

# CESI - Center for Education and Counselling of Women

## **ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2000**

CESI is a women's not-for-profit, non-governmental organization established in 8th March 1997 - International Women's Day, in response to problems of the violation of human rights, in particular women's and minority rights, nationalism, militarisation, and the deterioration of economic standards in the post-war period. Members of several women's and peace initiatives all of whom have many years of professional experience working with women war survivors founded it. CESI works at the community and national levels and it has a 10 - member staff, as well as a large, geographically and socially diverse network of volunteers throughout the country. CESI is also a member of the Women's Network of Croatia and the Antiwar Campaign of Croatia.

CESI works extensively at the local level throughout the Republic of Croatia addressing the special needs of women in chronically neglected geographic regions.

In the year 2000 we have conducted programs in accordance with our plans: The Education and Support of Women's Initiatives, Women's Human Rights and Building Gender Awareness. CESI mission is the advancement of the status of women and the building of a civil society.

Our objectives are to promote the values of gender equality, to promote and protect women's human rights and to encourage tolerance and dialogue in our post-war society. Through our projects we aim to empower women in order to gain control in their lives and to improve their psychological, physical, social and economic wellbeing.

### **Programme "Education and Support to Women's and Other Civil Initiatives"**

In year 2000 we have conducted project entitled "Education and Support to Women's and Other Civil Initiatives". Through our activities, we have reached 910 direct and 2000 indirect beneficiaries, and more than 30 non-profit and non-governmental organisations.

Goals of the project are:

- a) Empowerment and support to women's groups, civil initiatives and individuals in local communities
- b) Encouraging women to actively participate in social, economic and political life
- c) Encouraging co-operation between non-profit sector and local authorities in order to resolve common problems in the community
- d) Exchange of information, networking and building of coalition

### **Activities and achieved results:**

1. Identifying of women who are participating and/or are interested in non-governmental sector and women working in local authorities and interesting for co-operation. Individual women from local initiatives were included into work of existing associations and/or new initiatives have been formed. We have directly influenced founding of youth initiative KVARK (which stands for Creative Link of Alternative Culture Development) in Križevci, Ecumenical Peace Initiative in Zagreb. We have supported other initiatives, as well, through other forms of education.

2. Education – workshops with following topics:

- Advocacy – organised for women from Vinkovci (Slavonia region), in co-operation with Centre for Civic initiatives

- Strategic planning – for young people in Križevci, after which KVARK (Creative Link of Alternative Culture Development) has been established,
- Strategic planning for young people in Opatija, who have established Student's Council in high school.
- Needs assessment of women's initiatives from region of Banovina and Kordun, Sisak in co-operation with OSCE
- Communication Skills, and Group dynamics organised for women from Western Slavonia, in co-operation with Centre for Peace, Non-Violence and Human Rights from Okučani
- Identity development in multicultural communities in the post-war period, in co-operation with Irena Beziæ and Zdenka Pantiaæ – gestalt psychotherapists experienced in working with war survivors.
- Domestic Violence – two two-day workshops organised for non-governmental organisations' volunteers in Glina and Dvor, in co-operation with International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- We have evaluated project "Non-Violent Communication and Conflict Resolution" for Women's Club Pakrac

### **Seminars – Capacity Building**

- ❑ Fund-raising and Writing Project Proposals;
- ❑ Management and Financial Management for Non-Governmental Organisations were held,
- ❑ in co-operation with OSCE.
- ❑ Members of ten women's initiatives and organisations have participated.
- ❑ Organisational Development, for Patients Professors Network (on behalf of network: Croatian Association for Promotion of Patients' Rights), Split, September 8-9, 2000
- ❑ Basic NGO Management and Activity Planning, for association Croatian Woman, Cakovec,
- ❑ October 6 and November, 10, 2000
- ❑ Basic Civic Education, for about dozen NGOs from Zagreb and Zagreb area, Zagreb,
- ❑ October 7 –8, 2000
- ❑ Organisation Empowerment (Fund-raising and Media Skills), Association for Helping
- ❑ Woman and Child "Rainbow", Zadar, November 3-5,2000
- ❑ Project Proposal Writing;
- ❑ Democratic Management of Associations and
- ❑ Gender Awareness in co-operation with CARE Bosnia and Herzegovina we have led
- ❑ workshops on seminar for young people held in Neum, BH.

#### 3) International Conference

In co-operation with Association of Roma Women "Better Future" we have organised international conference "Rights and Status of Roma Women in Countries in Transition". The brochure containing conclusions and materials from the Conference has been published.

#### 4) Providing information on non-governmental organisations and problems within community.

Through our newsletter CESI Tribunela published in 500 copies, we have informed donors, local authorities, institutions and non-governmental organisation on our activities, but also on topics relevant to women. Each issue has been dedicated to one of such topics. The topic of the current issue is "Women and Economy". We have presented women entrepreneurs, and project of inter-sector co-operation.

Promotional material – brochures and postcards – have been published and new web pages have been designed, containing information on our organisation, our projects and topics of important international conferences.

As members of Women's Network Croatia, we have participated in regular be-annual meetings, and jointly with other women's organisations, we have defined priorities and tasks relevant to our society.

#### 5) Technical assistance to associations

Consultations, technical assistance and information have been provided to many associations, such as Association of Roma Women of Croatia "Better Future"; Committee for Human Rights Karlovac; Association for Patients' Rights Split; Women's Group Vojnic; Women's Initiative Gvozd; UŽUR Zagreb; Rainbow, Zadar; Croatian Woman, Āakovac; Women's Club Pakrac; Union of Roma Associations of Croatia and many others.

Association Igra (Game) uses our premises twice a week for their meetings. Many other inter-group initiatives' meetings were held in our office, as well, such as Feminist Summer School and Centre for Peace Studies' project Miramida. Our premises in Vojniæ have been used by International Rescue Committee (IRC), Centre for Civil Initiatives and International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC).

#### 6) Round tables, panels, and lectures

We have celebrated International Women's Day and our third anniversary with a lecture on eco-feminism, which was held in Zagreb. Lecture on women's health and reproductive health has provided for women and youth in Vojnic, Pakrac, Karlovac, Petrinja, Gvozd. Public panel "After elections..." was held in Karlovac in co-operation with Women's group Karlovac. Parties representatives have presented and discussed women's problem in our society and in Karlovac.

#### 7) CYBER CAFÉ Project - Women and new technologies

Programme location:

Town of Vojnic, Karlovac County – war devastated area populated with Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croats and Serbs returnees, facing big problems: unemployment, destroyed houses and factories, young people without jobs and perspectives.

Project description

Basic idea of Cyber Café programme is to enable women and young people in small towns and/or rural areas to access information and to encourage dialog with young people in the country and in the world through use of global communication, i.e. Internet. Broadening views, education and confidence gaining through autonomous project development within Cyber Café encourages more active participation in building local community.

Project Objectives:

##### a) Short-term:

1. To introduce women and young people to new computer technology
2. To enable young people to gather in order to gain and exchange knowledge
3. To enable access to information and linking through Internet

##### b) Long-term:

1. To advance quality of life in local community through encouraging women and young people to more active participation
2. To enrich what local community has to offer to young people

Activities:

1. Free use of computers and free Internet access
2. Education

Courses on basic computer skills and Internet access Basic Computer Skills, using specific computer programmes (Excel, Corel, Eudora), searching and creating database, possibilities of Internet, on-line education.

Workshops with following topics: Multiculturalism and Identities, Organising Local Community, Voluntarism, Networking with Similar Organisations in Croatia and abroad,

### 3. Reading Room

We have provided:

- Bulletins on information science, bulletins for young men and women, and information on non-governmental organisations in Croatia and abroad, bulletins on ecology, human rights and women's issues
- Information obtained from Internet on possibilities of education and scholarships

### 4. Playrooms for children

Children's playroom has been organised for younger children. They gather there in order to have fun and learn something new. While children are in the playroom, their parents have possibility to surf Internet and communicate with their families abroad. In that way, through free of charge Internet, we support people living on low income, for whom this is the only possibility to communicate with family and friends.

Video projections have been organised for children: cartoons – UNICEF's, with children's human rights topics, films for children with specific topics (peace, friendship, tolerance, different cultures, ecology, animals...), book reading, dancing and acting, drawing and "small big talks", when they discuss what they have seen and learnt from films that they have seen and stories that they have read.

For older children (10 – 17 years old), video projections have been organised, as well. Film topics are the same as for the youngsters. They also have playroom, reading room and discussions on certain topics. Once a week they could attend course of basic computer skills and Internet, as they still do not have possibility to have such education in regular school.

### **Programme "Women's Human Rights"**

We were actively involved into evaluation of work of the Commission of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for gender Equality, as part of the programme aiming at promotion and advancement of women's rights. We have also participated at the gathering "Women in Croatia 2001-2005", organised by the Governmental Commission for Gender Equality, and we were members of the Organising committee on the occasion.

- We have participated in preparation of National Policy draft for period 2001-2005.
- CESI is member of ASTRA network for sexual and reproductive health and rights of women in Central and Eastern Europe. We have signed and supported international actions and campaigns: World's Women's March, action "Women building peace" and World's Population Week – 2000, "Let's save lives of women", organised by World's Population Institute. We have informed public and media on all these activities. We are co-organisers of press conferences. Through our press statements we have tried to draw attention to problems of women in Croatia and the world.
- We co-operate in regional initiative "Women for the 3rd Millennium", jointly with organisations from Bosnia and Herzegovina within co-operation with CARE BH. Within this, so far three round tables have been held.
- After elections – meeting of non-governmental organisations of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina held in Nova Gradiška, in co-operation with OSCE Croatia and BIH
- Participation of women in public life – seminar for women party members and women of various occupations; Bužim, Unsko-sanski kanton, BH; in co-operation with OSCE BH

## Programme "Building Gender Awareness"

CESI has started the programme of building gender awareness targeting young people at the early 1999. The main objective is to promote values of gender equality, non-violence, tolerance, and solidarity and to encourage them for active participation in the society.

Besides, through this programme we want to:

- Promote development of knowledge and skills through educational programmes and activities outside the institutions
- Prevent and stamp out unacceptable forms of behaviour of young people
- Influence adoption of life habits which are beneficiary to one's health
- Advance gender relations
- Encourage volunteer work of young people with young people
- Empower girls for active work in the community
- Increase expert knowledge and abilities of professionals working with young people
- Develop networking and active co-operation among institutions, NGOs and citizens
- Influence forming of public attitudes towards young people's problems – violence, abuse, bringing-up, sexuality

### Results

Through this project, we have increased knowledge and amount of information of young people on their health, especially sexuality and reproduction, and we have provoked raising awareness on problems, which is the first step towards changing attitudes and behaviours relating to relations between sexes and violence. By lectures and workshops with topics such as sexuality, protection of reproductive health, family planning, violence, human rights, gender equality, we have reached about 1000 young people all over Croatia (mostly high school students, both male and female). We have also distributed leaflets on reproductive health among young people.

### Activities

#### 1. Education

##### a) Lectures

Lack of adequate sexual education has resulted in non-sufficient amount of information they have on different sex issues and due to that they are subjected to different forms of sexual abuse, unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. As an answer to existing problems, we organise lectures with topics: family planning, reproductive health, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, non-violence and addictions. We also distribute educational materials at schools and youth clubs. Since beginning 2000, there were about 800 beneficiaries, mostly high school students from Zagreb, Petrinja, Pag, Sisak, Bakarac, Pula, Gvozd, Vojnic and Karlovac.

##### b) Training for Trainers

Training for trainers is meant for volunteers who are going to participate in the project, or they are going to use their knowledge and skills in work with young people within other organisations or their job. The programme consisting of five two-day seminars for teachers, psychologists, social workers and everyone who work / want to work with young people has been developed. Workshop topics were: growing up and change, sexuality, stereotypes, communication, power, violence and methodology and basic trainer skills. In period starting with January and ending with June 2000, education for eleven volunteers from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina has been organised and conducted.

### c) Seminar for young people

Seminar "Growing up, Identities and Sexuality" has been held in Varazinske Toplice, on November 23-26. Seminar was, first of all for young women and men from Kordun, Banija, Eastern and Western Slavonia, interested in the subject, and who would like to continue co-operation with us o the programme aiming at advancement of life quality of young people and relations between sexes.

The objective of the seminar was to inform young people on topics related to growing up, learning gender roles; sexuality and gender related violence, and making them realise that there are problems related to gender and violence. The seminar leaders have been persons who have finished Training for Trainers. After introducing and creating trust, we have worked on following topics: sex/gender, family and growing up, gender roles and identity, sexuality, sex/gender equality, sexism in institutions, media, conflicts and gender/sex-related violence, building bridges, i.e. co-operation among men and women.

- Workshops were held for over 150 young girls and boys from Croatia, Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina on the following topics: Sensibilisation for Gender Issues - two-day workshop in Pakrac for 14 adolescents.
- Sex and Gender in Society workshop held in Zagreb for 20 young people.
- Women's Human Rights and Violence against Women - Workshop has been held in High School in Opatija.
- Sexuality - workshop held in Zagreb for 12 students from Zagreb's high school.
- Gender identities - one-day workshop held in Kozari Bok (suburb in Zagreb).
- Human rights - eight-day workshop during youth camp in Segedin for participants, ranging in age from 16 to 23 years from Croatia and Yugoslavia.
- Adolescence and Sexuality - workshop, students (both male and female) from seventh and eighth grade of elementary school Matija Gubec in Cernik (Slavonia) and their educator
- Gender-related Violence - the workshop has been held in Porec, within Centre for Peace Studies' Miramida programme.
- Conflicts without Violence - high school students in Pakrac (Slavonia).
- Sex and Gender - 20 participants coming from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina on this three-day- workshop held in Banja Luka. This was the third workshop within the programme Training for Trainers. The participants are going to keep working with young people in their local communities in order to advance relations between sexes.

### 3. Researches

a) Research on Zagreb high school principals' attitudes towards introducing sexual education into schools . We have sent 79 questionnaires to Zagreb high school principals. 36 of them have responded. Out of that number, 35 think that education on sexuality should be introduced into schools. If Ministry of Education would decide on introducing sexual education into schools, most of principals feel that it should be in form of several lectures during class-master's class, seminar in schools, or within biology classes. According to the principals, education on sexuality should be conducted by doctors, psychologists, biologists and experts or expert teams outside the school. 24 principals think that this education should begin in primary school, and 10 principals think it should happen during first year in high school. Most principals think that education on sexuality should not be limited to biologic, reproductive function of sexuality, but it should also include psychological and social dimension (communication problems, peer influence, influence of media, parents...)

#### b) Relations between men and women

CESI is conducting the research "Men, Women and Sexuality", in co-operation with Nordic Institute for Women's Studies and Research of Sex/Gender Issue, Norway . It is based on questionnaire already used within their project "Living for Tomorrow". The final aim of the questionnaire is not only to establish influence of young people's attitudes and opinions on sex and sexuality on risky sexual behaviour, but also to include those results into real process of education of young people on reproductive health. The research is going to last for two years and it is financially supported by World's Health Organisation.

### 3. Publishing

#### a) Handbook

We have published a handbook on identities, sexuality and growing-up "Sex and Gender under the Magnifying Glass", as result of experience gained during the implementation of the project. The handbook is meant for everyone working with young people on topics such as sexuality, growing up, gender equality, stereotypes and prejudices, violence based on gender using inter-active approach. The handbook contains exercises used on our seminars and workshops. We distribute it to schools, associations, and professionals working with young people. Some associations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Yugoslavia as model for this type of training also use it.

#### b) Brochures

We have published and distributed brochures on family planning and sexually transmitted diseases, jointly with the Department for Reproductive Health of Children's Hospital in Kilaiceva, Zagreb.

### 4. Advocacy and Media Campaigns

CESI emphasise the importance of connections among educational system institutions and autonomous educational programmes, conducted by non-governmental organizations, and need for introducing education for equality of sexes and sexual education to schools, because it is the necessity for long-term changes in the society.

These are some of the reasons, which led us to organise, round table under the title "Introducing Education on Equality of Genders and Sexuality into Schools" in co-operation with European House. Round table has been held in European House for experts in field of education and health. Besides introductory speakers, representatives of non-governmental organisations, educational workers (educators, psychologists, teachers, social workers, university professors), students (9th High School and Administrative High School) and university students have participated in the round table.

We have organised panels in Zagreb and Križevci, where we have discussed needs and problems of young people, and especially the importance of education on sexuality and education for gender equality. The project has been promoted in several cities in Croatia. We have spoken about the project for magazine Lady, several school magazines and bulletin of the Norwegian Institute for Women Studies and Gender Research. We co-operate with local media, as well. We have talked on topics such as violence and gender relations on Radio Zagreb, Radio Križevci, Radio Petrinja, Radio Dalmacija, Radio Karlovac and Croatian Television.

In November, we have organised promotion of the handbook on identities, sexuality and process of socialisation, by Amir Hodžić Nataša Bijelić and Sanja Cesar "Sex and Gender under the Magnifying Glass" in the European House.

We have participated in the public discussion on structure of education in the Republic of Croatia, and sent our comments and suggestions to the Ministry of Education and Sports.

### **Project Active Women Students**

CESI in co-operation with the Students' Assembly of the University in Zagreb has implemented the project under the title Active Women Students. The objective and purpose of this project is to increase the interest, motivation and participation of women students in the students' politics and students' organisations and associations. As an example of insufficient participation of women students, we can provide the fact that there were only 8.3% women students in 1998 in assembly of Students' Assembly.

The project has consisted of the campaign and research which has been done based on the survey which purpose was to gather data on amount of information and participation of students (both men and women) in students' politics. The sample included 406 students (men and women) of Zagreb University. Research results showed when it comes to the elections, political and public life, 38% students are strongly interested in these topics, 49 vaguely, and 10% are indifferent. The final project phase included panel called "Women in Society". Invited speakers were women successful and well known in public life.

### **Co-operation with NGO's and institutions**

In realisation of its programmes, CESI co-operates with organisations all over Croatia, and international organisations, such as UNHCR, OESS, CARE, IRC, ICMC, CRS. We include representatives of local management and self-management into our programmes, and our donors are larger pharmaceuticals' companies. We have also established co-operation with institutions such as Department for Reproductive Health in Children's Hospital, Zagreb and governmental institutions – State Bureau for Protection of Family, Motherhood and Youth, Ministry of Education and Sport, Commission of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for Gender Equality, social well-fare centres...

### **International Conferences and Networking**

- Regional Preparation Meeting for 2000 – Revision of Beijing Action Platform, Geneva, January 22 –24, 2000.
- Women in Crisis Management, Van Leer Institute, Israel, March 25 – April 2, 2000.
- Changing Social Dynamics: Gendered Theories of Power, Control and Exclusion, Interuniversity Centre Dubrovnik, May 29 – April 6, 2000
- Consultant for CEE and WA NGOs, Geneva, June 23-25, 2000, organised by The Population Institute, CDPA, IPPF.
- International Conference "Next Step for Social Development", Council of Europe, Geneva, June 26 – 28, 2000.
- Social Structure, Inter-university Centre Dubrovnik, June 5-9, 2000.
- Southeast Europe 2000: Young Minds, New Priorities, Wiena, June 29 – July 2, 2000.
- Peace Village, Athens, KEGME, September 9-15, 2000
- SAD, Connecticut University, NGO Management, October 2000
- Gathering organised by the Commission for Equality of Sexes "Women 2001 – 2005", Zagreb, October 2000
- NGO fair, Zagreb, December 2000

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