

Centar za nenasilnu akciju

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CENTRE FOR NONVIOLENT ACTION, SARAJEVO

# 3-Month Report

September – November 2001

*Centar za nenasilnu akciju (Centre for Nonviolent Action) is a non-governmental and non-profit organisation whose basic goals are peace building, the 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, whose communication has been interrupted through war and supporting the process of prejudice reduction and trust building.*

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

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## Introduction

In this trimester, the third Training for Trainers Programme was completed. That was the main activity of CNA office from Sarajevo, in this period. Tamara Šmidling from Belgrade, participant of this year's Training for Trainers, became our new member and joined the team at the end of November.

In this period, we've finished an external strategy evaluation of our partner organisation «Abraham» from Sarajevo. CNA has started to work on it in June. We are especially satisfied with it, not only because it's a concrete support to «Abraham», but also because it was a chance to commit to supporting development of local organisations.

Along with our basic activities, we've done a short training for highschool students in Sarajevo, a workshop in Zavidovići, few seminars and regional consultation in Osijek on the work of QPSW (Quaker Peace and Social Witness).

For the last few months, we've devoted ourselves to looking for funding and trying to find new foundations for potential future partnership.

It is, however important to remind ourselves to the 11<sup>th</sup> of September, the day of terrorist attacks in USA. Another war with new explosion of violence has started, opening another round of bombing and terror in the world and causing people to turn even more to resolving conflicts with violence. It's unbelievable how easy it happens, and it seems its going to happen without any big opposition in most of Europe and North America. Bosnia and Hercegovina found itself in this global anti-terrorist coalition, without much reflection and discussion, while at the time government didn't allow anti-war rallies organised by Islamic Community of BiH.

Anyway, the snow came along with the winter, somehow suddenly to misty Sarajevo, this year skipping the Autumn.

## Activities

### Training for Trainers III

After the first phase of the Training for Trainers Programme – ten-day training in Jahorina (more details about it is available in our previous report), during the past three months remaining four phases of The Programme were held:

- II phase: Follow-up meetings (in August/September 2001)
- III phase: Ten-day training (Rama-Šćit, September 14 to 24, 2001)
- IV phase: Follow-up meetings (in October/December 2001)
- V phase: Three-day training (Faletići, Sarajevo, October 26 to 29, 2001)

#### *II phase: Follow-up meetings*

In this phase, participants were preparing their own workshops, on different themes of their own interest and within teams formed on the training in Jahorina. Meetings offered a chance for every team to get feedback and advice from members of the training team of their own choice. Two or three-day meetings took place in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zagreb, Croatia and Budva, Montenegro. During these meetings, teams were working intensively and with great dedication, and since they needed to keep in touch and communicate with each other, some of them needed more time than previously planned.

### *III phase: Ten-day training (Rama-Šćit, September 14 –24, 2001)*

The second ten-day training from Training For Trainers Programme took place in the Peace House within the Franciscan Monastery in Rama-Šćit from 14<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2001. One participant unfortunately had to cancel, due to some other commitments.

In the first part of the training, there were workshops prepared and conducted by participants. The following themes were covered in these workshops:

- perception/understanding of conflicts
- team work
- leadership
- violence/nonviolence
- power
- identity/prejudice
- gender issues

The second part of the training included workshops prepared and done by the training team on the following issues:

- preparation of workshop/training
- difficulties in work
- role of the trainer
- motivation

In the first part of the training, it was planned for participants to prepare and conduct workshops. Most of those workshops were thoroughly prepared and seriously facilitated with high motivation of participants. For most of them it was the first experience in conducting a workshop. Also, there was mutual support amongst the group - participants were actively involved in exercises and evaluation. It resulted in very inclusive and motivating discussions.

After every workshop, a separate evening evaluation was done by both training team members and participants who had conducted the workshop. During these workshops, a high level of self-criticism and auto-reflection was expressed. Participants were also willing to except criticism and suggestion coming from the training team.

Major difficulties during the workshops were those related to teamwork, keeping up with the timetable, insecurity and absence of flexibility in unexpected situations.

Since most of the workshops took much longer time than planned, in the second part of the training, participants were very tired and worn out. That was the reason why workshops were, regarding both their contents and dynamics, on a »lower« level than expected.

There was a need, however, to define more clearly the role of the guest trainers in the training team.

On the last night of our stay at the »Peace house « two of our cars were stolen. One car belongs to CNA, and the other one belongs to CNA member Adnan Hasanbegović. Both cars were quite old and they were parked next to the car with Croatian license plates, belonging to Goran Božičević, our guest trainer. Therefore, we presume that it wasn't just theft behind all this but a clear message addressed to the »Peace house« and the mixed groups of people who come to our training events, sent from extreme nationalist groups from this region with the Croat majority. The damaged cars were found the very same day, but this whole event left a special mark and additional burden on the training. Anyway, this won't make us give up the intention to

organise another training in the »Peace house«, because it's an idea we want to support in this way.

Evaluation of the training contained following questions:

*How do I see my work, work of the group and the training team?*

*What have I gained through this training?*

*What is changed with me?*

Some of participants' statements:

- *I always think I can do better. I'm satisfied with my own work, although mistakes were made while conducting the workshop. I've seen different approaches, negative and positive sides. I've felt other people's solidarity to take part and help in our workshops. We were wild in Jahorina, everyone's much calmer here, and we look at things in a more constructive way. I'm satisfied with CNA training team, although after the first part, the worst was over. Some of the workshops weren't organised in the best possible way. I was under the impression it was difficult to facilitate them because the dynamics of the group dropped. G. brought some new energy.*
- *I felt I was part of the group. I'm thinking about applying to Training for Trainers again, under some false name.*
- *In the beginning it was quite all right, but then our workshop came, I wasn't satisfied, so I welcomed feedback. At the end, when I reckon everything, I'm pleased. I missed a day off. I missed spending time together in spare time. About the group – it was my pleasure to see the same faces, I'm not so sorry we're leaving, everything's superb, I feel fine. About the CNA team – I see them as successful.*
- *I would probably answer all these questions better tomorrow or the day after. I'm satisfied with everything about the workshops, and with all of the participants' workshops. I'm not satisfied with my own involvement in the second part. There were many things happening inside of me. I'm glad to see the potential in the group. I'm satisfied with the training team. I'm still examining how much is the team responsible for the energy dropping down. I didn't like the second part of the training.*
- *New experience, work in the team for the first time, lot of support and empowering from both CNA team and some people from the group, answers to some questions important for this job. I'm more motivated. The way I see the meaning of this work is changed, the idea of my power, I am much stronger and ready.*
- *It will be clearer when the impressions are settled. I have noticed I'm much more sensitive to some questions. The ground under my feet has changed, in a positive sense.*
- *I've got self-esteem, people, place where I can tell some things. I've gained motivation and potential colleagues. I've become more sensitised for violence and that is not a final change. At the moment, I'm motivated to do something, but I don't know how much it will last. That's why I have to do something as soon as possible.*
- *I think I've gained many things which will interact in my life. I've gained a lot of confidence in nonviolent communication and in life too, and I somehow feel smart. I've gained experience of conducting a workshop. My attitudes towards some people and some opinions were changed. My criteria in regards to trainers have changed. Trainers seemed to look perfect to me, now I see some mistakes. I'm surprised with my own confidence.*

#### *IV phase: Follow-up meetings*

These meetings are supposed to offer a chance to all the participants individually or within small groups to get feedback, advice, support from the training team according to CNA's capacities, concerning the work they were doing or intend to do in their own communities. Although they were planned to take place before the last phase of Training for Trainer Programme, since there wasn't enough time, some meetings were held after the end of The Programme.

Several ideas were discussed. One of them was to organise a series of short training events in nonviolent conflict transformation for NGO activists from neighbouring towns in BiH on

opposite sides of entity border. The other idea was to organise workshops for highschool students from north of Montenegro.

We deeply believe and hope that those and other ideas will be excepted and realised.

*V phase: Three-day training (Faletići, Sarajevo, October 26-29, 2001)*

The final meeting was at the same time fifth and the last phase of Training for Trainers Programme. It was held from 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> November 2001, in a lovely surroundings of »Faletići« boarding house, near Sarajevo. Some of the participants were absent due to other engagements and therefore 15 of them attended the training.

The training was primarily a chance for »a look back« at the whole Training for Trainers Programme, and elaboration of joint ideas and plans.

Needs assessment for each region was done at one of the workshops.

Participants gave their comments and impression with respect to the new concept of Training for Trainers Programme.

At the end of this programme, we may say the network with a potential for joint cooperation is created. Concerning that, participants expect support for their work from CNA, especially those individuals who can not rely on support of their environment.

Many of those who went through the training made a great step ahead towards creating and conducting workshops and training events all by themselves. CNA recognises them as future partners in its activities.

One of the participants, Tamara Šmidling from Belgrade was invited to join CNA team as a volunteer in Sarajevo office. We're glad she accepted the invitation.

More information in detail, about the whole Training for Trainers Programme is available in documentation of the training in CNA offices, and soon on our web page.

At the end, we need to emphasis that financial support came from Auswärtiges Amt and Südost Europa Kultur e.V. Berlin. We use this chance to thank them.

## **Letter of the Participant of Training for Trainers**

What did The Training mean to me?

*I went to the basic training, attracted by the themes, but without any grand expectations. All of my previous experiences from different NGO seminars came down to listening some lectures, my passivity and the impression that it wasn't the right way to cover such issues. From the very first day of the training in Žabljak, I've realised this was something completely different and I couldn't be indifferent towards it. First of all, it was my first encounter with people from ex-Yugoslavia, and already I've »faced myself« in a very painful way. I don't remember I ever felt the need to re-examine myself, to talk, to listen ...before that time. I never needed more support, and I don't think I ever got more safe space to be myself.*

*I've been so disappointed with myself so many times during different exercises, but regardless of that (dis)satisfaction with my own contribution, I also felt the power to continue and satisfaction with this process inside of me.*

*I knew that return to my hometown of Kolašin was not going to be easy, but despite of that, I'd been looking forward to it in some way. I just couldn't wait to confront myself in a social*

*context, I spent my whole life in. And really, the first few days were hell. It seemed to me I didn't speak the same language like people around me. No one could figure out why I was »somehow different«. Still, few people managed to understand what I was talking about, and they were listening to me talking about my experiences for hours. I was glad to hear a friend of mine saying that for the first time I was actually listening to her. I kept re-examining my behaviour to my acquaintances, tried to re-establish some relationships and for the first time to resolve conflict, without verbal violence. I got results, and every »step ahead« was empowering.*

*I was thrilled when I got the invitation for Training for Trainers, and I couldn't wait to find myself »in the circle« again. I wasn't quite convinced I could be a trainer, it was more a chance to continue working on myself. I've got more than I expected from this programme. For the first time, while we were preparing and conducting the workshop, I felt like a part of the team. I've learned to accept my own responsibility, to clearly define and articulate my needs, to respect the needs of others ... I've learned all sorts of things. Also, I've managed to realise difficulties and advantages of the work.*

*After all, without a bit of exaggeration, I can say that the experience from these training events is one of the most preciouses in my life. Really, I'm not the same person, I communicate more easily with other people, it's simple ... Besides, in a month I'll get a chance to find myself in the role of a trainer, to work with young people, and I think in a few years, in my hometown, there will be hundreds of people who cherish the values of NONVIOLENCE!*

*Dragana Šćepanović, Kolašin, Montenegro*

## **Seminar-Workshop on De-traumatization**

From the 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> October, a three-day seminar-workshop was organised by GTZ (Gesellschaft fuer technische Zusammenarbeit) Sarajevo in »Terme« hotel in Ilidža, BiH. Nedžad Horozović, member of CNA team took part in it. Workshop was created and conducted by a psychologist from USA, Yeal Daniely, PhD. Participants were mostly psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, students and NGO activists from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During the workshop, while working on their own traumatic experiences, participants had the chance to realise some of the basic elements of work with traumatised persons. Since most of the participants pointed out traumas experienced during war and destruction, dealing with those memories was very painful for some of them. This often made work difficult. Regarding that, it's disputable whether this type of work is appropriate in this region or not.

The discussions weren't clearly and thoroughly structured by the facilitator, which caused difficulties in following them. The issues were wide and sometimes not closely connected to elements of detraumatization, but those discussions were certainly was very useful.

## Meeting in Osijek

### Regional Consultation With QPSW

Two members of CNA accepted an invitation of QPSW, and took part in two-day meeting in Osijek, Croatia, on October 7 to 9, 2001. QPSW team wanted to consult other partner organisations and individuals from the region, about future strategy and action and to look back at their past activities.

Discussions were focused on exchange of experience of participants and their organisations with respect to the situation in the region and perception of difficulties and obstacles in their work. Discussions were also held on work in the past and present period, actual plans and visions of future and possible strategies, and the role of international organisations in peace building and civil society building, with a special review on QPSW and ways they can support local initiatives, which is one of their basic goals.

Report on this meeting is available from QPSW office in Sarajevo. E-mail: [qpsw@bih.net.ba](mailto:qpsw@bih.net.ba)

### Evaluation of “Abraham”

June – October

Between June and October 2001, a member of CNA has done an external evaluation of the work of “Abraham”.

The goals of the external evaluation were:

- Detecting key issues concerning further work strategy, and pointing out to the possible consequences of different choices of development.
- Indicating strong and weak points of organisational structure, and initiating a change towards more successful balance of different interests and capacities.

Process of evaluation has started with interviews with two employees of Abraham, about the possible goals of evaluation. They prepared *Report for Evaluation – ABRAHAM*, with the short overview of mission, goals, structure of the organisation, target groups, previous activities and perception of their successfulness, phases of development, future strategy proposal and proposal for evaluation questions. This document helped evaluator to prepare questions for evaluation. It was used as a reference for comparison with views of other members of “Abraham”.

Fifteen interviews were done with people gathered in and around “Abraham”. Based on these interviews, the whole set of recommendations was given regarding organisational structure and strategic guidelines for future. Complete report is available from “Abraham”, on request. Email: [ibrahime@bih.net.ba](mailto:ibrahime@bih.net.ba)



## **Debate – The Role of Young People in Local Environment**

On November 11, 2001, public debate on the theme: »The Role of Young People in Local Environment« took place in Zavidovići, in »The Youth Center« premises, at the same time with public presentation of the training »Peace is Young« (held in August, in Banovići, Bosnia and Herzegovina). It was organised by Agency of Local Democracy from Zavidovići and facilitated by CNA member Nedžad Horozović. Besides a big number of highschool students from Zavidovići and members of »The Youth Center« who attended the debate, there were also representatives of youth centres from Žepče (»Putokazi«) and Prijedor (»Omladinski centar«), the youngest councilman of The Council of Zavidovići and assistant chief for social work of The Council of Zavidovići present.

Discussion was about the problems of young people from Zavidovići, and chances for cooperation between youth representatives and local authorities. At the end of the discussion, Council representatives expressed their willingness to support well organised and clearly articulated initiatives coming from young people, aiming to give solution to the current problems of youth.

## **Training in Peace Building for Youth of Zavidovići and Žepče**

From November 23 to 27, 5-day training for youth from The Youth Centre Zavidovići and The Youth Centre Žepče was held in SHL house in Sarajevo. The idea to repeat the training in peace building within community, and to introduce young people from two ethnic communities (one town with the Bosniak majority and the other one with Croat majority) came after the successful summer training in Banovići with the same goals (for more information in detail, look for our Annual report 2000-2001)

This time, group was made out of younger and less experienced volunteers from both Centres. Training programme included themes relevant for introducing individuals from different groups, introducing them to problems in their communities, offering skills to deal with conflicts and empowering individuals. Nonviolent communication skills, sensitising for violence in society, disintegration of prejudice and working to understand one's own identity were used as an introduction to discussion on problems of young people in their communities and power of individual to do something to solve them either through youth centres or with some other kind of support.

The group was much younger than expected (15-20 years of age). This resulted in changing dynamics of the group: from highly motivated and interested to not paying attention. The reason for that partly lies in the fact that the group hang out together in their spare time and during the night. The important goal of the training was, however, getting to know each other and trust building. It was achieved through workshops, but also through spending free time together.

One week after the training, participants visit each other, go out together and prepare a joint project, which proves that time spent together while working and having fun gives expected results.

We know from our own experience that working with young people from communities still affected with aftermath of conflict and violence require long-term empowerment, because they themselves are often unable to make changes they want in an environment that is closed.

However, in this case they have the support from their youth centres, which is in favour of empowering process.

From CNA's perspective, this training was important not only because the support to the youth centres and young people of Zavidovići and Žepča continues, but also because of the team made of CNA members and Sanjin Omeragić, as a guest trainer, participant of this year's Training for Trainers Programme. I think that giving a chance to a young person from Bosnia and Herzegovina, to conduct a training with young people, we made a step toward strengthening local capacities for work on nonviolence and peace building in BiH.

Words of Sanjin Omeragić, member of the training team:

*»... in my opinion, the training was successful, because young people left empowered to change something in their own environment. I think that many of them realised, they have the power to change something. I also think some participants re-examined their attitudes and actions, which is a great success. The third thing, which is also a great success, is spending time together. Participants got to know each other without any nationalistic problems. When they meet, they'll be able to say hello and talk to each other.*

*All of this means a further step towards peace building was made, between these two towns and in Bosnia and Herzegovina in general.»*

## **Providing Financial Support for the Work of CNA**

Over the past several weeks, both of CNA offices have prepared financial plan for the next year which includes list of organisations and institutions from which we expect this kind of support. Unless there won't be major unpleasant surprises, it seems realistic to secure required funds, firstly because we count on donors who supported us until now, and to a less extent it includes institutions who sent signals they were ready to seriously consider our requests.

In the next year, we're certainly going to publish The Manual for Training in Nonviolent Conflict Transformation in Albanian language. This was supported financially by Berghof Foundation from Berlin.

We are planning 5 basic training events, the first half of our new one-year concept of Training for Trainers, one networking meeting of trainers from ex-Yugoslavia, and besides publishing of Albanian version of The Manual, another pilot-program titled "Facing the Past".

In the beginning of next year, we expect to get a final response from German Ministry for Development. Possible positive result would be important, regarding the increase of our staff and improvement in following participants of previous Training for Trainers Programmes. It would bring a certain relief to our current team members.

Several new contacts were made which is important because they look at the peace building as a long-term process.

There's at least 6 more project proposals to write. At the moment, we're waiting for response on 3 requests for funding. Our annual budget for the next year is about 300.000 Euro.

## **New member of CNA – Tamara Šmidling**

June of 2001 was really an important month for me. I've passed the last two exams of my studies of ethnology and anthropology, and by the way, filled in the form for the basic Training in Nonviolent conflict transformation, organised by the Centre for Nonviolent Action from

Sarajevo. I didn't have a clear idea about my expectations, but the programme seemed interesting, so I said to myself « Why not ? ».

I was in a dilemma about the question whether or not I belong to the activist « story ». I had the energy, willingness and desire to do something and change, too, but the ORGANISATION ... It seems I had a huge problem to identify values I cared about in NGOs I got in touch with. That's why I mostly volunteered in different projects, without a strong base and support, often questioning my own place and role in all that.

Coming to CNA training meant that many questions have got an answer, many questions had opened up, and a truly important process within myself was initiated. It was exciting and painful at the same time. And somehow empowering. Everything inside of me and around me simply just called towards a definite step to change.

After that, an invitation came for Training for Trainers. It was my first, post-war visit to Sarajevo, an encounter with so called «CNA house» in Bentbaša, full of people from all over ex-Yugoslavia.

People eat pies, talk, there's a cute cat roaming around ... «It so sweet here, in Sarajevo», I was thinking back then. The other part has begun, once again: dilemmas, fears, but also gaining confidence, and the rush of ideas and energy.

An offer to work in CNA meant fulfilling some of my desires, and a possibility to learn many things about the work, and myself too. Accepting this offer also meant one "detail" –leaving Belgrade. I have never ever seriously thought about the possibility to live anywhere else outside my own town. I've always felt my presence there was necessary. This time, I haven't thought about it a lot this time, but it's just that leaving Belgrade for a longer period of time didn't seem too terrible. Belgrade can do without me, for a while.

It's the morning of December 7, 2001, in Sarajevo. It's Winter and it's snowing a little. I am about to leave for my first training as a new CNA team member. I'm excited and can't wait for the beginning. All night, I've been playing some pictures from the past few months in my head. I realise how much it means to me to work with these people and to truly believe in what we're doing. It's much easier when you have this kind of support. This is my 13<sup>th</sup> day on the job, and also the 13<sup>th</sup> day of living in Sarajevo. It's the first time I write such a report and the first time I'm going to the training as a trainer. It's UUUH, but at least (for the first time) I don't miss Belgrade.