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Young people from different ethnic groups get to know each other during extra-curricular activities supported by the programme.

KEY STATISTICS

The Country

- 7 ethnic groups expressly mentioned in the Constitution
- 33 Municipal-level Commissions for Inter-Community Relations
- Community languages recognised for groups representing 20% of the national or local populations

The Programme

- \$4 million USD, 2009 – 2012
- Funds donated by the Government of Spain through the UN MDG Achievement Fund
- The programme has to date worked with 33 civil society organizations
- Local level work concentrated in 3 ethnically diverse municipalities -Kičevo, Kumanovo and Struga

FACTSHEET

Background

Since independence in 1991, the country has made significant steps towards defining national policies that recognise the country's cultural, ethnic and religious diversity. The "Ohrid Framework Agreement" (OFA), which brought an end to the inter-ethnic conflict of 2001, laid the foundations for peace and stability and for the country's present two-tier system of governance. The OFA's continued observance and implementation, together with meaningful inter-ethnic dialogue and collaboration across all social strata, remains essential for the development of the country as a productive and vibrant society and future European Union member state.

Programme

This United Nations programme seeks to further advance the successes that the country has achieved in inter-ethnic relations by advancing inter-ethnic dialogue and collaboration. It does this by supporting the efforts of central Government, relevant local bodies and civil society. The Programme works at the national-level, but also in three ethnically diverse municipalities (Kičevo, Kumanovo and Struga). At the local level the programme is working with civil society, school communities, and government bodies to demonstrate how formal and informal systems can strengthen tolerance, inclusion and respect.

OBJECTIVES

- **Governance**—Improve national systems and capacities for inter-ethnic cohesion.
- **Education**—Reinforce the education system's ability to promote diversity.
- **Society**—Promote tolerance and respect between different groups.

PARTNERS

This Programme is being implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO in cooperation with:

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Secretariat for Implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement
- Ministry of Education and Science
- Ministry of Culture
- Municipalities of Kičevo, Kumanovo and Struga

Main activities and Results

Governance

- The Programme supported representatives from all levels of government and civil society to map out and make recommendations for improving the capacity of national systems to promote inter-ethnic cohesion.
- In response, the programme is implementing a set of activities, which include incentives, such as grants schemes for civil society organizations, capacity development activities, and activities to increase capacities of municipalities to take up decentralized responsibilities on managing local culture and cultural diversity.
- The Programme is also advancing a comprehensive dispute resolution system centred on facilitation and mediation that can support inter-ethnic dialogue and collaboration in the country both at national and local levels.



75 representatives from all stakeholder groups mapped capacities and gaps related to inter-ethnic cohesion.

Education

- The Programme is working with the Ministry of Education and Science and related institutions to incorporate greater inter-ethnic understanding, tolerance and respect into the national education policy, curricula and textbooks.
- In the three municipalities, joint extracurricular and democratic participation activities are being introduced in the selected schools. At the same time, the Programme is expanding opportunities for interaction and dialogue among young people out of the school settings in community based youth centres.
- Higher education institutions are supported in developing and implementing educational programs that advance the study and promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution.



Through exhibitions, events and media engagement, the Programme is promoting greater tolerance, inclusion and respect.

Society

- To build consensus among communities in the three municipalities, trainings and seminars for government and civil society are being conducted.
- SCOs are being awarded grants for inter-ethnic confidence building activities.
- Through public debates, training for journalists and media support mechanisms, the Programme is also creating space for civic dialogue on inter-ethnic issues.
- Municipalities of Kičevo, Kumanovo and Struga

For further information

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