resources and competencies. Some of the participants were encouraged to overcome the negative attitude of society towards seeking a

professional psychological help and to regularly attend sessions which increased their awareness of emotions and roles every family member is “assigned” to. Some of the children and youth managed to improve their results in school, relations with peers and regularly attend classes.

Application form for extension of the project (for the 3<sup>rd</sup> project year) will be sent in the next period of time.

### 5.3. Breaking the Silence on Gender Based Violence (financed by IN Fondacija)

January 2017 – June 2017 Amica Educa implemented third cycle of the Breaking the Silence on Gender Based Violence funded by IN Fondacija at two high schools. J.U. Economic high school in Tuzla and J.U. Economic high school in Lukavac. High school in Tuzla has approximately 300 enrolled students in the 2016/2017 school year. High school in Lukavac has approximately 400 enrolled students in the 2016/2017 school year. Project addressed the issue of gender based violence in youth relationships and educated students about gender and gender based violence in order to prevent perpetuation of cycle of violence across generations. 10 each peer counsellors from high schools in Tuzla and Lukavac, 20 peer counsellors total, were trained for peer intervention and peer education, and peer counselling on the topic of gender based violence in youth intimate relationships.

- Students and school staff have been informed and educated on the topic of gender through distribution of informational material, two gender forum plays and discussions in all classes in both high schools. Upon completion of the project majority of students and school staff are aware of various forms of gender based violence while prior to the project they could only recognize physical violence as a form of violence, statistics and trans-generational transference of gender based violence, contributing factors, wheel of violence etc.
- Through education in workshops of school staff and students environment was created not only to challenge prevailing beliefs but to also intervene in cases of gender based violence. Just like students majority of school staff was not aware how traditional gender roles and beliefs contribute to cases of gender based violence.
- Young people who participated in the project both peer counsellors and volunteer mentors report on increase in their knowledge, self-confidence when it comes to leading groups and counselling individuals.

### 5.4. Campaign – Love Doesn’t Hurt (financed by Foundation of Local Democracy )

Campaign was prepared and implemented in March and April in cooperation with Network of Woman in Police and Coalition for Fighting Against Hate Tuzla. Campaign is implemented within country wide campaign called I Raise my Voice Against Violence. It included street campaigns in 4 municipalities of Tuzla Canton, info-educative lectures in 5 secondary schools in the same municipalities as well as large media campaign. The focus was to reach youth, especially young girls, who are entering relationships for the first time. The purpose was to inform and educate citizens (with focus on young women) regarding types of violence in youth relationships, marital relationships and family violence.

Streets campaigns included presentation of women body silhouettes with strong messages related to actions and treatment young girls encounter in their relationship and that are accepted as normal and acceptable behavior, even as expression of love. These messages are actually verbal, physical, psychological, economical, and/or sexual abuse. Most of the people had positive reactions to the campaign, but the lack of knowledge regarding recognition of verbal and psychological violence and abuse was evident. Most people relate violence only to physical violence.

The street campaigns had big media coverage (30 appearances in media) and it is estimated that number of reached citizens, directly or indirectly, is 200 000. Informative-educative lectures in 5 secondary schools have been prepared and implemented by representative of the Network of Woman in Police and Selma Mustacevic (topic Prevention of Gender Based Violence).

## 6. Fundraising Activities

Grants source	Project title	Amount requested / granted	Applied	Planned project implementation period	Status
Foundation for Local Democracy Sarajevo	Campaign "I Raise my Voice Against Violence"	2500,00 KM / 2500,00 KM	December 2016	March – April 2017	Approved
Dvz-international	Empowered Woman = Economically Independent Woman	4730,00 € / 4500,00 €	December 2016	July – Dec 2017	Approved
US Embassy	WEEFE (Women's Empowerment for Equal Employment)	18241,50 USD	December 2016	July 2017 – July 2018	Declined
Ministry of Labor, Social Policy and Return of Tuzla Canton	Family counseling	15700,00 KM / 4000,00 KM	December 2016	Jan – Dec 2017	Approved
Federal Ministry of education	Education – prevention of addiction	8 700,00 KM / 7370,00 KM	April 2017	Aug – Dec 2017	Approved
Raiffeisen Bank	Personal and Professional empowerment of helping profession students	18 840,00 KM	April 2017	Sep 2017 – May 2018	Declined
Embassy of Switzerland in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Municipalities in Action against Gender Based Violence	84 705,00 KM	April 2017	Aug 2017 – Jan 2019	Declined
Tuzla Municipality	Breaking the silence of GBV	4 980,00 KM / 2000,00 KM	June 2017	July 01 2017 – July 01 2018	Approved
Czech Development Agency	Request for NGO capacity support	(NGO capacity building - not financial support)	June 2017	Sep 2017 – Dec 2020	Approved (in process of preparation)
Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI)	Women's Empowerment for Equal Employment (WEEFE)	20 792.00 CAD	June 2017	Aug 01 2017 – Jan 31 2018	Declined
Ministry of Labor, Social Policy and Return of Tuzla Canton	Prevention of addiction	10 615,00 KM / 2500,00 KM	July 2017	Sep 01 – Dec 31 2017	Approved
Ministry of Labor, Social Policy and Return of Tuzla Canton	Family counseling	19 650,00 KM / 5 750,00 KM	July 2017	Jan 01 – Dec 31 2018	Approved
cfid	Strengthening Women's Actions in Community	42 000,00 € / 42 000,00 €	November 2017	January 01 – December 31 2018	Approved
US Embassy	Love Doesn't Hurt	22 661,00 USD /	January 2018	April 2018 – April 2019	Pending

## 7. Networking Activities (Government, Embassies, local NGOs, international donors, etc.)

During 2016 and 2017, Amica Educa has established and/or continued cooperation with several institutions and organization in Tuzla Canton and BiH:

- **Ministry of Education, Science, culture and Sports Tuzla Canton**
  - issued letter / expert opinion for implementation of psychoeducative workshops in two high schools and primary schools.
  - With the intention to distribute the Handbook for teaching and skilled staff of primary and secondary schools - Prevention of GBV in School (that was created by IN Fondacija project partners including Amica Educa and published by IN Fondacija) to the Tuzla Canton schools staff Amica Educa has presented it and sent it to the Ministry representatives for reviewing. Up to now, there is no information is this handbook used by the schools teaches.

- **Tuzla City Government** – Amica Educa's participation in Work Group for Youth Education for creating Action Plan for Youth as part of Youth Strategy for Tuzla region and Amica Educa's participation in Working Group for developing the Preventive and Alternative Measures in the field of Juvenile Delinquency.
- **Municipality of Zivinice** – Cooperation with Municipality of Zivinice (within Tuzla Canton) has started on initiative of Municipality. The need for support women in this municipality is estimated as one of the priorities and Amica Educa is recognized as organization that can support women in different field. The pilot education in NVC was organized in 2016 for women, members of Women Council and Municipality representatives. The Project 2018-2020 (financed by cfd) will be implemented in Zivinice focusing on strengthening women's action in community.
- **Center for Mental Health** – the exchange of information and mutual referral of clients in accordance with their specific mental health needs;
- **Center for Social Work Tuzla** – cooperation in the project Family Group Conferences. Annex of Agreement with Amica Educa has been signed. The Agreement defines the activities of both parties that contribute to the improvement of mental health and social status of vulnerable families in Tuzla.
- **Employment Office of Tuzla Canton** – The cooperation has continued related to forming the group of unemployed women for Personal Business Skills training and it was also widened within new Amica Educa project that targets also unemployed women who will be included in digital literacy program, psychological empowerment program and Business education. Agreement of Cooperation was signed.
- **Nonviolent communication (NVC) network** - The nonformal network is established and one of the Amica Educa representatives is a regular member involved in developing the network. The aim is to disseminate the nonviolence in every segment of society (schools, social institutions, politics, ...). Amica Educa representative become the certified trainer of NVC at World Center of NVC.
- **Centre for Education and Training** – ensuring training for Amica Educa beneficiaries in the field of Business Education and Competency Assessment leading to Competency Passport;
- **Centre for lifelong learning ERASMO** - ensuring training for Amica Educa beneficiaries in the field of digital literacy
- **Safe Network / Local Democracy Foundation / Centre for Legal Assistance** – providing free legal assistance for Amica Educa's beneficiaries/women.
- **Safe Network / Association Network of Women Police Officers** – joint campaign Love does not Hurt aiming prevention and reduction of gender based violence in youth relations.
- **OSCE Tuzla / Coalition Against Hatred** – joint activities aiming preventing and condemning hatred motivated incidents and other events caused by intolerance.
- **Youth Empowerment Services Center/SOS Kinderdorf B&H** – providing activities to strengthen business skills for Amica Educa beneficiaries (marginalized young people).
- **Primary and Secondary schools in Tuzla Canton** – cooperation in the project Family Group Conference and Breaking the Silence of GBV. 6 school professionals and two employees of Centre for social work have been provided with training on initiating the Family Group Conferences for families at risk.
- **Cooperation with Association Council of Schools and Parents in Tuzla Canton** has continued as their members recognized the importance of the education Positive Discipline in Raising Children as one of the tool for encountering the growing problems they experience in schools. Due to that three parents and teachers have joined the education.

## 8. Organizational Developments (strategy, certification of Amica Educa services, sources of finance, human resources, etc.)



The progress of Amica Educa has been seen in human resources development, visibility, advocacy, enlargement of scope of programs/services as well as infrastructure improvement:

**Human resources** - Amica Educa has experienced the changes in human resources. Namely, two associates has stopped working due to their age, new internal accountant has been employed in order to improve the efficiency of the financial aspect. Due to birth delivery, Psychologist Merima Salihbegovic was replaced.

**Expertize of Amica Educa personnel is being recognized by organizations/institutions to support their employees and their projects/actions:**

- Supervision to two social workers employed by Social Work Center Tuzla (contact persons for the Family Group Conferences) has been provided;
- Training on Prevention of GBV in School Environment for 40 teachers and representatives of the Ministry of Education of 3 B&H Cantons has been realized after being invited by In Fondacija;
- After being invited by Tuzla Open Centre (TOC - Feminist and LGBT Association) Amica Educa's representative developed workshops material and led three workshops: *LGBT and Heteronormative Society*, *LGBT and Religion* and *LGBT and Coming Out* for the Members of TOC related to challenges LGBT people experience in society;
- Amica Educa's representative participated at the Conference Contemporary Challenges and Perspectives of Humanities and Social Studies by presenting the paper Social Work and Mental Health;
- Amica Educa representative implemented NVC workshop for young men from Kiseljak (Roma community) and Mihatovici (refugee settlement) after being invited by Association Zemlja Djece Tuzla;
- Two Creative and psychoeducative workshops for preschool children of private kindergartens have been implemented (invited by private Kindergarten *Children's Corner* and *Aladin* Tuzla);
- Creative and psycho-educative workshop for elementary school children from the Catholic School Center Tuzla has been implemented (invited by the school teacher)
- Lecture for high school students of the Catholic School Center: Adequate Self presentation to Potential Employers (invited by the school teacher)
- 9 days of NVC Workshop for members of Women Council and employers of Municipality Zivinice has been implemented (after being invited by Municipality of Zivinice);
- Introduction workshops of NVC for Coalition for the Fight Against Hatred and other introduction workshop on same topic for Centre for Lifelong Learning in Tuzla have been implemented (after being invited by those organizations);
- Amica Educa's representative has completed all the requirements for certification and became a CNVC Certified Trainer

**Strategic planning** - Strategic planning for the period 2018-2020 has been carried out facilitated by cfd local coordinator Armina Cerbic from Sarajevo. The final paper is to be completed in the beginning of 2018.

**Web site** - In 2017 new web page has been created (with total of 21646 visits) as well as Amica Educa You Tube channel with 29 videos archived, videos containing different activities of team members in media or videos specifically created for the projects needs.

**Infrastructure** - The ground floor of the Amica Educa's house has been renovated and is used for Amica Educa's activities as well as for income generating through renting.

## 9. Outlook (priorities during the next reporting period, planned achievements)

Aside from activities planned as regular services offer in Amica Educa (seminars for professionals, psychological counselling services, gender program), Amica Educa will widen scope of its work by implementing project in Zivinice municipality (financed by cfd) as well as organizational development:

- Project Strengthening Women's Actions in Community covering period January 2018 – December 2020, aims to overcome the gap of lack of services in the Zivinice Municipality (one of 13 municipalities of Tuzla Canton) introducing the preventive mental health care programs and programs supporting economic independence of unemployed women while influencing conflict transformation between women and men through all of its activities. Integrating human rights principles and gender perspective in psychoeducation, business education and other activities in community, the project will empower right-holders (minimum 90 women at risk of mental health problems) for equal and active participation in community they live. Additionally 20 representatives of public authorities, institutions and organizations from social, health and gender equality sector will be empowered for acting in the field of women rights. Various actions at different levels will contribute to creating an environment that will encourage and enable increased involvement of women in the community's developmental processes.
- Organizational development will be supported by Czech Development Agency. The request for support has been sent in 2017 upon open Call. Being chosen along with 7 more organizations from B&H, Amica Educa will receive support in accordance with its needs defined in request and conversations with representatives of potential project implementing organization. The needs Amica Educa has defined are related to capacity building in the field of fundraising, advocacy, marketing as well as material/technical equipment.

Although information about concrete steps still needs to be clarified, unofficial information is that the project is planned to be implemented in following two years.

## 10. Annexes: all relevant tables and statistics

- Statistical Data for year 2017 (Tables for all programs, projects and other activities implemented by Amica Educa staff)

Tuzla, February 8 2018  
No: 01-15/18

Selma Alicic  
Director of Association

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Program director