



DIVIDED PAST
JOINT FUTURE

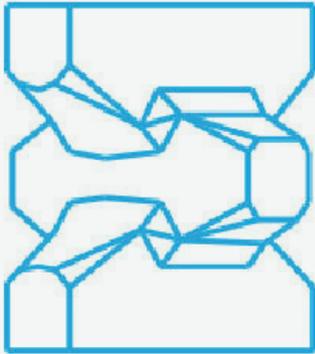
A SUCCESSFUL STORY

Youth Forum Theatre - a tool for the reconciliation process reconstruction is a project implemented by the Youth Cultural Centre and supported through a small grant program under the **Divided Past - Joint Future** project implemented by the YCC Banja Luka, funded by the EU.



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OKC

Omladinski
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Centar

YOUTH CULTURAL CENTRE

PROJECT: YOUTH FORUM THEATRE

- A TOOL FOR THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS RECONSTRUCTION -

Overall objective:

Contribute to a fair, equitable and intercultural local community by raising public awareness and empowering young people.

Specific objectives:

- Improving intercultural dialogue and youth networking through participation in the process of designing and performing forum theatre and promotion on social networks and the youth portal;
- Practicing and disseminating knowledge regarding the innovative method, by expert workshop participants, used to reduce hate speech levels and to ensure multiplication of project results.

Direct participants: at least 40 children and 30 young people (elementary and secondary schools in Herceg Novi) as participants of the forum theatre performances; 19 elementary and secondary school teachers; civil sector representatives and volunteers as participants in forum theatre knowledge-transfer workshops; Youth Officer of the Municipality of Herceg Novi - Representative of the Municipal Secretariat for Education and Culture (project partner); 5 representatives of municipal educational institutions and civil sector.

Indirect participants: 235 children and young people as audience forum theatre performances; parents / guardians, other teachers and youth professionals and the general public who received project information through media and social networks (over 2000 people).

Activities implemented during the project

Meetings with all interested parties: 35 meetings with representatives of the Secretariat for Culture and Education, educational institutions (elementary schools: "Dašo Pavičić", "Milan Vuković", "Ilija Kišić" and "Orjenski bataljon" and the Combined Secondary School "Ivan Goran Kovačić" in Herceg Novi), as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations and persons involved in the creation and implementation of youth work programs and youth policies;

Creating a schedule of project activity dynamics and designing an attractive visual identity for the project;

Preparation of promotional material;

Promotion in the media (10 posts on social networks and 8 media reports);

Recruitment of workshop and forum theatre participants;

Implementation of workshops and forum theatre performances - one two-day and one-day workshops held; 7 short forum theatre plays with younger grades and one with older elementary school classes were prepared, as well as three forum theatre plays in high school during the Student Parliament;

Preparation and editing of the publication (publication designed and published);

Multiplication of project results; distribution of the publication (76 copies distributed).

Significance and contribution of the project

Reconciliation processes, as the project progressed, were understood differently. Working with teachers, there has been a need for new approaches, support and inspiration in their daily "reconciliation" of the quarrelsome and / or dissatisfied parties encountered in their classes.

By putting forum theatres on the stage, reconciliation processes gain the focus of embracing diversity, and so we are already there approaching our original vision. In a protected environment, we went through the scenes of snitching, mocking, gossiping, lying, excommunicating and discriminating, expressing variety of prejudices towards anything different, and all the way to scenes of physical violence. By depicting scenes like these, forum theatre participants seemed to be getting rid of their ballast. They were free to express their fears, injustices, even traumas, which had happened to them or their loved ones, only this time, they had the opportunity to react as they may not have wanted, did not know or were not allowed to before.

„This time I will be different!“ is the statement of a boy who has wished to change his behaviour and this time be better towards others, and also towards himself.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the project is the opportunity given to each participant to look at his/hers own actions, reflect on them, and finally realize that they have a chance to act differently - non-violently. The pleasure of watching these "a-ha" effects was really great, whether for us who coordinated the project in different roles, the teachers who prepared the forum theatre in their classes, or the ones for whom this project was primarily envisioned - children and young people.

Comments of the participants of the workshop "Forum-Theatre Method - Using Drama in Education":

"Everything was practical and usable in actual life situations";

"The most useful thing was that everything presented was very practical and applicable";

"What I liked the most is the practical performance of the forum theatre";

"The most useful thing was sharing my colleagues' experience."

Comments of the Participants of the Combined Secondary School "Ivan Goran Kovačić" Student Parliament:

"What I liked most was the problem solving, as well as the portraying of those problems, and also that we were involved in acting";

"The most useful thing was that we learned to solve problems in a different way";

"Most of all, I liked the mature thinking of students about problems";

"Most helpful was problem-solving, as most of us have similar problems."