

CENTAR ZA NENASILNU AKCIJU
CENTRE FOR NONVIOLENT ACTION



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Centar za nenasilnu akciju (Centre for Nonviolent Action) is a non-governmental and non-profit organisation whose basic goals are peace building, development of civil society, cross-border cooperation and promotion of nonviolence.

Our main activity is to organise and implement trainings (seminars) in nonviolent conflict transformation and to support groups and individuals who wish to do this kind of work. Through training in nonviolent conflict transformation we are aiming to develop political awareness of the training participants, and to pass on skills in nonviolent dealing with conflict. At our trainings CNA gathers people from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Yugoslavia and Macedonia, hence giving special focus on networking, and communication between people from different areas, and supporting the process of prejudice reduction and trust building.

CNA started to work in 1997 with an office in Sarajevo. Office in Belgrade started in 2001. CNA is an external branch of KURVE Wustrow.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Dear friends,

CNA's Belgrade office began this trimester by taking a vacation which we planned-ahead and needed very much. It started right after the end of the third phase of Training for Trainers Program (TfT), which took place in Kolašin (Montenegro).

After almost fourteen years spent abroad, one of CNA's members came from Sarajevo to Belgrade, to the city where he had grown up and which he had had to flee because of his conscientious objection to army service. We were very glad that he didn't have any problems entering the country and therefore there was no need for us to act (with a media campaign and civil pressure) for which we were prepared.

Another distinction of this period is the first regional training held in Serbia and organized by CNA. It's the fourth phase of the Training for Trainers Program which was held in Bečej, Vojvodina. We are satisfied with the organization of this event which empowered us to look for possibilities for further work in Serbia (including Vojvodina). There are several follow-up meetings with participants, currently taking place in both Sarajevo and Belgrade, often simultaneously.

Our manual «Nenasilje» («Nonviolence») was translated into Albanian and printed. We are very happy about this as it makes our work on the multiplication of knowledge and skills amongst Albanian-speaking population much easier.

One of our members took part at the Forum «Youth and the Culture of Peace» that was held in Marseille, France, while the other team-member participated at the conference dealing with the issues of «Truth and Reconciliation in the Region of Former Yugoslavia». One member of CNA was invited to a two-day international peace conference "Reflecting on Peace Practice" in Boston, USA, but didn't manage to get there due to a bad weather.

The whole team gathered at a meeting in Sarajevo to discuss the «Networking meeting» which was going to take place in the beginning of next year. It will cover the issue of «Dealing with the Past». This way, we want to start the process of the regional networking of people who are dealing with this subject or want to deal with it, aiming to establish a solid system of exchange and information flow and analysis of different approaches.

The current political situation and the results of the elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia are not very encouraging (nationalistic voices are still quite loud) which tells us there is a need for more people who support values like sustainable peace, nonviolence and regional approach to become socially engaged. It brings us back to the great need for multiplication and networking that we're working on.

The warmest November we've had suites us just fine. ☺

2. MAIN ACTIVITIES

2.1. Training for Trainers Program, phase III *Kolašin, Montenegro, August 23 - September 2, 2002*

The third phase of this year's Training for Trainers was held in «Bjelasica» hotel in Kolašin, Montenegro. Unlike the first training of this series, only 16 people took part because several of them were, for different reasons, unable to attend. Teams of participants were formed in advance, therefore some participants found themselves in a difficult position, because they had to conduct workshops with incomplete teams. However, they managed to overcome this difficulty quite well.

A ten-day training gave participants a chance to conduct workshops they had prepared during follow-up meetings, as well as to receive feedback about their work, from both the group and the members of the training team. In the first part of the training, participants conducted their own workshops, while the second part opened up room for discussions on the trainer's work, the role of the trainer, the motivation for this type of work and so on.

Teams of participants, formed in the first phase of the program (on the training in Jahorina) prepared and implemented workshops on the following themes: identity, prejudices, gender roles in the society, ethnic prejudices, peacebuilding and power. Their choice of themes has proved their courage and readiness to tackle all the issues and problems that turn out to be the most crucial in our societies, problems that need to be worked on the most in order to change well-established, widely accepted patterns of opinion and behavior. Most workshops were prepared very carefully and attentively. The training team got the impression that a lot of effort and creativity was invested in every workshop in order to fulfill its goals. Certain mistakes which were noticed and commented upon, happened mostly because some teams weren't totally coordinated and prepared, due to some slip-ups during preparations. The lack of training experience of the participants, and the fact that they had not been involved in conducting a workshop before were also connected with this. The contents of most workshops showed quite an advance, in comparison to the previous training events. The group was well developed, which enabled people to express their non-censored opinions on many delicate issues (such as ethnic prejudice or the role of KFOR or NGOs in peace building) in a transparent manner. Those were exactly the issues where the presence of some people who had taken part in the first two phases of the program, was needed the most.

The second part of the training focused on the following themes: difficulties in work, the role of the trainer, peace building, motivation, and the evaluation of training. Rather unexpectedly there was quite enough energy and good mood for work, and therefore plenty of questions concerning the work of the trainer, and work on peace building in general, was asked. It was obvious that the group needed very much to get answers to some of their questions, as well as to get support in resolving some

personal dilemmas in relation to possible difficulties and approaches to work. This time it didn't seem to look like a quest for ready-made and universally acceptable recipes, but like a good chance to share our experiences and views with the group. We were sure those answers would most certainly be critically revised by most of the participants.

The problem that was noticeable in this phase of the training came from the lack of communication within teams, therefore their internal evaluations were generally missing. That is the reason why we needed to work on it in the second part of the training. The training team decided to introduce a round of feedback amongst participants to cover themes such as the approach to conducting a workshop and team work.

Along with quite a thorough debate about workshops and mutual feedback, a space was opened up for discussion about the next phases of Training for Trainers, which we included in the program for the first time this year. This was included as a direct response to participant feedback, telling of their need for stronger support in the process of creating and conducting their first independent activities. The training team has started a discussion about the following phases of the program in order for everyone to get to know the expectations, needs and capacities we all have while entering this new area. The impression remained with the training team that it takes more work and reflection on a strategic approach, as well as more self-reflection on one's own capability and motivation for work on concrete problems that exist in our societies. What we've certainly recognized is a strong desire and interest to act, but often without a clear picture about the ways to approach problems and how to accomplish changes that are desired. Due to the fact that participants needed more time and room for reflection on possible ways of action, the issues of peace building and degrading of peace were not covered as thoroughly as expected. The training team had the idea to start a discussion on the question «Do I contribute, deliberately or not, through some aspects of my work to the *degrading of peace*?». However the issue remained untreated. One of the main goals of the whole Training for Trainers program is to give encouragement and stimulation to find constructive and satisfying ways of activism. We find this to be a solid base for re-examination of ourselves and the communities we live in, thus discovering some personal answers to the well-known question: How can I really be active and change the society I live in?

It was agreed to exchange ideas about possible activities through a common mailing list in the meantime, to facilitate criticism, comment, and to expand these ideas as well as form teams based on them. Participants took responsibility for opening up and moderating the mailing list.

During the evaluation most participants put an emphasis on the importance of their experience in conducting their first workshop, as well as the feelings of encouragement and empowerment they received for further work. Financial support for this and six other phases of the program was provided by German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. More information on this training is available from the documentation entitled «I was painting the fence - 4. Program Training for Trainers in Nonviolent Conflict Transformation, phase III». Documentation in Bosniak / Croatian / Serbian language contains 74 pages.

2.2. The Training for Trainers Program, Phase IV

Bečej, Vojvodina, October 18 - 23, 2002

The fourth phase of this year's Training for Trainers Program was held in Bečej, Vojvodina, from October 18 to 23. According to a new expanded concept, this program now lasts for a year. This fourth phase represents an innovation of the program, and its main goal is completion of the participant's ideas for activities in the area of peace building as well as forming teams of participants that are going to prepare and implement their own ideas, with the support of CNA team.

At this point of the program we were intending to present some basic skills on writing project proposals and drawing up a budget for the activities planned.

All of this was new for most of us, as this theme was new part of the training concept and also unknown to most of the trainees. This is introducing a strategic approach to making project proposals, getting in touch with potential founders and all the other jobs that precede and follow the actual workshops and training events.

Besides the CNA training team, our colleague from the Center for Peace studies in Zagreb, Croatia, Gordan Bodog joined the team. He conducted the workshops on Writing Project Proposals and Making the Budget. By inviting colleagues from other peace organisations our participants get to know different approaches to trainer's work, to feel different dynamics and get to know new insight into different aspects of activism.

The training took four days, during which we were working very intensively, with all the workshops taking longer than planned and with work during breaks. As a result of all this, in spite of our fears and worries, teams were formed based on the criteria agreed on in the previous training which had taken place in Kolašin, Montenegro.

Teams were made with respect to the ideas for activities gathered through the mailing list and presented on the training. We agreed to start searching for funds for the implementation of six ideas:

- Training for teachers from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Vojvodina
- Training for activists from different parts of Macedonia
- Training for journalists from FRY
- Training in nonviolent conflict transformation for people from the region of former SFRY
- Training for youth in Kosovo
- Training for youth in Montenegro
-

It is of special value to the programme that some people who went through the Training for Trainers over the past number years will be joining some of these teams in preparation and implementation of their own training. We are thus one step closer to the bonding of trainers from the region and strengthening the informal trainers' network. We believe this will certainly contribute to the quality and quantity of peace work in different parts of former Yugoslavia.

Another big benefit of this training comes from a much wider space for discussion on a strategic approach in the context of peacebuilding. The group was highly motivated to work and a noticeable advance was made in dealing with these issues in comparison to the previous training in Kolašin.

Another innovation in this year's Training for Trainers program is work on writing project proposals and making a budget, which is intimidating for many people and needlessly mystifying. Having in mind that these skills are essential for conducting activities independently, an idea was developed to enable participants to go through the whole process of organization, implementation and evaluation of the activities through different phases of the training, in which writing the project proposal is one of the basic steps.

It reached a stage during the training that there was time pressure (only two blocks were left for work on this very wide area) and a sudden change of rhythm and dynamics in the work. The change in dynamic was due to the participation of our guest-trainer whose work method was different from that of CNA. However the group agreed to work on these issues very enthusiastically, giving the impression that the fear of dealing with these kind of jobs has been pretty much overcome.

By the end of the training we were very tired but had far fewer worries concerning further phases of the program. We hope to be able to provide financial support for participants' activities because we believe it means a lot to all our societies that are burdened with problems that need to be worked on. It was very satisfying to see and sense the level of responsibility participants took over during the work process. It was also noticeable how open and transparent participants' mutual communication was, as well as readiness to offer each other not just support and cooperation but constructive and clear criticism that opened a path towards changes and contributed to the quality of joint effort.

2.2. The Manual for Trainings "NENASILJE?" ("NONVIOLENCE?") Translated into Albanian



The Manual for Training in Nonviolent Conflict Transformation for Work with Adults "NENASILJE?" »NONVIOLENCE? by Nenad Vukosavljević, which was published in 2000, has been translated into Albanian language (»PADHUNSHMËRIA? Doracak për trajnim në temën përpunimi i padhunshëm i konflikteve për punë me të rritur«). It was done by our friend and colleague Memet Memeti from Tetovo, Macedonia and edited by Prof Hamit Xhaferi, Ph.D.

500 copies of the Manual in Albanian have been printed. It can be obtained from CNA Belgrade and Sarajevo offices and it will soon be available on our web page: www.nenasilje.org.

We use this opportunity to thank once again all those who have supported us while we were working on the translation of this manual with special thanks to the Berghof Stiftung Foundation which provided financial support; Berghof Research Center for Creative Dealing with Conflict (Berghof Forschungszentrum für konstruktive Konfliktbearbeitung) for their advice and support and Memet Memeti for great and dedicated work on translation of the Manual.

3. OTHER ACTIVITIES

3.1. The Conference «Which Model of Truth and Reconciliation is Suitable for Former Yugoslavia»

A two-day conference on the theme: «Which Model of Truth and Reconciliation is Suitable for Former Yugoslavia» was held in the Jugoslavija Hotel, in Belgrade on October 11th and 12th. It was organized by the Victimology Society of Serbia in cooperation with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. One member of the CNA team attended the conference.

The conference covered the following issues: Experiences of war victimization - truth, denial, reconciliation; How did we survive the war in former Yugoslavia - activists' personal experiences; Truth and reconciliation - Experiences of former Yugoslav republics; Telling the story in a different way - experiences from the world. Participants of the conference were mostly people who are in some way engaged in the process of dealing with the past, coming from: Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Yugoslavia. Many guests came from countries outside the region of former Yugoslavia (mostly from Germany, Belgium, Northern Ireland and USA). Ambassadors of Bosnia and Herzegovina to FRY, as well as several representatives of the Serbian Government took part in a several discussions at the beginning of the conference.

Discussions at the conference focused on psychological and sociological aspects of reconciliation and the search for truth, experiences of the countries in which these matters are being processed or already have been in the past, and possibilities to act through the legal justice system and state institutions in order to establish prerequisites for active work on the reconciliation process.

CNA plans to organise a networking meeting of people who are working on the issue of dealing with the past, and therefore it was important to us to attend this conference. We are convinced of the importance of working in this area, as soon as possible and on as many different levels as possible. This means that we generally support activities aiming to address this issue (to the extent in which they are not opposed to the values we promote) and this is why we wish to look back at some of the difficulties concerning this conference. We see a special emphasis on the importance of these impressions with respect to the meeting we're preparing and the learning points we want to draw out of it.

Here are some of the most important impressions CNA team member's got from the conference:

- unclear goals of the conference - as they were not set according to perceived needs of participants from their work. Most part of the conference had guidelines without defining concrete reasons for discussions on these topics.
- An attempt to create too universal recommendations was made (what should be done in order to open up reconciliation processes in the region of former Yugoslavia) which were created without clear explanation for whom they are intended and seemed not to have been based on real experience from work on the issue. A good deal of those recommendations were intended for some state institutions (Governments, Foreign Offices and Courts) or for the Commission for truth and reconciliation, although almost none of those institutions' representatives took part at the conference. One may ask for whom those recommendations were for, if these institutions (individuals, organizations) will hear them and if they want to hear them in case we offer it to them. Recommendations were done last day of the conference by the participants, who gave their suggestions to organisers.
- lack of discussion on the level of "achievable by us/our organisations" and also not enough exchange of experiences from work up to date and the analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the approach we use.
- not enough space for interaction between participants because too many were present, which reduced the chances of exchange and constructive criticism. Focus was mostly on achieving results (as defining goals of reconciliation process and ways of searching for truth), and not enough was aimed at the process of making decisions and resolutions.

Regardless of the difficulties stated above, a lot of useful information was presented at the conference which was relevant to people who work on building sustainable peace in the region. This information came from experts in certain fields (psychology, sociology, law etc) and activists talking about their projects and the activities they work on. One of the most useful lectures was presented by a victimologist from Germany, Dr Gerd F. Kirchhof who looked back to the way the people of Germany have dealt with the past since the war. The impression remains after this lecture that perhaps it would be a good idea to make a parallel between the attitude of the public here and in Germany. Looking at dealing with past events and factors that contribute to, or interfere with, this process.

More information about this conference is available from The Victimology Society of Serbia, Tel: +381 11 3282294.

3.2. Opening of the »Trauma Center« in Novi Sad Novi Sad, Vojvodina, October 25, 2002

Our friend Ursula Renner and the organization called »Ohne Ruestung Leben« (»Living Without Weapons«) invited us to attend the opening of the »Trauma Center« in Novi Sad, Vojvodina. The center is aimed for people who went through war experiences, for their family members, as well as for all others with traumas caused by the wars in the region of former Yugoslavia. The goal of the center is to offer help to these people to maintain and improve their mental health, to go through re-socialization process, etc.

It took a lot of effort and time for such an idea to come true. It goes back all the way to 1998. We are glad that The Center gathers people who really believe in the things they do and who care about processing issues like war, veterans, victims of war.

3.3. The International Forum „ Youth and the Culture of Peace ” *Marseille, France, November 7-11, 2002*

CNA member Helena Rill took part in the international forum which was organized by the French Peace Movement (Mouvement de la Paix). The aim of the forum was to promote cooperation between different European and Mediterranean regions, and to open up some space for dialogue about important issues concerning peace and nonviolence.

The organizers wanted to cover several issues including what peace and the culture of peace represents, the participation of youth (in the peace movement) in Europe and the Mediterranean, how to educate people in nonviolence, how to deal with the ongoing conflicts in these regions, and what possible projects in this area can be implemented. The CNA member however got the impression that the forum focused too much the result (projects), and not enough on the essence and the process itself, which is what are the reasons for implementing projects in the first place (where do we see the problem), what the possible target groups are, how to implement projects etc. The CNA team member expressed her opinion about these matters at the forum. The impression remains that there wasn't enough time left to talk about these different approaches to work on peace building.

The CNA member however thinks that the meeting was very useful concerning the exchange of experiences between people who have similar experiences from work on conflicts (Cyprus, Israel). Mutual empowerment was felt as a result of this exchange, which is important for keeping up the peace building efforts. It was also said that nonviolence and injustice hurt just the same no matter where they happen. On the other hand, the attitude towards peace building was worrying: it started with focusing exclusively on results (without needs assessment and deeper thought on possible impacts) and continued to perceiving education in nonviolence solely as studying human rights and mediation. Such view appears limited, leaving out of the perspective, the issues of sensibilisation to violence (social injustice) and nonviolent conflict transformation.

The CNA member believes that it will take much more discussion on different approaches to peace building and sensitization for violence in order to find common ground for work in peace building. It is also necessary that local people take more responsibility and become more active in peace building with respect to their own specific needs and views.

4. APPENDIX

4.1. In Belgrade, Again (*Nenad Vukosavljević*)

After 13 years, 9 months and 27 days, on October 7th, I flew in from Banja Luka and found myself in Belgrade, again.

Leaving Sarajevo was quite difficult, because after having spent five important years of my life there, I've grown to love that town and the people around me.

I spent those first days in Belgrade somewhere between dream and reality, comparing the old images of the city with actuality. The days passed in strange meetings with people I loved, some of which I never saw for all this time. We've all grown older, our lives have changed.

Unlike for hundreds of thousands of people who still cannot go back to their homes, many of which live in my town today, for me the end has come to the time of forbidden places and forced absence from home.

I still don't know if I may consider myself lucky or damned for having spent the past 13 years away from home, outside of Belgrade. But, I certainly am happy that I'm able to be in my town, today.

CNA will very much welcome feedback, suggestions,
questions and criticism concerning this report and our general work.
Your thinking along helps us.
Thank you.

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