

STEPS TOWARDS PEACE

- *meeting of pupils-participants from KSC (Catholic Schooling Center) from Sarajevo, and JU OS elementary school `Center` from Tuzla*

FINAL REPORT

General Information

- A. Name of Recipients: EMANUELA BORIC, JASMINA MEHMEDOVIC
- B. State: B&H
- C. Name of the project: Steps Towards Peace
- D. Period: April/May, 2009.
- E. Financial Award 2215 KM
- F. Your contribution 2900 KM
- G. Money spent (sum of award and your contribution): 5175 KM

IREX Grant

- 290KM: Expenditures for transport of participants from Sarajevo to Tuzla (12 persons)
 - 88KM: Expenses for food for participants from Sarajevo in Tuzla (12 persons)
 - 351KM: Expenses for transport of participants from Tuzla to Sarajevo (15 persons)
 - 600KM: Expenses for accommodation for 15 participants from Tuzla in Sarajevo (2 days)
 - 338.6 KM: Expenses for food for participants from Tuzla in Sarajevo (for two days)
 - 200KM: Lunch expenses (Dancing Group from KSC- Catholic Schooling Center)
 - 28KM: Expenses for copying invitations and performing the farewell show
 - 320KM: Expenses for promoting the project on radio station `Kameleon`
- Total: 2215.6 KM

Contributed expenses:

- 960 KM-Project preparation, workshops for participants from Sarajevo in Tuzla, re-thinking final performance by Emanuela Boric, Jasmina Mehmedovic, Natasa Mandic, Sadeta Zulic (Since huge and demanding work was the issue, it was necessary to involve in the project, besides grant recipients, additional participants, professors from Tuzla and Sarajevo, who helped in preparing the participants for final performance.)
- 640 KM- work on choreography and dancing exercises with the pupils (Emanuela Boric and Jasmina Mehmedovic)
- Planning and preparing workshop (Emanuela Boric and Jasmina Mehmedovic)
- 100KM- One day workshop for participants from Sarajevo and Tuzla, implemented by two project leaders from Sarajevo and Tuzla- Natasa Mandic, Sadeta Zulic

- 100KM- Renting space for one day workshop for participants from Sarajevo and Tuzla, donation by OS `Centar`, elementary school from Tuzla
- 300KM- Expenditures of renting space for rehearsing dancing choreography for Catholic Schooling Center in Sarajevo
- 400KM – Expenses of choreographer for rethinking and rehearsing dancing choreography
- 100KM- Expenditures of educators from Tuzla who will care for children two days while they are in Sarajevo, during the final conference (Sadeta Zelic and Jarmila Ovcina)
- 200KM- telephone expenditures (continuous agreements of coordinators, contacting pupils and April group)
- Total- 2900KM-

About the project:

Describe original plan of the project

Regarding the fact that the majority of conflicts on national basis stem from fears, and fears have their root in ignorance, misunderstanding, we found out that we should work in relating young people of different nations and interests in communal promoting of coexistence through cultural activities.

People should be brought up, from early childhood, in spirit of tolerance and respect, and therefore we decide to focus on educating in accordance with spirits of human values, mainly of the pupils aged 10 and 11.

In this project, we tried to develop understanding, to contribute to pupils` knowledge about people of different religions, to connect the children from two different cities, with, at the first sight, different backgrounds: children from Catholic Schooling Center and children from JU elementary school `Center`.

Also, while working with the children, it is indispensable to establish the cooperation between these two cities and these two schools.

The goals of the program: 1. Connecting pupils of different national and religious adherences from Sarajevo and Tuzla

2. Promoting spirituality

3. Presenting experiences acquired in the United States

Strategy: meeting pupils in Sarajevo and Tuzla

workshops with pupils

dancing performance

relating participants of the program Faith and Community: Dialogue, and their participation in cultural-historical performance at the farewell dinner in Sarajevo

Explain and describe results of the project and future plans

The outcomes of this program are best testified by photos of excited children, and their constant telephone and internet contacts.

Hosts in Tuzla did not part, during their whole day, from their guests from Sarajevo, and at the end of the day; the whole team was joined by parents of pupils from Tuzla, who decided to offer, to the pupils from Sarajevo, to spend these nights at their homes.

On the other side, the families of pupils from Catholic Schooling Center from Sarajevo offered their hospitality to children from Tuzla, and they also wanted to `adopt` children from Tuzla, at least for a few hours, in order to show them the beauties of the city.

The complete project really influenced breaking prejudices and antagonisms, and also strengthening individuality, since the pupils spent two days far away from their parents, and, with the children they did not know before, in an unknown city.

Also, the performance was shown before respectable auditorium and pupils were asked for high level of self-consciousness that they actually showed.

We also have in plan to incite pupils for firmer contacts among them, and to include in that project, parents, but we also have in mind future cooperation between Catholic Schooling Center in Tuzla and elementary school Center.

Program Criteria

In which way your project promoted the goals of the program Faith and Community?

- Since participants of the project were taught about the religions on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, about peace, non-violence and tolerance, human relations generally, spirit and goals of the program Faith and Community, were present all the time.
- The participants of the program, who come from different nationalities, were constantly acting together, and after they completed socializing, they left their environment very satisfied with the time they comfortably spent in meetings, and with newly acquired friendships for which we hope that they will be of the permanent character.
- Also, in this project, professors who work with children were involved, and they will remain in professional and private contacts in the future.

Have you used knowledge and ideas that you gained in the States during the implementation of your project?

- Of course.

The idea for this whole project was born in the States, and while looking at the American schooling system, it became clear to us that religion does not mean indoctrination. And that it does not have to be stumbling stone among the young, but rather the link that will contribute to further understanding and respect for people.

The fact that matters is also that the grant recipients, Emanuela and Jasmina, did not at all know each other, before participation in program Faith and Community: Dialogue, and that they originate from different environments, and that they are of different nationalities. However, this did not represent an obstacle to great cooperation, nor for the friendship that was born in the meantime.

How did this project contribute to your professional development?

- While working on the project, we cooperated with different colleagues from both schools, what certainly made us richer, regarding the professional instruction as well.
- While applying for workshops and final performance we had to acquire broader knowledge of other religions, and the ways of tactful approximation of individuality of each participant to the pupils in first years of the elementary school. Besides that, we had to learn and to feel the rhythm of the dances of different traditions, what also contributed to better understanding of differences among people.

Results

Who benefited from your project and in which way?

- The benefits from this project are multi-fold, and we could say direct or indirect. Direct benefits were gained by professors who were the participants of seminar, and pupils from schools which participated in the seminar.
- Indirectly, we consider this seminar to be very useful for the whole society and B&H, since the pupils who learn to respect themselves and the others, will not communicate violently, will be tolerant and will appreciate human values and in the future, and be bearers of peace in the dark that surrounds us.

Write down the list of publications, articles and alike that resulted from your project?

- www.tuzlarije.net
- www.tip.ba
- www.oscentar.com.ba
- What is also foreseen is publishing the article in Catholic Weekly, as well as in the journal of OS elementary school `Center`-Cvrcak.
- Also, editorial of the Voice of America will be informed about the final performance, and we hope that it would be reported.

What have you learnt?

Explain what the success of your project was and what could be done to make your project even more successful?

- Achievements of this project were clear during the first meeting of pupils and professors from Tuzla and Sarajevo. The initial anxiety and unpredictability disappeared fast in a close relationship, joyful games, and inspired dances, and all participants were inclined to like this.

- impressions expressed by pupils themselves in later contacts with their professors, more than obviously pointed to the fact that the project 'Steps towards peace' was the right thing.

- On the other part, watching from this perspective, project would maybe be more successful if we decided to place the pupils from both cities in families, what would enable them to meet each other better and to feel the heart-beatings of the people coming from different environments and having different national belongings.

The same could be applied to professors – and we believe that in homes of our colleagues we would feel welcome, and that if we did that, we would involve more participants in the project, both educational workers and children.

But, in these moments of creating the idea for 'Steps Towards Peace' we could not know this, though we hope that all participants in the project will make their understanding deeper and that it will not finish with the end of the project.

Conclusion

What would be your conclusion about the project and your opinion of the same?

- It is difficult to explain in words how satisfied and happy we felt, while looking how other children who are children of complete strangers, with whom we work, turn into our friends. What the project has brought to them is to meet without fear, individuals who belong to different religions and nationalities. The pupils participated in creating 40 minutes program and satisfaction was expressed by the both sides. Both schools established the contacts, and what is the most important, is that contacts will remain after this project. This project meant to me and Jasmina and Emanuela who accomplished contacts on higher level, between two schools, as much as this project meant to children.

Success of this project is not perceived only on the level of successful realizing of performance and workshops, but it also lies in relating the 'little ones', and further cooperation of OS elementary school 'Center' from Tuzla and Catholic Schooling Center 'Saint Joseph' from Sarajevo.