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INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the Foundation Open Society – Macedonia (*FOSM*) will work towards achieving its three strategic goals: **1)** supporting reforms related to the priority areas of *FOSM* (EU accession, education and youth, healthcare, legal and fiscal framework for civil society and legal empowerment) and providing support for the participation of civil society to contribute to public policy-making; **2)** demanding accountability from the governments by monitoring the progress of public policies related to EU accession, monitoring the planning and expenditure of public revenue in higher education and budget allocations affecting marginalized groups in healthcare, as well as monitoring the local government policies in areas like urban planning, environmental protection and monitoring local government policies in three municipalities; and **3)** improving the quality and access to healthcare, legal and educational services for the underserved communities that have limited access or receive low-quality services.

In 2020, the planned activities for accomplishing the three strategic goals were implemented within the framework of the four **concepts**: (1) Civil Society Engagement in EU Accession; (2) Community Partnerships for Advancing Local Democracy; (3) Education of Small Ethnic Communities; and (4) Legal Empowerment Network Strategy, and two **fields**: (1) Students’ Rights and Engagement, and (2) Rights-based Health Policies.

Within the framework of rapid response to the health crisis caused by COVID-19 pandemic and aiming at timely response and mitigation of the socio-economic consequences, in 2020 *FOSM* provided 1,141,018 USD (62,973,533 MKD) for humanitarian assistance of food packages, hygiene products and supplements for over 15,000 most vulnerable Roma families in 18 municipalities; Administrative and legal support for low-paid workers and workers in the informal economy, above all, women, Roma and single parents to access national economic measures; Support for development of innovative models to deal with economic disadvantages and advocate long-term measures to soften socio-economic crisis; Support to local organizations to monitor and advocate promotion of local government policies and practices in times of crisis and to inform citizens of measures for protection from the virus by means of creative activism; Donation of tablets with internet card for 350 children from socially disadvantaged families; Technical equipment needed for realization of online teaching for 5000 students in 10 schools with instruction languages of small communities; Digital competence training for teachers etc.

The total amount of resources spent in the implementation of *FOSM*'s activities in 2020 was 4,345,350 USD (235,172,917 MKD), out of which 3,589,505 USD (195,355,947 MKD) were from the Open Society Foundations, while 755,845 USD (39,816,970 MKD) from other donors.

**REPORTING ON ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED WITHIN THE
CONCEPT FRAMEWORK IN 2020**

CONCEPT: CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN EU ACCESSION

Through the concept Civil Society Engagement in EU Accession in 2020 we continued to support the reform agenda related to EU accession in the areas of justice, fight against corruption and anti-discrimination thereby contributing to the process of Europeanisation of society.

Within the framework of the first specific objective, *the Blueprint Group for Judicial Reform* continued to monitor the implementation of the Judicial Reform Strategy (2017-2022), including the development of the following papers ["Analysis of the Quality of Reforms Related to the Selection, Higher Instance Court Selection and Dismissal of Judges"](#), ["Efficient Criminal Justice: Review of Cases Initiated by the SPP"](#) and the policy papers: ["Vetting the Justice in RNM"](#), "Analysis of the Resources and Capacities of the Public Prosecution in RNM" and ["Terminating the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination"](#). The *Network on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination* continued to work on advancing the system of prevention and protection against discrimination by consistent application of the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination in compliance with the European standards. The following documents were developed: ["Guide on the Case Law of the European Court on Human Rights Related to Protection against Discrimination"](#), ["Report from Monitoring the Work of the Ombudsman Focusing on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination \(2010 – 2019\)"](#) and four policy papers: ["Shifting the Burden of Proof in Court Procedures on Protection against Discrimination"](#), ["More Work for Less Money: How to Decrease the Gender Gap in the Salaries in RNM"](#), "Accessibility of Court Judgements from the Field of Protection against Discrimination in RNM and the Implementation of Directive 2010/41/EU" and "How to Achieve Greater Protection of Self-employed Pregnant Women and Pregnant Spouses and Life-Partners of Self-employed Persons". The *Platform on Fight Against Corruption* drafted three analyses on the operation of the State Commission on Prevention of Corruption (SCPC): ["First Report on the Operation of SCPC \(March – September 2019\)"](#), ["Second Report on the Operation of SCPC \(October – December 2019\)"](#) and ["Report on the Period January - June 2020 about the Successful Operation of SCPC"](#). In addition, the research dealing with the topic ["Funding Problems of Political Parties"](#) was developed, along with the analysis ["Methodology and Instruments of SCPC for the Upcoming Elections"](#), and the two policy papers ["Increasing the Efficiency of the Operation of SCPC"](#) and ["Accountability Challenges and Internal Integrity of High Risk Corruption Institutions"](#).

Our determination is setting up an integrity system as a pre-condition for a successful fight against corruption in the reform process of the country. FOSM is implementing the project **Strengthen Systems of Integrity to Combat Corruption at the Municipal Level** within the framework of USAID Civic Engagement Project, implemented by the East-West Management Institute, funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) for the purpose of contributing to the advancement of good governance on a local level by strengthening the resistance to corruption and conflict of interests of local government. The activities of the project are directed towards: (1) introducing integrity systems in five municipalities, those being Zhelino, Karposh, Dojran, Prilep, Ohrid and (2) increasing civil engagement in the fight against corruption and conflict of interest, especially of the vulnerable groups of citizens through intensifying the number of reported cases with the assistance of legal aid and information. Cooperation with the mayors of the five municipalities was established. A Methodology for Risk Assessment on Local Level was developed, and five risk assessments were conducted in the involved municipalities through interviews with the mayors and Municipal Secretaries, including 80 representatives of the local administrations. A public opinion poll on corruption and conflict of interests was conducted in these five municipalities. For the purpose of

building the capacities of municipal administration and local government and their preparation for implementing the integrity plans, [five two-day workshops](#) took place for 53 municipal representatives. FOSM's cooperation with the civil society organizations *Multi-Culture (Tetovo)*, *Coalition "All For Fair Trials" (Skopje)*, *ECHO (Shtip)*, *Choice (Strumica)* and *Station L.E.T. (Prilep)* lead to securing [free legal aid](#) to more than 100 citizens who had doubts in possible corruption and conflict of interest cases. To improve the quality of the legal aid, the supported organizations submitted a request for consultation to the Ministry of Justice concerning the application of the Law on Free Legal Aid for cases related to corruption and conflict of interests. For 98 citizens and/or representatives of civil society organizations, six educational workshops were implemented by the partner-organizations *Echo*, *Station L.E.T.* and *Choice*. FOSM prepared a media campaign for the purpose of using new narratives that will persuade citizens that the fight against corruption is possible and to motivate them to get involved more actively. Within the framework for putting in place an integrity system, FOSM as a member of the Working Group on Local Level Integrity established by the State Commission for Preventing Corruption, is actively contributing and submitted its Notes related to the draft policy on local level integrity.

By supporting *Coalition "All for Fair Trials"* the project "Systemic Monitoring of Criminal Court Procedures" was implemented to estimate the efficiency of criminal justice in primary courts and monitor the implementation of litigation guarantees specified in the Law on Criminal Procedure and in the internationally recognized standards for fair and just trials. Twenty (20) selected observers monitored a total of 232 trials in 14 primary courts on four appellate regions in RNM. Due to the Covid-19 situation, the first online trial in Primary Court Kavadarci was monitored. The analysis ["Long Way to Justice in a Fast-track Procedure"](#) and the manual ["First Time in Court, Guidelines and Recommendations, Criminal Procedure"](#) were published. To raise the awareness about the standards for just trials, a [promotional event](#) was organized to mark the occasion of the International Day of Human Rights.

For strengthening the capacities and increasing the knowledge of civil society on issues related to the institutional structure of the EU and the key political processes, including the negotiations on the *acquis* in the areas of fight against corruption, justice and prevention and protection against discrimination, FOSM in partnership with *Coalition "All for Fair Trials"* cooperates with 10 journalists. The journalists were selected on a public call and they increase their knowledge in 6 thematic trainings, followed by a research of their interest from justice-related topics and publish investigative stories and articles.

The second specific objective is directed towards monitoring the overall EU accession to ensure that the reforms serve public interest and meet the requirements of the citizens. In cooperation with *Prespa Institute* from Skopje the following documents were developed: "Analysis of the Negotiations Framework of RNM", ["Analysis of the Structure for EU Negotiations"](#) and „Analysis of the Quality of Part of the Reform Process and Image of RNM for One EU Member-State" that led to recommendations for measures and activities for improving and facilitating the negotiations.

By supporting the *Foundation for Internet and Society Metamorphosis* we contributed to the identification and removal of the obstacles for democratic development of the media sector through the project ["Media Reform Observatory"](#). Four [interim reports](#) and one [Final Report](#) from the observing the fulfillment of reform priorities in the area of media were developed as a pre-condition for EU accession of the RNM.

The purpose of the third objective was to increase the flow of information and to improve the level of understanding of the citizens about the reforms related to EU accession, thereby helping them to make informed decisions and extend support for the reform process and Europeanisation of society. [15 grants for associations](#) were awarded for implementing activities that contribute towards achieving the specific objective. 14 documents and policy papers were drafted and promoted, more specifically: (1) ["The Effect of Chapter 23 – Justice and Fundamental Rights on EU accession of RNM"](#); (2) ["Analysis of the Research of Public Perception about EU Accession with a Focus on Chapter 23"](#); (3) ["Respecting the Rights of Convicted Persons with a Focus on People Belonging to the Roma Ethnic Community in the RNM"](#); (4) ["Analysis of the Access to Justice for People from the Eastern Region"](#); (5) ["Analysis of the Performed Monitoring of the Work of Primary Court Tetovo, Internal Affairs Sector – Tetovo, Penitentiary Institution – Jail Tetovo and the Ombudsman – Regional Office – Tetovo"](#); (6) ["Local Information is Also a Test for EU"](#); (7) ["The Measure Custody between National and European Practice"](#); (8) ["Analysis of the Level of Information on Probation of Convicted Persons in Jails and Determining Specific Training Needs from the Area Probation"](#); (9) ["From Rural Woman to Successful Entrepreneur, Without Stereotypes and Discrimination"](#); (10) ["Guide for Debating in Administrative Dispute"](#); (11) ["EU from the Lens of Rural Areas"](#); (12) ["Men and Women on the Labor Market - \(non\)Equal Participation and Treatment"](#); (13) ["Be Courageous – Speak Loudly"](#); and (14) ["The Level of Recognition of Gender Equality as a Basic Human Right in Rural Areas, and Part of Chapter 23 – Fundamental Rights and Justice"](#). On the basis of the researches of the associations and their publications, FOSM developed and undertook a promotional [media campaign](#) for better understanding the need for required reforms related to EU accession by the citizens.

In cooperation with *TV 24 News*, FOSM organized a televised debate titled "Is There a European Solution for the Macedonian-Bulgarian Knot?" on the occasion of publishing the second edition of the book ["The Macedonian Issue from 1944 up to Date – Communism and Nationalism on the Balkans"](#) by Tchavdar Marinov in Macedonian language. The [debate](#) was our contribution to clarify and put into context the existing political and historiographical debate between Bulgaria and North Macedonia which amplified before the expected upcoming start of EU accession talks of the country and became a serious point of misunderstanding in the course of accession. The speakers gave their views of the issue in the attempt to expand the context and have a constructive discussion on the possible theoretical, but also practical ways of finding a solution for the Macedonian-Bulgarian knot, bearing in mind the methods of the academic community and its constructive contribution to resolving the problem.

FOSM published the collection ["From Bucharest to Prespa – Testimonies of a Time: Macedonia 2008–2018"](#) (in Macedonian, Albanian and English language). The collection contains articles of 14 renown journalists, intellectuals and civic activists who testify about the 10-year period in which the country was labelled as "captured State". This period illustrates the governance of the non-democratic government, nationalism, populism, and constant blaming and shaming all those who thought differently. On the other hand, it also marks the beginning of hope for a better, more democratic, more prosperous country integrated within the EU.

FOSM in cooperation and support of the *European Institute of Open Society* and the *Institute for European Policy of Open Society* implemented the **project Towards a Captured State in North Macedonia – Judiciary, Public Prosecutor's Office and Police**. The aim was to determine the forms and manners in which the political capturing of the institutions of North Macedonia happened in a time when the country was put in the category "captured State". National partners in undertaking the

[research](#) and drafting the analysis "[Towards a Captured State in North Macedonia – Judiciary, Public Prosecutor’s Office, Police](#)" were *BIRN Macedonia, Coalition “All for Fair Trials”, the “Helsinki Committee for Human Rights”* and the *Institute for Human Rights*".

FOSM prepared a media campaign aiming at applying new narratives that will encourage the citizens to believe that the fight against corruption is possible as well as to motivate them to get involved more actively. The media campaign used the research conducted by Topos Partnership in cooperation with *FOSM* and the local works of research of the Department for Anthropology and Ethnography. The cooperation leading to the change of public narratives for anti-corruption reform was enabled by the reserve anti-corruption fund of the Open Society Foundations, while the purpose was for *FOSM*, OSF Latin America Program and Open Society-USA to create capacities for various actors in North Macedonia, USA and Brazil to apply more efficient public communication in the fight against corruption. In the form of an advisory body, but also by using the opportunity to benefit from the technical support of *FOSM* and Topos Partnership, in changing the narratives for the anti-corruption reform the following associations also cooperated: *Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women (ESE)*, the *Institute for Democracy Societas Civilis, Youth Educational Forum, Multikultura (Tetovo)* and the *Coalition “All for Fair Trials”*.

In line with the specific objective for increasing the flow of information and improving the understanding of the citizens regarding EU accession, *FOSM* in cooperation with the *Association for Research and Analysis ZMAI* developed [commentaries and recommendations to the Draft Law on Budgets](#) and a [public discussion](#) took place to present the commentaries and recommendations.

Within the framework of the fourth specific objective targeting the establishment of a structural dialogue between civil society organizations and the Government, we are implementing the **project CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations** in cooperation with the partner-organizations *Centre for Civic Communications, Reactor – Research in Action* and *Eurothink – Centre for European Strategies*. The project is supported by the European Union through IPA funding for civil society and the media program for the period 2016-2017, while the co-financing is covered by *FOSM*. The established web-platform www.dijalogkoneu.mk continues to serve as the focal point for information related to the three formal cooperation mechanisms between civil society organizations and the institutions as well as to publish topics and educational material connected with EU accession. The web-platform contains a database with more than 320 active civil society organizations organized by sector of interest that receive regular information about the contents available for their sector of action. The web-platform enriched its educational component by regularly uploading [public policy papers](#) on EU integration related topics; [video-animations and tutorials](#) and [visual information on the EU](#). The contents on the Sector Working Groups, as one of the three consultation mechanisms, are the most visited elements of the platform, while the video-contents from the sessions of the Council for Cooperation and Development of Civil Society present a unique tool accessible on this web-platform, including the first 12 shadow [annual reports](#) from monitoring the operation and effects of the Sector Working Groups for 2019. These reports are summaries of the information from the monitoring of the 12-Sector Working Groups enabling a single access point to all general and key information on the work of the Sector Working Groups. The reports also provide a cross-section for the state of affairs of the Sector Working Groups representing an indicator for the implementation of IPA II in RNM. In addition, in the course of 2020, by means of [public policy papers](#) the following topics were covered and discussed: (1) Comparative Experience from Policies and Practices of Human Rights Protection in Emergency Situations in EU Member-

States; (2) Including Gender Perspective in Agricultural and Rural Development Policies; (3) Challenges and Opportunities for Improving Control of Public Procurement; (4) Negotiation Structure for EU Accession, (5) Mechanisms for Dialogue and Involvement of Civil Society Organizations in Agriculture, (6) Passed Path and New Winds in the External Policy of RNM and (7) Regulating Online Platforms: EU Policy and its Reflection on the Policies of RNM.

Even in pandemic conditions, *FOSM* continued to work on the enabling environment for civil society thereby contributing to the development of the environment for the operation of civil society. Within the framework of the established cooperation with the General Secretariat of the Government of RNM, the Unit for Cooperation with Civil Society of the GS and the Council for Cooperation and Development of the Civil Society of the Government, in a consultative process, an "[Analysis](#)" was drafted on the financial support of associations and foundations from the Budget of the Republic of North Macedonia (from 2017 until the first half of 2019), with comparative analysis of the models for state funding in other countries and a proposed-model for setting up a Fund for support and development of civil society and co-financing of EU-funded projects in RNM. The recommendations and conclusions of the analysis have been determined as [strategic](#) priorities of the Government of the RNM in the part titled "Democracy Working for the Citizens".

FOSM, with the support of the Secretariat of the international initiative Open Government Partnership, and in cooperation with the Ministry of Information Society and Administration, continued with the activities commenced in the **Open Government Partnership** (OGP). In 2020, two mechanisms were setup to contribute to the new coordination and monitoring structure of OGP-process in the country those being: [Network of Civic Organizations for OGP](#) (Network) that has 72 members and the Council for Coordination and Monitoring the OGP Process and the National Action Plan (NAP) for OGP 2018-2020 (Council of OGP). The aim was to create structural dialogue between civil society and the government, civic organizations, citizens, and other stakeholders in the process of designing, implementing, supporting, promoting, and monitoring the priorities and initiatives of OGP before the development of the new National Action Plan. The OGP Council aims at encouraging transparency and openness of the public administration bodies, to secure inter-sectoral cooperation and to increase the level of participation of civil society in implementing the OGP process in drafting the Action Plans as well as to support, encourage and monitor the implementation of the current NAP, establishing clear structural and sustainable mechanisms for ongoing dialogue between the government and civil society. This Council consists of 14 members with an equal number of members from the institutions and from civil society and is managed by one representative from the bodies of the public administration and one from the selected civil society representatives (two co-chairs) which is the first model of this kind reflecting equality in decision-making as a feature of the partnership in our country.

In times of the COVID-19 pandemic, the communication between the members of the Network was online, and *FOSM* played the role of coordinator of the Network by timely informing about all ongoing processes, online events, calls and opportunities for getting involved in OGP activities in the country and abroad. Some of the most significant benefits gained are: secured participation of 26 organizations from the Network through a public call for co-creating the Action Plan of OGP for the period 2021-2023; through *FOSM* as a member of the Working Group for Openness of the Legislative Government and in the drafting of the Action Plan 2021-2023 secured the involvement of 3 member-organizations of the Network that contributed with their comments, suggestions and proposals connected with the activities foreseen in Open Parliament; Participation in the Local Open

Government Partnership which thanks to the cooperation between the municipality of Sveti Nikole and Civic Women's Initiative CWI Sveti Nikole (member of the Network of civil society organizations for OGP) is the [first Macedonian municipality elected to participate in the Global Open Government Partnership](#) together with 56 other municipalities in the World that secured the key services provided by an effective and accountable local government.

In addition, *FOSM* together with the *Centre for Civic Communication (CCC)* and the *Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality - ESE*, with the support and coordination of the OGP-Secretariat and the Ministry for Information Society and Administration continued to sustain the active involvement in co-creation process of NAP for OGP 2021-2023. In 2020, to obtain systemic means of planning and implementing the consultation process that will enable timely, smooth, inclusive and transparent process of co-creating the new NAP of OGP 2021-2023, along with a timetable of activities, manner of conducting consultations with stakeholders for deriving new priorities and determinations within the framework of OGP process, including a timetable, open call for participation in the co-creation process and Guidelines for Conducting a Questionnaire to Assess the Implementation of the measures of NAP for OGP 2018-2020 and the need for their involvement in the new NAP. For the areas Access to Information and Access to Justice, *FOSM* secured its contribution in the Information on the Results of the Working Group for Implementing the Action Plan for OGP 2018-2020 by submitting the final report on self-evaluation. Finally, the recognized potential of the Republic of North Macedonia contributed to its becoming focus country in the next two years of the international initiative for OGP, along with its ambitious commitments and partnership of stakeholders as to serve as a model for the countries from the region.

RAPID RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC CRISIS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CONCEPT CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN EU ACCESSION

Support to Civil Society

The year 2020 was marked by the global COVID-19 pandemic. *FOSM* recognized the challenges faced by civil society, thus within the framework of the concept Civil Society Engagement in EU Accession, continued its cooperation and support to three thematic non-formal networks of civic organizations those being: [Blueprint Group for Judicial Reform](#), [Platform for Fight Against Corruption](#) and [Network for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination](#). The support secured new communication tools and channels for extending distance-working of associations and their participation in policymaking. Even in pandemic conditions, the work of the non-formal networks was supported so that they can smoothly monitor EU accession thus ensuring that the reforms focusing on Chapter 23 are directed towards public interest and meet the expectation of the citizens. The *Blueprint Group for Judicial Reform* analyzed the influence of the emergency state on rule of law in the report "Report on Legal Challenges from the Emergency State for Dealing with the COVID-19 Pandemic" as well as in the ["Analysis of Adopted Acts Legally Enforced during the Emergency State in 2020"](#).

Thanks to the enhanced regional cooperation and the involvement of *FOSM* in regional projects directed towards mitigating the consequences from the pandemic funded by the Open Society Foundations from the Joint COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund, *FOSM* secured support for vulnerable groups such as low-wage persons, non-formal and occasional gig (precarious) workers. The project **"Responding to the Socio-Economic Effects of COVID-19 by Supporting Vulnerable Groups, Low-Wage, Informal and Gig Worker"** analyzed the economic measures of the Government

directed towards supporting the vulnerable categories. In addition, the project promotes long-term measures for mitigating the socio-economic effects of the crisis and develops new models and initiatives for employing vulnerable groups that will contribute to the development of the Western Balkan region. More than 3,000 persons from these vulnerable groups received legal assistance and aid to enjoy their rights. A digital platform for selling agricultural goods was established "[Domasno.mk](#)", as direct aid for women from rural areas enabling the women farmers from the Prilep region to generate income. The activities are implemented in cooperation with three national associations¹ and three think-tanks² that collaborate with organizations from the other countries of the Western Balkans.

Under the conditions imposed by the pandemic, the project CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations initiated an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on civic involvement and engagement in policymaking in the sectors healthcare, education, and socio-economic policies. The research evaluates the appropriateness of the measures of the Government of RNM during the state of emergency and determines its influence on national and local level in the sectors healthcare, education, and socio-economic policies. That way, by including researchers and civic organizations working on local and national level, direct support was provided during the pandemic, on the one hand, and a contribution was made to increase the level of evidence-based information and to strengthen the capacities of civic organizations so that they can participate in sectoral policies in times of crisis, on the other hand. Finally, this type of support contributes to the promotion of structural dialogue between institutions and civil society.

CONCEPT: COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR ADVANCING LOCAL DEMOCRACY

In the second year of implementation of the concept Community Partnerships for Improving Local Democracy, *FOSM* continued to provide support to joint efforts of local civic actors in Tetovo, Bitola and Shtip to initiate systemic changes in their communities. Bearing in mind the urgency and the spreading of COVID-19 along with the growing challenges and negative effects, support for our partner-organizations was secured as well as for implementing adapted annual plans.

The crisis instigated by the pandemic COVID-19 endangered the regular operation of civic organizations. To prevent lagging behind or terminating the engagement of our partners, six local organizations focused on monitoring and advocating the enhancement of policies and practices on local level in Tetovo, Bitola and Shtip in the areas of spending public funds, environmental protection and/or urban planning were awarded [annual grants](#), once they adapted their annual plans.

Association Multikutura - Tetovo with the project "How Is Public Procurement Done in Primary Schools in Compliance with the Law on Public Procurement" aimed at stirring up public interest about the way and contents of public spending through public procurement in 12 primary schools in the municipality of Tetovo in 2018. The research identified good practices, but also public procurement violations and weaknesses. A report was developed and published titled [report on key](#)

¹ *LAG Agro-Leader – Krivogashtani, Loud Textile Worker – Shtip and Dignified Worker – Prilep.*

² *Association for Policy Research Analitika, Skopje, Association for Research and Analysis ZMAI Skopje and Institute for Economic Research and Policies Finance Think, Skopje.*

[findings from monitoring](#), but also the findings and recommendations of the analysis were presented in infographics and communicated to the public through an online campaign.

In Bitola, the *Union of Associations for Rural Development LAG Network* is implementing the project titled “Public Money for Public Good”. To improve practices and transparency, as well as to increase the involvement of the civic sector in the distribution and expenditure of local public funds, following a public opinion poll of 200 surveyed people, an analysis was developed about the level of understanding the budgetary process by the citizens in the municipality of Bitola. The members of the non-formal network of civic organizations active in the municipality of Bitola were trained to monitor the budgetary process on the local level professionally and systematically. The findings of the research were presented on the meetings with the Unit for Local Economic Development of the municipality of Bitola and on the local radio. On the basis of the poll’s findings and the collected information, for the purpose of increased civic participation, the [Guide on Budgetary Process on Local Level](#) as well as an educational video on financial literacy of the citizens were promoted.

Regional Geographical Association GEOSFERA - Bitola (Geo-sphere) works on improving the quality of the environment in the settlement Goren Bair in Bitola. Through the activities envisaged in the project “I Really Do Love BAIR CLEAN!” and with the involvement of the local community, a discussion was organized that finished with proposed measures for overcoming the problem of solid waste and creating dumps in the settlement Bair. The [Conclusions](#) and the proposed measures were submitted to the Council of Municipality of Bitola. To further the discussion on overcoming the problems with dumps, *Geo-sphere* drafted a map showing the territorial expansion of the settlement Goren Bair in the last 20 years as well as interactive Google maps.

Local Community Development Foundation - Shtip (FRLZ) is implementing the project “Civic Lens 2.0” to improve the quality of the policies and practices of spending public funds in the municipality of Shtip. The findings of the comprehensive [analysis](#) on the practices and spending of public funds in an understandable and clear manner were publicly presented with [infographics](#). During draft-budget development and upon the request of the municipality of Shtip, *FRLZ* organized an online survey to identify the priority issues and needs of the citizens. Subsequently, the municipality increased its level of transparency and started to publish quarterly budgetary reports on regular basis on its website, and after six years, it started to publish the public procurement plans again, and the link to the Electronic System for Public Procurement for the concluded contracts and announcements.

Media Plus Shtip within the framework of the project “Tell it, so Others May Know” focuses on improving the communication between citizens and civic organizations and the local government in Shtip to increase civic involvement in the decision-making processes in the municipality. Following the publication of a comparative [analysis on the application of digital tools](#) on the sites of other municipalities with more developed systems of communication, in the municipality of Shtip, a working group was established to refresh and modernize the website of the municipality. The working group was setup for that purpose and proposals for improving the communication with citizens are expected, but also proposals for improving the involvement of civic organizations in the operations of the municipality. In addition, following the publication of the [analysis on the state of affairs of the civic sector in Shtip](#), it was proposed and agreed to look at the free space, owned by the municipality, and to offer it to the civic organizations for their operation.

National Roma Centrum from Kumanovo within the framework of the project “Adequate Housing Policies and Practices” continued its efforts to advance and monitor the right to housing and urban

solutions for the Roma in the municipality of Shtip. The urban-planning capacities of the civic organizations were built as well as the right to be adequately presented and a report was drafted on access to policies on adequate housing. The project secured information for the citizens about the current processes, rules, and legal regulations for legalizing their dwellings, as well as for proposals for the possible adoption of the new Law on Legalization.

Within the annual Agreement for Cooperation with the *Helsinki Committee for Human Rights (MHC)*, the growing trends of hate speech are monitored regularly, as well as the various forms of peer-bullying on the Internet and other online communications. Youth is still the largest group of initiators, but also the target of such attacks. In its annual report, *MHC* recommends timely and appropriate response by MOI and the law enforcement agencies, but also treating topics for recognizing and protection of different kinds of peer-bullying when using social networks and Internet in the educational and upbringing processes through a comprehensive educational preventive mechanism as part of civic education. In addition, support and implementation of public campaigns is recommended for the purpose of developing public sensibility for accepting diversities based on tolerance and respect. Due to the frequent use of hate speech towards persons of different sexual orientation, *MHC* recommended amendments to the Criminal Code and incorporating sexual orientation and gender identity as one of the grounds for prosecution. A clear legal framework is necessary to achieve effective sanctioning of hate speech.

The annual plans of the Local Activist Hubs in Tetovo, Bitola and Shtip for implementing local advocacy actions focused on resolving community problems were realized with ongoing support of the **Macedonian Creative Activism Team**. The team (consisted of Nikola Pisarev, Gorge Jovanovic, Andrej Mitevski, Goran Kostovski and Adrijana Lavciska) adapted and implemented the methodology for creative activism of the Centre for Art Activism of New York in Macedonia and in the region.

In 2020, the activists and artists of the activist hub in Tetovo, within the framework of the supported project "Quiet Revolution" implemented the following creative actions: 1) action "[For the First Time Ever, a Ghost Bus!](#)" was a response to the new bus-stops erected by the municipality in several locations in the city although public transportation buses were still not provided. The action accelerated the procedure for selecting the company and the municipality chose the best bidder the following December and ordered the buses; 2) "[Be Careful Where You Park in Tetovo!](#)" was an action that made an attempt to influence public awareness concerning the problems that stem from the insufficient level of traffic behavior in the city. Symbolic "penalty tickets" were placed on the wrongly parked vehicles to appeal for increased traffic culture of the drivers. The purpose of this action was to stress the need for improving the safety of the citizens and pedestrians whose space for movement was usurped by the reckless and irresponsible drivers who park their vehicles illegally. The legally parked vehicles were awarded commendations to further encourage their behavior; 3) "Traffic Police" was an action implemented in cooperation with the "traffic Police" whereby the improvised police-officers and pupils from several schools were taught how to cross pedestrian zones in the vicinity of the schools; 4) [New Mural in the Primary School "Lirija"](#) stressed the power of knowledge as the most powerful weapon for a better future; 5) "Magical Carpet" was an action that advocated for improving physical access in public institutions for people with special needs. Following the action, upon the initiative of central government of the Agency for Cadaster and Property of the Republic of North Macedonia, a group was established to raise the funds to fix the lift in the Shopping Centre in Tetovo that was out of control for more than 15 years although the number of people using the services of the Cadaster was large.

The actions implemented by the activist hub in Bitola within the framework of the project “Creative Bitola” were greatly supported and approved by the citizens of Bitola. Some of the actions even triggered a response by the municipal authorities. The following creative actions were implemented 1) With the action titled “The Streets of Bitola” the disastrous conditions of the streets in Bitola were presented in a humorous way. The street titled “PROMISED, BUT NOT FIXED” reminded the people on the unfulfilled promises given during elections. A street full of so many holes made people drive in the style of Giant Slalom when passing and therefore named “GIANT SLALOM”. One of the streets was described as “FUTURE, DUG, CHAMOMILE”; 2) “Bitola in the Dark” was an action directed towards the municipal authorities and the competent public institutions pressuring them to repair the stripes for street lightening at the entrances of Bitola and on some other places that were not operational for many years. The action was superbly accepted by the citizens of Bitola, and although the entrances of Bitola are still not lightened, the competent services responded and undertook a dozen of repairs of the street stripes, 3) “Mosquito Spray” was an action undertaken to remind the municipal authorities to budget for disinfection of the city bearing in mind the problem that the citizens of Bitola have with the mosquitos and other insects; 4) [“Roma are not Punching Bags – End Violence Against Roma”](#) was an action aiming to remind the public and the relevant institutions that most of the cases of violence against the Roma that happened in Bitola resulting with serious injuries of several Roma have not been resolved yet. A dozen punching bags were put in public spaces close to the places where the incidents happened. The bags as well as the other props, stickers and banners were carrying the protest note “Roma are not Punching Bags” and “End Violence Against Roma”.

Aiming at encouraging the municipal authorities and public institutions to invest in providing appropriate contents for children with special needs in the parks of Shtip, the non-formal group of activists “Shtip Art Activism” implemented the creative action titled [“Children Deserve More”](#). Local artists and activists made 4 figures of animals adapted for use for children with special needs. The objects, with the approval of the municipality, were placed in the park. The installation was designed and implemented in accordance with the recommendations that came about from the consultations with the parents of the children with special needs and professionals from relevant areas. The citizens of the municipality of Shtip were pleasantly surprised from the action and stressed the need to put in place more such playgrounds in different locations in the city during follow-up contacts. Following the action, the municipality of Shtip placed props for the smallest children in two settlements in Shtip, but also repaired some of the existing playgrounds.

Within the framework of the several-year grant for institutional support secured in cooperation with the Program on Culture and Art of FOS, the *Centre for Contemporary Art - Skopje (CCA)* continued to implement urban artistic actions on current affairs issues. In several local communities in RNM and in cooperation with artists and activists, CCA created and supported local initiatives on various topics (culture, local development, presenting local values, opportunities, and problems etc.). [“Keep Distance”](#) and [“Stay Home!”](#) were actions aiming at changing the mindset and behavior of the citizens during the restrictive measures for the purpose of preventing further spreading of COVID-19. In addition, and bearing in mind the importance of the topic, [urban action](#) marked the International Day of Fight Against Corruption.

For further capacity building of the members of the Macedonian Creative Activism Team and representatives of partner-organization CCA, as well as the members of the concept team, in the period February – October 2020, in cooperation with the *Institute for Individual and Organizational Development SYMBIOTICS Skopje (Symbiotics)* a purposeful workshop was organized that took place

online due to the restrictions for spreading COVID-19. The focus of the workshop were the topics personal development and leadership. Special attention was given to leadership, including advance communication skills as the basis for coaching. The aspects of emotional intelligence were separately covered as the basis for developing trust-based relations as well as the topics pertaining to styles, manners of transforming conflicts and dealing with specific conflict situations. The members of the local activist hubs in Tetovo, Bitola and Shtip, from November 2020 until the end of March 2021 will have an opportunity to take the personal development and leadership program delivered by *Symbiotics* in cooperation with the Macedonian Creative Activism Team.

In addition, by building the capacities of local civic organizations and the activist hubs in Tetovo, Bitola and Shtip in the period 29-31 October 2020 an online training was organized on the basics and types of creative activism delivered by the *Foundation for Debate and Education IDEA SEE*. Participants of the workshop were representatives of 9 local civic organizations and the activist hubs from Tetovo, Bitola, and Shtip.

Upon the request of several Roma civic organizations and in cooperation with our peers from the concept Network Strategy on Public Health, in the period October – December 2020, the Macedonian Creative Activism Team organized a several-day long online training on creative activism for representatives of four Roma organizations those being: *Romano Chachipe*, *IDiC - Initiative for Development and Inclusion of Communities from Shuto Orizari*, *National Roma Centrum - Kumanovo* and *Station L.E.D., Prilep*. The participants had the opportunity to become familiar with the idea of creative activism and the process of creating and implementing creative actions, and to apply the learnt contents. The group of participants of the workshop implemented the following creative actions: 1) Action ["The Labyrinth in the Centre for Social Work in Shuto Orizari"](#) took place in Skopje. By means of a short performance in an improvised labyrinth, presenting life stories and actual statements of people requesting social services from the Centre for Social Work in Shuto Orizari and selected advocacy messages, the activists demanded from the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy to pay attention to the fact that serious reforms are required to improve the operation of the Centre for Social Works in Shuto Orizari; 2) Action ["Better Access of Pregnant Women to Gynecological Services"](#) was performed in the center of Kumanovo. The activists requested from the competent institutions to seriously revise the access of pregnant women to gynecological services and stressed the need to avoid practices of them paying for healthcare services that they should not. A dozen prams used for the performance were donated to socially deprived families once the action was completed. The action attracted the attention not only of the public and the passers-by, but also the media. The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy made a public statement and encouraged pregnant women and women who have just given birth not to pay for check-ups that are not a legal obligation.

To further build the capacities of the members of local civic organizations and the activist hubs from Tetovo, Bitola and Shtip, a webinar was organized to present the research titled "Redefining Anti-corruption Narratives" implemented within the framework of the initiative of the President of Open Society Foundations to support innovative anti-corruption initiatives. The research was performed partly in the USA, Brazil and in our country in partnership with Topos Partnership.

FOSM also provided additional financial support for printing the photo-monography "PROTEST(S)" by Aleksandar Kondev and Zlatko Teodosievski whose purpose was to give an authentic visual-textual review of the phenomenon of the protests in the contemporary Macedonian society, especially in the period 2015-2017 and its peak called "Colorful Revolution".

Preparations are underway for the monography on creative activism in Macedonia, which is planned to be published in the first half of 2021 in Macedonian, Albanian and English language.

In cooperation with the *Association for Sustainable Development Milieukontakt Macedonia*, we started an assessment of local issues in the field of environmental protection and climate action. In the first quarter of 2021 we are expecting the reports and the analysis of the findings of most frequent problems and shortcomings of the environmental protection policies in Tetovo, Bitola, and Shtip. The data received will be used to develop a creative educational campaign and implement advocacy actions for resolving the issues and improving the state of affairs in this sphere in the course of 2021.

RAPID RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CRISIS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CONCEPT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FOR ADVANCING LOCAL DEMOCRACY

Supporting Local Communities

Apart from the fact that we enabled smooth operation of our partner organizations in long-term COVID-19 pandemic crisis conditions, within the framework of the concept we secured earmarked funds for creative actions directed towards increasing public awareness about the threats from spreading the virus and the need to adhere to protection measures as well as increasing the level of accountability of relevant institutions. The Macedonian Creative Activism Team and the local activist hubs in Tetovo, Bitola and Shtip performed many creative actions despite the numerous limitations. Not only did they alarm the public about the increased number of infected cases, disrespecting the measures and irresponsible institutions, but they also suggested solutions for the problems.

Within the framework of the action ["Protect Yourself and Protect the Others"](#) posts were erected in front of the banks in Tetovo with the messages "Wear Medical Mask!", "Wash Your Hands!" and "Keep a Distance of 2 Meters!" in order to increase public awareness about the necessity to sustain personal hygiene, wear a mask and keeping social distance. The activity was well received by the citizens, while the bank representatives at the end of the day gathered the posts and used them the following day thereby overcoming the problems when whole queues of people were waiting for pension and social welfare payments. ["Wedding Ceremony during COVID-19"](#) was an action in which the bride and groom, Corona and Virus, invited over 300 guests to their wedding making them respect the dressing code – masks that had to worn on their hands instead of their faces and combined with their attire. Through messages like "Dance Oro Regularly, and the virus will disappear – we declare it dead" the group wanted to raise public awareness in a parody manner making citizens respect the measures, be responsible and solidary as to protect the collecting wellbeing of Tetovo; ["Let the Fikjo Pass"](#) was an action in which the exhibited "Fikjo" was reminding the citizens to keep the necessary distance as a prevention from the pandemic. The action was well received by the citizens of Bitola and the media, while the "Fikjo" within a short time became a viral hit on the social networks on local level; ["Wear Masks"](#) was an action that displayed a dozen of enormous masks on the public spaces in Bitola thereby sending out a clear message to the citizens of Bitola to wear masks and take the protection against Coronavirus more seriously; "Corona Christmas Tree" was erected in the center of Bitola reminding the citizens on the importance of respecting the measures for protection against COVID-19 during the holidays; ["Be a Super Hero"](#) was an action that displayed nine carton prints and banners with the Marvel brand together with the image of the Super Textile Worker from Loud Textile Worker in prominent places in Shtip. The action and its clear message – to comply with the specified measures for protection from Coronavirus – attracted the attention of the citizens, as well

as a response by the local authorities. The competent institutions strengthened their inspections, while the Police was additionally engaged to introduce order in public transport and in the transportation of workers from the industrial zones. Within the framework of the action ["Irresponsible Behavior has a Price"](#) carton prints were placed in front of the textile factories, the building of the municipality of Shtip - Square "Freedom"- and the city market in the form of invoices, fiscal receipts, and bills to remind the citizens of the irresponsible behavior pertaining to the protection of COVID-19. The number of infected patients and the most frequent violations of the measures were imprinted on a separate banner. The action triggered a response that increased the number of inspections and regular controls of the transportation of the employees in the textile industry; ["Corona Responsibility Quiz – Who Has the Ball and Who is to Blame?"](#) i.e., "The Ball of Responsibility" displayed props in the city square in Shtip and in the bed of River Otinja. The action alarmed the institutions, within the framework of their legal competences, to respond and duly act to decrease the galloping number of infected COVID-19 people at the time in the city. At the same time, an installation was erected asking the question "Whose Fault is it?", together with posts bearing the questions: "Who did not Adhere to the Measures?", "Is it the transporters' Fault for Spreading the Disease?" and "Should the Institutions Sanction More?", and a banner in the center of the city with the message "Irresponsibility Leads to Desolation" alarming the institutions to respond.

FOSM joint efforts with the City of Skopje and provided additional funds to start the operation of the House for Open Housing which was opened within the framework of the project "Securing Temporal Housing for Women Victims of Domestic Violence Who have Left the Violent Environment" of the *National Network on Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence "Voice Against Violence"*. In conditions of ever-growing numbers of patients infected with COVID-19, limited movement, and increased frequency of various forms of domestic violence, in the period July – December 2020, the House of Open Housing offered protection to 3 women and 8 children - victims of domestic violence. Two of the beneficiaries are already employed and they are in the process of leaving the house. All 8 children are included in the educational process - 3 in secondary school and 5 in primary school – thanks to the conditions they have in the shelter. All beneficiaries of the house have acquired the right to healthcare (which they did not have previously) with a Family Doctor in the municipality Karposh. As planned with the project, the beneficiaries accommodated in the house for open housing, as well as for other beneficiaries, the social worker provided more than 350 social services, while the legal adviser provided over 100 services, including legal information and 25% written legal submissions. Over 90 individual and family counselling were also provided. All women accommodated in the house together with other 15 women – victims of domestic violence went through basic and advance training on IT skills, soft skills, and carrier counselling.

FOSM secured additional funds for the [documentary series](#) "State of Emergency – Coronavirus in North Macedonia" produced by *Machine Production*. Over 6 episodes deal with the different social and political aspects of the efforts to handle the COVID-19 crisis in Macedonia in a systemic and chronological manner. The series is a collage of relevant persons from the official political scene, representatives of institutions, donor community, foundations, associations, journalists, and activists illustrating experience, responses, organized manner of manipulation with fake news and misinformation, but also specific political measures, their implementation, achievements, and challenges. The authors of the series, Sibel Abdiu, Slobodan Trajkovski and Naum Trajanovski make a serious attempt to locate the endeavor for transparency, institutional measures, and policies, but also the efforts for additional politicization of the situation, spreading fake news and misinformation that by their own merit pose a threat to undermine public health. The documentary series also made

visible the various social groups and numerous issues related to the particularities of their position during the state of emergency. The series was broadcasted end of December on National Television (MTV1), and additionally disseminated on YouTube and social networks.

REGIONAL CREATIVE HUBS: TAPPING INTO THE POWER OF ARTS AND CULTURE TO EMBOLDEN CITIZEN ACTION AGAINST CORRUPTION

The general objective of the initiative **Regional Creative Hubs: Tapping into the Power of Arts and Culture to Embolden Citizen Action against Corruption** is to empower artists, activists, and journalists to be more effective in their efforts to involve people in resolving issues related to corruption. From the Western Balkan region, as part of the initiative, the foundations from Macedonia, Albania, Bosna and Herzegovina and Serbia as well as the foundations from the region of West Africa (OSIWA) are involved. *FOSM* and OSIWA are implementers of the initiative, planning and coordinating activities, as well as facilitating communication and advancing cooperation between participants in this initiative. In addition, by means of financial and program input, the Culture and Art Program, Economic Justice Program and the Lab Sector within the framework of the Strategic Unit in OSF New York participate in the initiative.

The regional creative hubs are virtual platforms where participants strive to learn *how* and *why* to get creatively involved to provoke change of public perception of corruption. In the first phase of implementation, following the training of trainers in October 2019 (for the participants of the Western Balkans), and in December 2019 (for the participants of West Africa), the participating foundations in this inter-continental and inter-disciplinary initiative awarded grants for earmarked activities for testing and adapting the methodology for creative activism and defining strategies on how successfully to create actions that successfully involve new audiences. 17 grants were awarded in the Western Balkans (4 in Macedonia, 4 in Albania, 5 in Bosna and Herzegovina and 4 in Serbia). For the participants in this phase, mentoring assistance was available to adapt the methodology in the cooperation with the *Centre for Art Activism* from New York and the Macedonian creative activism team. Bearing in mind the imposed restrictions of movement and communication due to the uncontrolled spreading of COVID-19, additional online sessions were organized to support the grantees to adapt foreseen activities. In Macedonia, four creative actions were implemented, those being: "Shake up the judge" implemented by Igor Ilievski as part of the action "[With the Help of Justice](#)", where a group of activists placed a carton-made object with the scene where "Justice shakes a judge". The objects were displayed on several locations in Skopje – the building of the Public Prosecution and the Primary Public Prosecution for Organized Crime and Corruption, the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption, Ministry of Justice as well as in front of the headquarters of the two largest political parties. With this creative guerilla action, they called upon all "competent" bodies, including the two political parties to join Justice in the fight against corruption. The action "Say NO to corruption at universities" was implemented by Dragana Gunin. The findings of the survey and interviews with male and female students on the topic of sexual harassment were supposed to be publicly presented in the form of a performance. The project, however, was adapted due to the COVID-19 situation and instead of a performance, 5 audio stories were published and shared on the social media. The public response was excellent. Within the framework of the creative action "Corruption Parade", implemented by Darko Taleski in cooperation with another three local fine artists, a board was painted in an amusing manner - bodies of holders of public functions and political parties, while the space for their heads was open so that interested passers-by could put their head

in it and take photographs if they please. The board had three presentations in the center of Prilep and attracted the attention of the public. The passers-by had an opportunity to photograph themselves and discuss with the present artists the various aspects of corruption in the town and country. Zorica Zafirovska implemented an action titled "Oxygen!" The action aimed at suggesting possible solutions for improving the air quality in the town. Through the messages "Spoil Me, Water Me, Pat Me!" an appeal was sent to the citizens for their involvement in the action for improving the air, and on 13 locations trees, bushes and flowers were planted in neglected cement pots throughout the town.

COVID-19 pandemic changed the operational plans of this initiative therefore in the course of Spring and Summer 2020, the Committee of the initiative worked on changing the activities and designing an online train-the-trainer program with mentorship included. For the participants from Western Balkan and West Africa who successfully implemented the small grants from the first phase, an informative and consultative session took place in August to present the train-the-trainer program and the call for participation in the next phase of the initiative. Twenty-four (24) candidates applied on the open call (11 from the Western Balkans and 13 from West Africa) and 17 were selected (9 from Western Balkans and 8 from West Africa) who received individual grants up to 10,000 US dollars from the participating foundations to implement their idea. Additional funds were made available for all grantees for communication sets and access to Internet so that they can smoothly participate in the communication. The *Centre for Art Activism* from New York and the local mentors from both regions were engaged to provide the necessary support of the grantees so that they can design and perform successful trainings and creative actions focused on changing the public perception related to the corruptive behavior in their environments. In this phase, *FOSM* supported two projects: "Gender-based corruption on the workplace (with a focus on women)" which will be implemented until May 2021. The author, Dragana Gunin, turned her attention to the issue of corruption on the workplace faced mainly by women and aimed at raising the awareness for resolving this issue; and "Artivism for Change", individual project of Igor Ilievski aiming at selecting, training, and assisting a group of dedicated persons with different skills to be effective in the fight against corruption on a local level. Apart from implementing the training program, tailored to the needs and opportunities of the selected group, the participants must develop a strategy for implementing a series of creative actions.

The implementation of the grants and mentorships is ongoing and include regular weekly online meetings, consultations, and assistance for adjusting the methodology of creative activism in the project implementation phase. The participants have an online archive with documentation on the methodology of creative activism at their disposal and an archive on anti-corruption practices and examples from Western Balkans and West Africa. We were trying to meet the needs for various trainings, therefore the participants, at this stage, had an opportunity to take part in additional trainings specially designed to meet their needs on various topics. The additional content was provided by the *Centre for Art Activism* from New York, the mentors from Western Balkans and West Africa, the counsellors of the initiative who have specific experience in certain topics and/or engaged experts.

In November and December, several online workshops took place. "Creative strategies and tactics" – online session that, through examples, showed how to plan and apply creative tactics in activism in different steps, from conceptual of the creative tactics in activism to action. "How to structure a workshop" – dynamic, fun online workshop for discovering excellent experience and methods for

teaching creative activism. The session “What you did not know about corruption: Your chance to ask!” shared knowledge on what was and was not corruption, the existing types of corruption, the conditions that enable or encourage corruptive behavior, how corruptive mechanisms work (abuse of public funds, trading influence, conflict of interest...), how to fight corruption, how to check whether progress was achieved and whether our advocacy efforts had an impact at all. The workshop “How to select and work with your group of participants” offered knowledge and experience on what needs to be done so that the selection process can help identify an excellent group that can achieve big things (during and after the training). This process of online learning will last until the end of May 2021 when the project grants of the participants of the workshop are expected to be completed.

Those involved in the project have regular virtual meetings for preparing and implementing activities. The Centre for Art Activism from New York and the local mentors from both regions organize weekly meetings to plan and prepare the program for the online training-of-trainers course as well as the mentoring process. The book and video preparation activities on the whole initiative started. The monitoring and evaluation partner, Organizational Development Support from Brussels, is monitoring the work of the initiative and in the interim report gave its recommendations on planning and implementing the second phase of the initiative.

CONCEPT: EDUCATION OF SMALL ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

In 2020, the concept Education of Small Ethnic Communities continued to implement the defined strategic goal to secure direct support to ten rural schools whose language of instruction is one of the smaller ethnic communities by means of improving the competencies of the teachers as well as by advancing teaching and other educational resources necessary to conduct regular online teaching and learning (technical equipment, teaching, didactic and other material in the language of instruction).

Apart from the direct support of technical equipment as a rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the books of the compulsory reading list for second grade were provided for two schools with Bosnian as the language of instruction thereby completing the procurement of titles approved for reading in all languages of the small ethnic communities (the reading list books in Turkish and Serbian language were secured last year).

Within the framework of the strategic partnership with the *Foundation for Educational and Cultural Initiative “Step by Step” (Step by Step)*, the support of the communities for learning established last year in all schools involved continued. While there were conditions, 6 mentoring related meetings took place by visiting the schools themselves, followed by 30 online meetings. A total of 293 teachers, members of the learning community, participated on the meetings. It proved that the acquired skills for cooperation, exchange of experience and peer-learning are quite helpful to the teachers in dealing with the challenges of online teaching in this specific period. To boost the exchange of knowledge, not only in their own schools, but also with their peers from other schools, 10 network events were organized for a total of 173 teachers.

In pandemic conditions *Step by Step* continued to promote reading and work on enriching teaching resources – manuals and additional literature (picture books) in the languages of the small ethnic communities. Eight picture books from the edition “Our First Library” were adapted in video picture books, filmed stories with the help of the shadow theatre, subtitled in Serbian and Turkish language.

In addition, 4 picture books were translated in Bosnian language, 4 in Turkish language and 3 bilingual (Macedonian and Romani languages) and 2400 copies were disseminated to the schools involved in the concept.

The online training “Positive Environment in the Classroom” was attended by 121 teachers. They had an opportunity to become familiar with topics that are important for the development and advancement of the pupils in pandemic conditions such as emotional intelligence and self-confidence of pupils, emotional self-regulation, conflict resolution in the class/school building a safe learning environment, making responsible decisions, developing empathy and social awareness. At the end of December, the preparation of the training module for headmasters started. The module was titled “Inclusive School Environment” and it will be implemented with the school principals and representative of the expert staff of the schools in the beginning of next year.

The traditional event of *Speech4Teach* titled “The Role of the Teacher in the New Reality”, organized by *FOSM* and *Step by Step* took place on 7th October and was dedicated to the International Teacher’s Day 5th October. The event took place in an open space, in compliance with all the health protocols, and several educational experts and practitioners addressed the public, including the Minister of Education and Science of RNM. Teachers and school principals from the project-schools as well as other educational institutions (Administration for Development of Education in Languages of Small Ethnic Communities, Bureau for Development of Education, State Exam Centre, MES etc.). A short video presenting the project achievements so far was prepared.

Within the framework of the strategic partnership with the *Foundation for Internet and Society (Metamorphosis)*, all project schools were visited, and the teachers became familiar with the concept of Open Educational Resources (OER), as well as the opportunities offered. Teacher training on developing OER were delivered, and the website *Open Educational Resources* www.oor.mk was maintained and further promoted to teachers and on the social networks. Two webinars took place for 70 teachers on “Development of Digital Resources for e-teaching”, while 190 teachers from the project- primary schools were trained on most used tools and technologies, including fast and efficient online lessons Edmodo.com and Google Classroom on additional two webinars.

Metamorphosis developed an [analysis](#) on the opportunities with recommendations for including open educational resources in the educational process as a component in online teaching, but also as an additional or alternative option of regular textbooks and teaching aids.

In partnership with *FOSM*, *Metamorphosis* published a call for the best OER-teacher and 35 teachers applied with approximately 500 different kinds of open educational resources uploaded on the website of OER, while the three most successful teachers were rewarded with personal computers and smart-boards for their schools. The last 5 days of the call were marked with more than 30,000 visits of the Facebook page of OER.

The second specific objective of the concept Education of Small Ethnic Communities was directed towards supporting educational institutions and authorities and sustainable systemic solutions that will enable equal educational opportunities for all pupils. The concept continued to contribute to the improvement of policies regulating instruction in the languages of small ethnic communities through research, translations, and policy papers.

FOSM established cooperation with the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) on several aspects of improving the quality of education. A team of BDE-advisers and two university professors

developed “Guidelines on Upbringing and Educational Aspects in Combined Classes in Primary School” which was translated, printed in 5 instruction languages (Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, Serbian, and Bosnian) and distributed to the schools. The Guidelines are expected to serve the teachers and the managing staff in organizing the teaching process in combined classes in the schools. The “Guide on the Work of School Inclusion Teams” published by BDE in Macedonian and Albanian language targeting the inclusion teams in the school was translated and printed in Turkish and Serbian language.

We provided assistance to translate the new draft-concept for primary education school in Turkish, Albanian, Bosnian and Serbian language so that it will be easier for the public and the stakeholders interested to access it and get involved with their suggestions and commentaries. *FOSM* developed its own commentaries and suggestions on the Concept for primary education and the Concept on distance learning thereby giving its contribution to the upcoming national educational reforms.

Within the framework of the concept, several research and analysis on the public educational reforms were conducted. With the support of *FOSM*, *Metamorphosis* performed the research titled [“The Conditions and Challenges for Conducting Online Teaching in Elementary Schools in RNM”](#), in the period March – June 2020, focusing on the technical aspects and recommendations for improvement.

In partnership with *Step by Step* a research was conducted looking into the positions and opinions of the teachers, the management team, and the professional services of 30 schools related to the realization of online teaching. The result was a [“Study](#) on assessing the state of affairs, needs and challenges for implementing online teaching in primary schools in rural areas where the language of instruction is a language of the small ethnic communities as well as children with social-economic risks” whose purpose was to define recommendations and contribute to better preparation of the educational system in the academic year 2020/2021.

With the support of the Administration for Development of Education in Languages of Small Ethnic Communities, the analysis titled [“Education in Languages of Small Ethnic Communities”](#) was developed. The purpose of the analysis was to investigate the set measures for education in languages of small ethnic communities and the selective subject, language and culture in the regulation and in the strategic national documents, the current state of affairs, the challenges, obstacles and perspectives.

In 2020 the support of projects contributing to Roma inclusion in education continued as the third strategic goal of this concept.

The three-year project **Stay@School: Action for Inclusion of Roma in Primary Education**, funded by the European Union started in October 2019. The project, whose implementer is *FOSM*, is realized together with the *Association Centre for Educational Support “Dendo Vas”* and the *Foundation for Educational and Cultural Initiatives “Step by Step”*, in partnership with the Ministry for Education and Science (MES). By decreasing the financial burden related to the education of the children from the most vulnerable Roma families, the purpose of the project is to increase the scope of pupils and to decrease Roma dropouts in primary schools, thereby contributing to regular school attendance and successful moving to the next grade.

[In the academic year 2019/2020 stipends were awarded](#) to 282 first graders. [In the academic year 2020/2021](#) 320 stipends were awarded to first graders and 318 pupils were enrolled in second grade. The 400-Euro stipends per year were awarded for covering the costs of schooling. Keeping the

stipend depends on regular attendance of the pupils at school as well as on the successful passing to the next grade. The stipends are intended for Roma pupils whose families receive social welfare.

The beginning of the new academic year was marked with the media campaign “Write Your Future Letter by Letter”, to educate, motivate and promote the benefits from education in the future life of the children, including the quality of living. The two videos were broadcasted by 6 national and 6 local/regional televisions and shared on social media and web-portals, including branding of bus No.: 19 that commutes through the center of Skopje. All that sent out a clear message to the public that all children have the right to good quality education and that we all have an obligation to contribute to the fulfillment of that right.

For the purpose of identifying the children outside the educational system, their enrollment at school, regular attendance and successful passing to the next grade, 29 assistants were hired to support the Roma community and cooperate with the Roma families and schools. In December 2020, a new call was published, and an additional 33 assistants were hired.

The project approved grants of 2,500 Euro to 20 schools to implement small projects – through games and common participation in school activities encouraged interaction and exchange of knowledge amongst pupils. Due to the pandemic, the activities will be implemented in the course of 2021, immediately after conditions allow physical presence of pupils in schools. For these schools, a four-day training on social justice as well as on recognizing and dealing with discrimination took place and 62 teachers were trained.

With the support of the *Defense for Children's Rights Association* in the implementation of the project “Social and Educational Support of Street Children”, approximately 60 children received support every day in fulfilling their school tasks in the premises of the Daily Centre of the association. The team of the Centre helped them register on the national platform for distance learning, while the beneficiaries who did not have electronic equipment to follow, in agreement with their home-room teachers, the team downloaded the teaching contents and disseminated them to the pupils. The beneficiaries received snacks as well, and during the whole year the team was in ongoing communication with the families related to the Coronavirus prevention measures and the need for health care and concern.

The *Association Roma Business Information Centre of Macedonia (RBICM)* within the framework of the project “Pedagogic assistant for primary education pupils” delivered a 3-month training workshop and certified 26 pedagogic assistants on the basis of the program accredited last year. The certified pedagogic assistants secured educational support to the pupils that needed it and were in contact – at all times - with the parents and the school pedagogues in several primary schools in the municipality Butel, Chair, Gazi Baba and Gjorche Petrov. When the school closed, the activities of the pedagogic assistants continued online. The pupils who could not attend school regularly were visited by the pedagogic assistants in their homes respecting the healthcare protocols.

Until the end of 2020, *FOSM* administered the stipends for young Roma students of Medicine and other study programs within the framework of the programs RMUSP and RHSO, funded by the Roma Educational Fund.

With the financial support of the Educational Support Program of the Open Society Foundations, additional projects of strategic interest for *FOSM* were sustained.

The project *Schools Community Self-Governance for Climate, Disaster and Social Resilience* was a coordinated effort of four national foundations (Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, and Kosovo), and it included analyzing the state of affairs and assessing the needs and opportunities for installing photovoltaic energy systems in a specific number of schools to achieve energy efficiency and environmental protection. Four (4) international experts were selected to develop a feasibility study. The expert from Macedonia will work on the chapter covering the technical aspects and opportunities for installing photovoltaic systems in the schools. Local experts will also be engaged to collect the necessary data for the study envisaged for the first quarter of 2021. With the assistance of the thematic program, a project-proposal will be developed to fund the planned investments in the selected schools in the country.

The *Association of Researchers and Analysts (ZMAI)*, with the financial assistance received in 2019, implemented a research in 10 municipalities and 48 schools to determine the current state of the infrastructure, financing capital investments and the way decisions are made concerning the part of both the local and central budget for each school. With the data collected through the analysis and the on-the-spot visits, graphical comparative drawings were developed on the current and the required infrastructural efforts, as well as the needs for equipping the schools with technology and didactical material. In addition, the so-called “personal identification cards” of the schools published on their websites and on the websites of the municipalities are being created. The findings were published in the publication [“Analysis of the needs for investment in infrastructure and technology in 48 primary schools in 10 municipalities in the Republic of North Macedonia”](#). The analysis offers a proposal for determining the methodology and the formula by which investments in primary schools would be transparent, fair and will enable balanced and sustainable development of all primary schools. Thanks to the engagement by MES and the financial support of the World Bank project, ZMAI will apply the proposed methodology to determine the investment needs of all schools in the country.

The project “Strengthening the Network of School Principals in RNM” that the *Association of School Principals of Primary and Secondary Schools* initiated in November 2019, aimed at strengthening the capacities of the association for strategic planning so that it will be recognized as a serious stakeholder in educational policymaking. The planned direct meetings and regional meetings with the members of the association were not possible due to the pandemic and the obligations related to the organization of the teaching activity in the schools, therefore they were implemented by means of online workshops led by a Consultant. Nevertheless, the strategic planning process was successful, and it will be completed in the first quarter of 2021 with the promotion of the strategic document throwing light on the future actions of development of the association.

Within the framework of the regional project **Anti-corruption in Education and Healthcare**, the *Community Support Centre of Municipality Struga* in partnership with the *Centre for Civic Communication* conducted an analysis of three public procurements, those being: building a sport hall in the high school “D-r. Ibrahim Temo”, procurement of hygienic goods, soft drinks and foodstuff for the student dormitory “Brothers Miladinov” and the procurement of heating wood for the schools administered by the municipality of Struga. The analysis was based on reviewing tender documents, received through FOI, focus groups and interviews, while the findings and recommendations were disseminated for the purpose of improving the transparency of the municipality, the quality of the goods procured, and the services obtained by the schools concerned.

RAPID RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CRISIS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CONCEPT EDUCATION OF SMALL ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

Supporting Education

With the sudden closing of the schools and moving onto online teaching, education became one of the areas most concerned with the COVID-19 pandemic threatening to increase the inequalities and long-term negative ramifications on the social cohesion of society. Recognizing education as one of the areas that requires urgent support, *FOSM*, within the framework of the strategic concept Education of Small Ethnic Communities, secured technical equipment (mobile computers, desktops, printers, smart-boards) for a resource-classroom for online classes of smaller ethnic communities. The equipment enabled the teachers and schools to organize good quality teaching (online, physical presence and/or hybrid form).

Thanks to the enhanced regional cooperation and *FOSM*'s participation in regional projects aimed at mitigating the consequences from COVID-19 pandemic and funded by the Program for the Support of Education of the Open Society Foundations, *FOSM* provided 350 tablets with Internet connections for pupils of the poorest families belonging to the ethnic minority communities from the 10 schools thus enabling pupils to attend classes regularly.

Within the cooperation established with MES and BDE, *FOSM* translated the lesson plans and protocols for primary and secondary schools, including the algorithm on dealing with pupils suspected or positive of COVID-19 in all languages of instruction. *FOSM* helped with the translation of the short version of the curriculum in all languages of instruction.

CONCEPT: LEGAL EMPOWERMENT NETWORK STRATEGY

Although the four-year global Initiative for Legal Empowerment of Open Society Foundations was formally over at the end of 2019, *FOSM* continued with legal empowerment activities in 2020 as well. In the midst of the pandemic, when the citizens from marginalized groups faced the difficulties and the need for assistance for practicing their healthcare, social and rights stemming from the governmental anti-crisis measures just proved that the strategic decision to continue with this concept was right.

The support of 15 civic organizations that provided legal, paralegal and free legal aid for poor and the marginalized groups of citizens (Roma, sexual workers, drug-users, textile workers) increased with additional support from the Joint COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund of Open Society Foundations.

An increase of more than 50% of assisted citizens from these groups can be observed compared to the number of services provided in 2019. In 2020, a total of 5,598 legal or paralegal services were provided, compared to 2,971 in 2019. In addition, the associations that provide free legal and paralegal aid to textile workers note an increase of the number of citizens who required free legal aid – total of 1,708 citizens compared to 1,113 citizens who required and received free legal aid in 2019. The most frequent aid offered was related to social security, employment rights, housing, domestic violence, discrimination on the ground of pregnancy, obtaining financial assistance through the economic measures adopted by the Government etc. Twenty-three (23) requests for extraordinary inspections were submitted to the National Labor Inspectorate and three procedures were initiated

in the primary courts for pension insurance renumeration, annulment of the Decision on disciplinary action against a healthcare worker and a criminal procedure against an employer for violating employment rights. Meetings were organized with institutions on national and local level for improving working conditions of textile workers during the pandemic. Subsequently, regulations and measures were adopted to improve the protection of textile workers. Ten announcements were published as well as 11 monthly reports on violations of textile worker's rights and functioning of protective mechanisms, including 4 infographics with data from reported violations.

A policy paper on the access to expertise in cases with approved secondary legal aid was developed as well as a report on the tendencies on providing legal aid to poor citizens in pandemic conditions. A Framework Memorandum with the Lawyer's Chamber of the Republic of North Macedonia was concluded specifying the cooperation for advancing access to justice and *pro bono* legal aid services.

Our advocacy for legal empowerment of marginalized groups of citizens was additionally strengthened with the implementation of the project **Access to Justice for the Most Marginalized**³. The activities of this project secured more than 3,200 legal and paralegal services pertaining to social security, employment rights, health insurance, economic measures for financial assistance of citizens, family relations, discrimination, domestic violence etc. Paralegals and jurists working with sexual workers provided 589 legal and 1,085 paralegal services, while 452 legal and 170 paralegal services were secured for drug-users. A total of 452 legal counselling and 300 paralegal services, out of which 180 were made available through the web-based tool "Call Urgent Paralegal Aid" – all provided for the Roma, social risk families and rural inhabitants. Through two video podcasts, drug-users were informed on the problems related to the pandemic and the impact on the community, as well as decriminalization of drugs and its significance for them and their families. Five workshops were organized on advancing the knowledge of existing and new paralegals, as well as 2 trainings for jurists and paralegals providing services. Creative workshops were organized for the sexual workers who will create products for the community. An info-caravan also took place and 10 places in 3 municipalities were visited in the course of 8 days and 834 citizens were participants. During the action, a shortcoming of the Law on Social Assistance was identified related to the right of guaranteed minimum assistance. That was reported to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and resulted with an amendment to the regulation enabling citizens to benefit from the right of guaranteed minimum assistance by submitting only a personal identity card. All the rest of the documents are now collected by the Social Care Centre in the line of duty. Five (5) strategic cases will be provided with advocacy, and 4 of them are already initiated. Contents were regularly published on the website www.pravnozajakni.mk, including advice, information and resources related to access to justice.

Comprehensive training on social entrepreneurship, along with months-long individual mentorship of 10 civic organizations started in 2019. As a result, 6 organizations were supported to implement social and economic activities during 2021 thereby securing additional funds for legal services.

FOSM's advocacy resulted with North Macedonia being the first Western Balkan country to include the priority area Access to Justice in the fourth National Action Plan for Open Government Partnership 2018-2020. Subsequently, the fifth session of the Council for Coordination and Monitoring the Process of OGP and NAP 2018-2020, this area was recognized as exceptionally important and structured as a separate priority area within the framework of the next NAP 2021-

³ The project is funded by the European Union and implemented by *FOSM* in partnership with *HOPS-Healthy Options Skopje* and *Station LET from Prilep*.

2023. In addition, including Access to Justice as a separate priority area with exceptional importance to marginalized communities was also noted in the recommendations of the Secretariat or OGP and the Independent Reporting Mechanism⁴. In the co-creation process of the OGP Action Plan 2021-2023, through an open call for participation, 15 organizations of the Network of Civic Organizations were able to participate in this area.

Within the framework of the regional project **Anti-corruption in Education and Healthcare**, the *Association STATION L.E.T.* in partnership with the *Centre for Civic Communications*, in the area of healthcare, undertook an analysis on three completed public procurement procedures implemented by PHO General Hospital “Borka Taleski”, Prilep during 2018-2019. The procurement concerned was of foodstuffs, medical supplies, and supplies. Based on the data received through 4 FOI, 15 interviews and 3 focus groups with citizens who used hospital services, a policy paper was drafted – bulletin containing all project activities and the analysis of the public procurements. A public debate also took place.

RAPID RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CRISIS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CONCEPT LEGAL EMPOWERMENT NETWORK STRATEGY

Support for the Marginalized Groups of Citizens

FOSM responded rapidly to help the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of citizens. In partnership with the *Red Cross of RNM – Red Cross of the City of Skopje* and with the local support of 10 civic organizations⁵ implemented 3 actions⁶ distributing a total of 12,266 humanitarian packages. The packages contained basic foodstuffs, hygienic products, personal hygiene items and COVID-19 protection goods as well as various types of vitamin supplements. The quantity of the products was planned in accordance with determined standards for meeting the needs of a 4–5-member family for a 30-day period. Approximately 26,000 persons/citizens from a total 20 municipalities⁷ and 2 suburbia settlements⁸ with a significant number of Roma population, including 11 rural areas⁹ where poor families live in substandard conditions who could not afford to provide basic living conditions were part of the scheme.

Apart from that, a quick assessment of the possible economic and social consequences on the health crisis was developed. Even in the initial months of the lockdown in the country, serious violations of employment rights, were identified – workers included in the non-formal economy were left without income and faced grave difficulties in acquiring the rights that they were entitled to with the governmental anti-crisis measures. To prevent further vulnerability and marginalization of the groups concerned, it was very important to secure that they get timely and appropriate administrative and legal aid in acquiring their employment rights and access the governmental anti-

⁴ <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/north-macedonia-design-report-2018-2020/>

⁵ NGO Romano Chachipe, Skopje; IRIZ Skopje, Sonce Tetovo, Station LET Prilep; NRC Kumanovo; NGO KHAM Delchevo, NGO LIL Skopje, HOPS Skopje, Centre for Street Children in Shuto Orizari and ad hoc body Roma Crisis Headquarters, Berovo.

⁶ First distribution 3,778 packages with foodstuffs and hygienic products and products for personal protection in March-April 2020, second distribution 1,261 packages with foodstuffs and hygienic products and personal protection products in May 2020 and third distribution 2,188 packages with hygienic products and supplements (vitamins) in December 2020.

⁷ Shuto Orizari, Tetovo, Gostivar, Kumanovo, Prilep, Bitola, Krivogashtani, Dolneni, Delcevo, Vinica, Berovo, Shtip, Probishtip, Veles, Strumica, Kochani, Kichevo, Kavadarci, Negotino and Radovish.

⁸ Settlements Vizbegovo and Zlokukani, city of Skopje

⁹ Village Crnik in Pehchevo and villages Vtoliste, Kruseica, Polciste, Besiste, Vogjani, Vrbjani, Dupjacani, Nebregovo, Dunje, Caniste, Drenovci in the vicinity of Prilep.

crisis measures. Therefore, in July 2020, through the Joint COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund of the Open Society Foundations, *FOSM* secured support to a group of 15 civic organizations – local Roma organizations that provide paralegal assistance, professional organizations that give free legal aid as well as human rights protection organizations. This support assured timely assistance for a large number of low-income and non-formal employees - who were mainly women, Roma and single parents – to get access to the national assistance measures required to fulfill basic living needs and protection of their employment rights.

From July to December 2020, 8 organizations¹⁰ in 16 municipalities¹¹ provided a total of 5,598 legal or paralegal services.

Most frequently served were the Roma, single parent low-income workers, persons without income, employees, sexual workers, drug-users, social assistance beneficiaries and retired persons with low pensions. Most frequent violations were employment rights, social and children protection, health insurance and security, patient rights, using temporal measures and access to anti-crisis financial measures of the Government, stipends for Roma pupils in primary and secondary schools, domestic violence, and family law, acquiring personal documents, support for self-employment and opening one's own business.

Five organizations, licensed for providing free legal aid¹², secured legal and paralegal assistance to 860 citizens in 11 towns¹³. Most frequent assistance was requested by unemployed persons, Roma, low-income or no-income persons, non-formal economy workers, victims of domestic violence, textile workers, pensioners, disabled persons, and drug-users. Most frequent violations identified were rights from the fields of employment, social security, domestic violence, housing, bailiff and notary procedures, discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy, benefitting from temporal measures and the right to domestic payment card. Two specific cases for strategic advocacy were identified.

In order to assess the impact of the health crisis on the social, economic and health status of vulnerable groups, two researches were performed – on national level related to the impact of the pandemic on the economic situation, domestic violence and healthcare of women (1025 respondents) and researching the impact of the health crisis on local level especially on unemployed Roma women or those who are part of the non-formal economy of Roma communities in 4 municipalities¹⁴ in a total of 48 settlements with a dominant Roma population with a total of 1,992 Roma households. The results of the implemented surveys will be published in the first quarter of 2021, when the analysis on the implementation of the budget of the four sets of the governmental economic measures will be also published.

FOSM was providing ongoing support and coordination of 12 organizations that continued with outreach activities for vulnerable citizens from the Roma community despite the difficult conditions. From the beginning of the pandemic until the end of the year a total of 38 weekly online meetings took place to share current outreach events and agree common requests and responses to competent

¹⁰ KHAM, IRIZ, Romano Chachipe, HOPS, Station L.E.T., Sonce, HERA, Lil.

¹¹ Skopje, Delchevo, Pehchevo, Vinica, Shuto Orizari, Prilep, Dolneni, Krivogashtani, Karposh, Gjorche Petrov, Saraj, Tetovo, Gostivar, Ohrid, Struga, and Strumica.

¹² EHO – Educational Humanitarian Organization Shtip; National Roma Centrum Kumanovo; Helsinki Committee for Human Rights Skopje, Youth Cultural Centre Bitola and Izbor Strumica.

¹³ Skopje, Bitola, Demir Hisar, Prilep, Kumanovo, Shtip, Strumica, Valandovo, Kochani, Sveti Nikole, Vinica.

¹⁴ Delchevo, Vinica, village Crnik in Pehchevo and Shuto Orizari

institutions. A total of 29 requests were sent, some from specific organizations and some from the group.

For greater visibility of the activities, 11 short videos were published about the problems and challenges faced by the Roma community and 13 video stories on the life of persons from marginalized communities. Three (3) educational materials with 1,100 print-run in Macedonian and Romani languages for the Roma from the non-formal economy involved waste collectors, domestic workers and market salespersons were also distributed.

To animate the broader public about the difficulties and problems faced by the Roma community when benefitting from social and health rights in pandemic conditions, representatives of Roma organizations implemented two activities – in Skopje and Kumanovo – in cooperation with *FOSM*'s creative activism team.

INITIATIVE “GET OUT AND VOTE!”

Early Parliamentary Elections Initiative

As a result of the postponed date for EU accession talks, early Parliamentary Elections were scheduled for April 2020. To address the expected lower turnout on these elections, *FOSM* implemented the initiative “Get Out and Vote!” based on the previous experience and acquired knowledge throughout the years covering various aspects of the election process – from monitoring elections, legal aid for citizens on their rights and obligations, up to creating educational turn-out campaigns and active use of the voting right. For this initiative, *FOSM* secured resources from the Election Integrity Initiative Fund of the Open Society Foundations.

The initiative “Get Out and Vote!” was planned as a set of activities for the period February–May 2020, the changed conditions however caused by the COVID-19 pandemic postponed the elections for July 2020, thereby postponing the activities of the initiative and partly changing the strategy.

Several activities were implemented within the framework of the initiative. A **media campaign** with 5 different TV-spots¹⁵ and radio-advertisements in Macedonian and Albanian language, web-banners and communication on social networks was calling on the citizens to exercise their voting right. Although four weeks were planned, due to the COVID-19 situation and the postponement of the elections, the campaign took place on all channels for two weeks. In that period, the campaign had a total reach of 72% of the TV target group, over three million impressions were created in the form of web-banners as well as 1 million impressions and 400,000 interactions on Facebook and Instagram including 100,000 interactions with the target group. Two episodes of the **TV show YESTERDAY'S NEWS** were created covering the issues of turnout, voting security protocols, as well as the importance of exercising the right to vote in democratic societies by means of humor and satire. The episodes were broadcasted on TV Channel 5 in June and July, and parts of the episodes were shared on social networks. The episodes, together with all the rest of communications related to **YESTERDAY'S NEWS**, had a total of 352,000 reach on TV, 47,000 visits on YouTube, 2,4 million reach on Facebook and 77,000 on Instagram. The project “**Against Misinformation for Greater Elections**”

¹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Qq2RnNtZs>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dd_wWCj_sI4; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEnYaeLsC-k>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6sI8Ahu-Pw>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nyZUfjTG3Bk>

Turnout", implemented by the partner-organization *Foundation for Internet and Society Metamorphosis*, was one of the key activities of the initiative. During the election campaign, all misinformation related to the election process were edited and checked by local fact-checkers for the purpose revealing the real facts to the public. The exposed news was shared to the local media as well as the social networks for further dissemination. The activities of the project contributed to increased level of information of the public by unveiling the masks of the information communicated to the public, especially on local level. Debunked information (checked misinformation) published in a total of 93 texts had 930 publications on 10 online media. All 93 articles were shared on Facebook, online media in Skopje as well as on the Facebook pages on the portals.

**KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND/OR ACTIVITIES THAT
MARKED THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATIONS
SUPPORTED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE
STRATEGIC FIELDS OF FOSM IN 2020**

FIELD: STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND ENGAGEMENT

Within the framework of the strategic field Students' Rights and Engagement, *FOSM* continued to work on advancing student rights and youth engagement for better student and youth policies and greater transparency and accountability in higher education by supporting the initiatives and projects of several youth and other organizations.

Youth Educational Forum (YEF) implemented a cycle of 10 open online lectures titled “(Extra)Ordinary Lectures” on different topics from several areas such as: debate, environment, international relations, statistics, law, technology, theatre, medicine, social equality, cosmology film and feminism. A total of 374 secondary and higher education students were involved in the lectures and the follow-on discussions. Due to the high interest, additional four were “(Extra)Ordinary Projection” were implemented involving 145 young people who watched 7 short films of four national directors. “(Extra)Ordinary Projections” in co-production with *Radio MOF* offered space for getting familiar with domestic cinematography and the young film workers.

Around 500 secondary school students were involved in the lectures organized in 26 Youth Clubs for Non-formal Education nationwide. More than 40 students and graduates got involved in leading these clubs thereby securing a platform for youth development and discussion on topics that are still left out from formal education at a time of a health crisis. In 2020, the first national online debate competition took place involving 47 debaters from the whole country, and 80 young people from the clubs virtually visited the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Environment. Two 2-day online capacity-buildings trainings for student representatives took place – student ombudsman and advocacy trainings that included more than 30 student representatives from the university “Ss. Cyril and Methodius”.

Two research projects were conducted this year as well those being “Secondary School Student Experience and Recommendations For a Better Digital Education” to hear the opinions and challenges faced by secondary school students during online education and “Crisis Attempts of Higher Education Institutions To Digitalize the Academic Year 2019/20” aiming at detecting the problems faced by higher education institutions of RNM, as well as to provide a comparative analysis of the manner in which other countries are dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

YEF representatives were involved in the working group on youth of the Ministry of Education and Science, as well as in the Council for Cooperation of Civic Organizations with the Government. On *Radio YEF* more than 140 announcements on education, youth and their initiatives were shared along with 10 analyses of the current situation of youth. Four (4) video pieces were produced, and they were visited over 20,000 times. From the program “In Class”, 5 new episodes were made.

In the last quarter of 2020, *YEF* began to create a digital platform for non-formal education that would offer training for students, young people, and teachers. The purpose of the platform is to serve as a source for educational resources and online space for short and long trainings to develop critical thinking.

The activities of two youth networks, funded in 2019, continued to act in 2020 as well. The **National Youth Council of Macedonia (NYCM)** published a paper that stemmed from monitoring student elections in the three state universities in Bitola, Shtip and Tetovo titled “*Analysis of Student (Re)forming in the state universities in Shtip, Bitola and Tetovo*”. *NYCM* organized a public online final event titled “How did the students organize themselves: from law to practice” enabling partner-

organizations to share their experience from the implementation of the project. The **Network for Preventing Brain-Drain** led by **Leaders of Education, Activism and Development** created the website www.braindrain.mk within the project and published a public policy paper titled “How to hold on to youth? Brain-drain as the biggest challenge of the Republic of North Macedonia”. The results of the research and publication “Analysis on the Implementation of the Strategy for Networking, Cooperation and Prevention of Brain-Drain of Good Quality, Highly Educated Human Capital 2013-2020” were disseminated on the final event of the project.

The **Association for Educational Development EKVALIS** in cooperation with the organizations **YEF**, **HERA** and **Psihoterapika** received support for implementing the project “Youth Packages and Engagement Through Youth Campaigns” aiming at creating contents lacking from formal education for young people. The project is expected to contribute to the training of over 300 young people from 12 different towns on topics such as: human rights, digital literacy and digital security, critical and analytical thinking, sexual education, and mental care concerns. Teams from the organization prepared the lectures that at the beginning of 2021 will be published for interested young people to apply for and attend lectures that are not available in formal education. Every participant will then have an opportunity to apply in a youth campaign organization with the support of mentors from the involved organizations. The expectation is that the project will also contribute to engaging young people in local communities and municipalities in order to raise public awareness about important societal issues and advocating solutions to the problems of young people.

The **Independent Academic Union (IACU)** drafted a package of 9 analyses and research within the framework of the project “Financial Transparency in Higher Education and Science in RNM” to determine the state of affairs in higher education. It focused on various issues and aspects of higher education i.e., higher education budget analysis; financing science; public access to the budget as a policy paper; procedure and criteria for allocation of staff salaries in higher education and science; salaries and structure of employees in higher education, scientific organizations and institutions; and research on the perceptions of academic staff of the valorization of their labor, and transparency and accountability of higher education funding. A survey on the value of academic work of public higher education and scientific institutions was also conducted. The whole study, including the analyses and recommendations is available in the form of a publication titled “Financial Transparency and Accountability in Higher Education and Science in RNM”. The research served as a base for finding draft-solutions and for advocacy work as to overcome the problems identified. In the advocacy efforts, the *IACU* organized conferences and other public events, debates, and press-conferences to share the findings and discuss the recommendations. *IACU* representatives were present in the media as well. Meetings with the central government were also organized.

IACU organized a meeting with approximately 50 representatives of its union-organizations, and performed online debates and working sessions with leaders and representatives of academic unions from the region to exchange experience related to the methodology and advocacy efforts of the academic unions. *IACU* advocates for the conclusion of a Collective Agreement of the higher education and science branch determining the lowest salary for a specific degree of work complexity to be used as the basis for regulating the salaries of all higher education and scientific institutions.

The project “**Engaged Students for Dormitories Free of Corruption in RNM**” was implemented in the period November 2019 - December 2020 with the financial support of the Higher Education Support Program of Open Society Foundations. The project was realized by **YEF** in partnership with

the **Association for Development of Urban Culture and Space Utilization (MELEEM)** from Skopje, **Legal Think** from Shtip and **Youth Educational Centre (YEC)** from Bitola.

YEF conducted a research on the quality of living, the involvement of students in decision-making and corruption in the three student dormitories in the country. The field research was finalized before the crisis on the basis of already defined methodology, including a focus group that took place in the dormitory Pelagonija in Skopje. The findings of the research were presented in the report titled “On Housing Issues: Research on Tenant’s Living Standards from the Student Dormitories “Brakja Miladinovci” – Shtip, “Kocho Racin” – Bitola and “Pelagonija” - Skopje and discussed on a final online event that included the directors/representatives of the dormitories. The report put forward a set of recommendations aiming to improve the quality of living, student involvement in the dormitories as well as advancing the level of transparency of their work.

MELEEM organized a hackathon with students of architecture and dormitory tenants generating ideas for improving the living conditions in the dormitories. The three best student initiatives (following a small space intervention for each dormitory) were implemented in the period October-November 2020, thereby enriching and improving the open space where students can spend their time.

Legal Think developed a [guide](#) on the rights and obligations of students stemming from the Law on Higher Education and the new university statutes, as well as the rights and obligations of the students living in the dormitories. Based on this Guide, 6 online trainings were organized covering student rights for interested tenants in two of the dormitories. Additional 3 video-trainings were developed that included students who were tenants in the dormitories.

Radio YEF developed several video pieces, organized a video challenge and a series of 3 online debates for student-tenants and/or representatives of competent institutions discussed the need and time of opening dormitories, life in the dormitories in pandemic conditions, as well as other aspects from the conducted research of student dormitories. The video contents had over 50,000 visits. In addition, **Radio YEF** monitored and reported on the situation and conditions in the student dormitories in more than 30 pieces of news that have over 10,000 visits.

FIELD: RIGHTS-BASED HEALTH POLICIES

In the field of Rights-Based Health Policies, **FOSM** provided support to organizations that work on advancing health policies that enable health services and rights of marginalized communities (LGBTI, Roma, drug-users, sexual workers, and people with HIV). The activities of these organizations were directed towards achieving the strategic goals in this field: (1) monitoring and analysis of the healthcare budget and demanding accountability from the authorities for the allocation of maximum funds available to enable progressive and non-discriminatory fulfillment of health rights; (2) advocating healthcare reforms in accordance with the needs of the communities; and (3) enabling the involvement and participation of communities concerned in planning, monitoring and evaluation of implemented health policies. In 2020, the **Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women – ESE**, **HOPS – Health Options Project Skopje**, **Coalition Margins**, **Association for Support of Marginalized Workers STAR-STAR** and **Foundation IDEA Southeast Europe** were supported.

Through the year, their work and activities were adjusted to the conditions of COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2020, the *Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women – ESE*, as part of its regular monitoring the implementation of preventive programs of the Ministry of Health, developed 5 analysis: [Monitoring the program on regular check-ups of pupils and students for 2018 with included findings from Roma communities identified by the survey on household entry](#); [Monitoring the program for active healthcare of mothers and children for 2018 – with included findings from the Roma communities identified by the household entry survey](#); [Budget changes of the program on active healthcare of mothers and children in the period 2017-2019](#); [Monitoring the implementation of the program on regular check-ups of pupils and students for 2017](#); and [Comparative analysis of the implementation of the cervical cancer screening program in 2012 and 2018](#). In July, a press-conference and a public debate on the topic “How Macro-Economic Policies Influence Access to Healthcare of Women, Mothers and Children”¹⁶ were organized. The findings on the influence of macro-economic policies on the healthcare budget, including access of women, mothers and children to preventive health services, as well as the findings of the monitoring on preventive programs were presented. Special focus was given to the multi-annual negligence of preventive healthcare as to see the reasons behind the negative impact of pandemic conditions.

In cooperation with *Vidi Vaka*, a short video¹⁷ on the key problems was developed related to women included in the cervical cancer screening program and breast cancer screening program with a special focus on the small number of Roma women included in these screening programs.

A “Draft Action Plan for Advancing Health and Healthcare of Women, Mothers and Children for the Purpose of Decreasing Perinatal and Breastfeeding Infant Mortality in RNM for 2020–2030”¹⁸ was developed that included measures and activities for improving women’s reproductive health and the health of mothers and infants that will lead to ongoing decrease of the perinatal and infant rate of mortality. In October, the Plan was publicly presented on a press-conference and public debate with participants from the Ministry of Health, the Health Insurance Fund, the Health Protection Office for Mothers and Children, Association of Family Doctors, healthcare workers and representatives from civil society organizations.

In order to evaluate the level of reactive and proactive transparency, as well as the level of efficiency and transparency in implementing public procurement procedures, more than 70 public institutions were evaluated. Three reports were developed and published pertaining to 2019 and recommendations were submitted to 89 public institutions. 1,777 public procurement procedures from 62 public institutions were monitored. The report drafted throws light on the changes of the efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and transparency of the institutions in the period 2016-2020. Based on the report, recommendations were submitted to all 62 public institutions. In addition, a public event was organized on the International Day of Freedom to Information, and representatives from the institutions as well as national and international civic organizations took part. To raise public awareness about the significance of fiscal transparency and the need for priority-based budgeting, as well as to promote the results achieved, more than 587 pieces of information were developed and published which were visited more than 80,000 times on the social media and Internet website of *ESE*. In cooperation with the *IDEA Southeast Europe Foundation* a questionnaire was created to collect

¹⁶ <http://www.esem.org.mk/index.php/shto-rabotime-sega/3748-javna-debata-na-tema-„kako-makroekonomskite-politiki-vlijaat-vrz-pristapot-do-zdravstvena-zastita-za-zenite-majkite-i-decata”.html>

¹⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/1005267336250614/videos/225500879238230>

¹⁸ <http://www.esem.org.mk/pdf/Publikacii/2020/Nacionalen%20akcionen%20plan%202020-2030.pdf>

information from social media beneficiaries on the topics that they would like to read more and hear different opinions and positions. On the basis of the collected information from the citizens, a debate was organized titled “How much will EU accession help in improving healthcare and the efficiency of the budget process?”¹⁹

During 2020 ongoing mentorship and technical assistance were provided for the 3 Roma partner-organizations (*Romano Chachipe*, *IRIZ* and *KHAM*) that work with the Roma communities in Shuto Orizari, Delchevo, Vinica and Pehchevo. The support was secured by adapting the “COVID-19 Call for Action: What Can you Do in the Community to Promote Social Solidarity in Times of Physical Distancing”²⁰. The purpose of the call was to help the organizations adapt their work to the newly created circumstances. Material to inform and educate the Roma community on various topics related to the pandemic were developed. All materials are uploaded on the Internet and social networks of *ESE* to be accessible for other civic organizations, as well as for all the population. Regarding the governmental measures as a response to COVID-19 pandemic, a Guide was developed explaining the procedures to acquire the rights stemming from the newly adopted governmental measures, so that the Roma partner-organizations can provide appropriate good quality assistance to the Roma population. A Guide was drafted with instructions on developing two *community score cards* related to the health and health protection of mothers and children as well as for women’s reproductive health, including a Guide on Budget Analysis and Interpretation of Budget Related Data. Focus of the Roma health improvement advocacy activities was on healthcare and improvement of the situation in times of pandemic. Individually, and in cooperation with other civic organizations, several demands and responses to institutions related to the advancement of the situation were prepared²¹; a press-conference and public debate titled “Challenges Met by Roma Women, Mothers and Children in Accessing Primary Healthcare”²² took place, and support to partner-organizations to draft local advocacy strategies was secured.

Capacity-building activities were also implemented as well as technical assistance and mentorship of the organizations from the region so that they can apply the methodologies on social accountability and legal empowerment. Upon the request of DPNSEE and in cooperation with *HOPS – Healthy Options Project Skopje*, support and mentorship for three organizations implementing harm reduction programs from Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina on applying the methodology on budget analysis and advocacy was secured. In 2020, for the needs of 12 civic organizations in the country – two individual organizations and a network consisting of 10 civic organizations²³ technical assistance and support was provided. A training and implementation material were developed for healthcare public institutions as well as for the sector on employment and application of social accountability methodologies, including material for piloting and institutionalization of the methodologies with the sectors concerned.

Regarding the advancement of the access of women on the labor market, an analysis²⁴ was developed reviewing the status of women and the labor market, with a specific focus on the active employment measures and services, identifying barriers of access of women to the measures and services available, and providing concrete recommendations for future active employment measures and

¹⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmHiCaLHTcE&t=850s>

²⁰ <http://www.esem.org.mk/pdf/Sto%20rabotime/2020/2/Community%20action-final.pdf>

²¹ <http://www.esem.org.mk/pdf/Sto%20rabotime/2020/3/Baranje%20za%20preventivni%20merki%20vo%20Shuto%20Orizari.pdf>

²² <http://www.esem.org.mk/index.php/shto-rabotime-sega/3749-pdf-sto-rabotime-2020-5-informacija-za-mediumi-romi-pdf.html>

²³ NGO LIL, HOPS – Healthy Options Project Skopje and Network for Protection against Discrimination

²⁴ <http://www.esem.org.mk/pdf/Publikacii/2020/Pristap%20na%20zenite%20do%20pazarot%20na%20trud.pdf>

services. A video was also developed and promoted presenting the results and recommendations of the research, including statements made by civic organizations and unemployed citizens. Based on the data from the national research titled “How Much Non-Paid Care in Domestic Conditions Costs?”, that detected key problems faced by the care-providers and the families that are not able to deal with the basic living needs of the adult beneficiary, a set of 12 recommendations for improving the state of the care-providers, those who need care and the families benefiting from the service was developed. The recommendations were developed in a consultative process with patient organizations and the care-providers themselves and sent to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy. A press-conference²⁵ took place in November to announce the demands submitted to the State.

In cooperation with the *Association Open Gate La Strada*, an [Alternative Report](#) was drafted for the Children’s Rights Convention related to two chapters, those being Violence Against Children and Disability, Health and Welfare. The alternative report was submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and it will be reviewed on the 88th -pre-session of the Committee.

The ***Association HOPS – Healthy Options Project Skopje (HOPS)*** works on advancing healthcare rights of marginalized communities, with special focus on drug-users, minors who use psychoactive substances and sexual workers.

During 2020, the advocacy focus was on decriminalization of personal drug-use, including cannabis. In partnership with the *Coalition Margins* an Advocacy Strategic Plan was drafted. Meetings with representatives from relevant institutions took place and draft-amendments to the laws regulating this area were submitted - Law on Narcotics Control, Criminal Code, and Law on Misdemeanor of Public Order and Peace. An independent evaluation of the National Drug Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2014–2020 was conducted, while the identified results and recommendations were submitted to relevant institutions and used in the process of planning and drafting the new National Drugs Strategy for the period 2021–2025, including an Action Plan for its consistent implementation. HOPS was part of the cannabis decriminalization and legalization initiative titled “Operation Liberalization” that included a public campaign with ongoing publication of texts, various contents on social networks, organizing podcasts and online discussions to raise public awareness on the need of decriminalizing drug for personal use, including cannabis. A policy paper was developed titled “Decriminalization of Drugs as the Basis for Humane and Effective Drug Policy – Comparative Analysis of Two Models of Decriminalization in Portugal and The Netherlands” specifying the successful results and positive experience of drug decriminalization in both EU Member-States. In November, and International Conference on Drug Regulation took place with the participation of international experts from both countries, national experts and ministers of health, labor and social policy and justice, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Primary Public Prosecution that openly supported the need for decriminalization of personal drug-use and the need to create a national decriminalization model in line with the national context.

Within the framework of the platform for decriminalization of sexual workers, a Declaration on Decriminalization of Sexual Work in RNM was developed and submitted to all political parties prior to the parliamentary elections. Seven political parties signed the Declaration thereby committing further support to the process of decriminalization of sexual work. In 2021, a proposal for decriminalization of sexual work including a proposal for regulation the issue was submitted for the

²⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crXRmcyyNUI&t=306s>

governmental program. In cooperation with the feminist platform *Medusa*, an online campaign for decriminalization of sexual work was implemented.

Advocating the sustainability of the harm reduction programs was directed towards: a) institutionalization of HOPS-programs in the HIV Prevention Program; b) licensing to secure psycho-social services; c) licensing the provision of free legal aid in line with the Law on Free Legal Aid; d) securing funds of local municipalities for supporting the harm reduction actions of civic organizations; e) providing financial support from the excise for alcohol, beer and tabaco products; and f) enabling financial sustainability through a special fund funded with company tax revenue of the companies producing and trading cannabis as provided in the new Law on Narcotic Substance Control. As part of the Fight Against HIV Platform, a Declaration on the Institutionalization of HIV Programs, including the Harm Reduction Programs was submitted to the political parties in the pre-election period, and to the Government of RNM in September. The Declaration advocates amendments to the Law on Health Protection thereby recognizing the civic organizations as health service providers, standardizing the services on harm reduction, and enabling long-term sustainability of these programs. As part of the advocacy efforts two issues of the publication "Drugs – Policies and Practices", "Drugs and the Police", and "Drugs in Macedonia" were published.

In the course of the year, *HOPS* representatives participated actively in the different committees and working groups that were defining the amendments and additions on issues related to: legal and secondary legal acts on national records for legal gender recognition, securing health services for transgender persons, sustainable funding of HIV preventive programs, comprehensive program on treatment, rehabilitation and resocialization of minors using psycho-active substances as preparation of protocol on handling street children and Law on Prevention and Protection of Violence Against Women, including domestic violence.

In conditions of health crisis, the activities for legal support and legal empowerment of sexual workers and drug-users were enabled by telephone, periodical field visits and physical meetings in exceptional cases. Through the harm reduction program, in the two *drop-in* centers in municipality Kisela Voda and Shuto Orizari, a total of 837 legal services and support were secured, 95 clients (76 men and 19 women, out of who 33 were Roma) were contacted. Most of the services - 282 were related to the criminal legal justice, 198 services to the administrative procedures, 155 services to civil law and 107 services to family law. Eight (8) cases of discrimination and unequal treatment based on health conditions were identified, out of which in 3 cases were related to torture, inhumane and degrading behavior and 3 cases the right to access health insurance and health protection were violated.

In the daily support center of sexual workers and their families, through field visits and by telephone, a total of 896 services were provided, a total of 79 various clients were contacted (17 men and 62 women, out of who 45 were Roma). Most of the services provided were related to criminal law - 384, administrative law - 198, civil law - 85 and family law - 183. Apart from legal services, information was secured about the limitations imposed by the governmental measures and precautions, including the criminal and legal ramifications for non-compliance. Fourteen (14) cases on gender-based violence and violation of the rights of sexual workers, including a femicide of a sexual worker who was killed by her partner were documented. At the beginning of the year, in accordance with the Law for Free Legal Aid, *HOPS* registered as a licensed organization for providing free legal aid. The paralegals provided a total of 1,366 paralegal services in the communities for a total of 184 different clients in 5 towns. Most prominent problems and violations were noted in the field of gender-based

and domestic violence, health and social protection, and possibility to access and benefit from the government's economic measures. In 2020, the strategic advocacy of 13 cases for violations of human rights continued in front of the national courts, out of which 4 were sexual workers' cases and 9 were drug-user cases. For one case in favor of 4 sexual workers, the European Court on Human Rights adopted a draft-decision for mutual settlement with a fee of 6,000 Euros. Court's final decision is expected from the European Court of Human Rights on determined violation of rights of drug-users with illegal revealing of medical data and illegal DNA profiling. In May 2020, information was submitted to the Committee for Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women on the state of sexual workers and drug-users in RNM. In June 2020, a report was also submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding the position of children using drugs.

Although with limitations, field and institutional work continued with children drug-users, street children and social risk children. A total of 47 different children (26 boys and 21 girls) who use various kinds of drugs were contacted, out of who 10 children were contacted for the first time, 6 boys and 4 girls, aged 12-17 years. Five (5) children started substitutive therapy on the Toxicology Clinic and Psychiatric Clinic. Two workshops were organized for the social risk children accommodated by state institutions on topics related to love and value system.

Coalition Margins works on the protection and respect of fundamental human rights of marginalized communities, with a focus on LGBTI, drug-users, sexual workers, people who live with HIV and marginalized women.

During 2020, the activities of *Coalition Margins* were directed towards translating actions into meeting goal 16.3 of the global United Nations sustainability goals (promoting rule of law and securing equal access to justice for all) on national level. The legal team of *Coalition Margins* had consultative meetings and communication with several faculties and courts and drafted two shadow reports. One of them was dedicated to the implementation of goal 16.3 on national level²⁶, and the other was on the position of LGBTI persons and their rights represented²⁷ through all 17 development goals. Both reports were presented to the High-Level Political Forum²⁸ of UN and later UN submitted recommendations for their implementation on the basis of the findings of the reports. In partnership with the *Association ESE* an Action Plan was drafted for advancing the access to justice for marginalized communities in accordance with goal 16.3.

To secure a systemic solution to textbooks with discriminatory contents for primary and secondary education and improving education from the viewpoint of equality, non-discrimination and inclusiveness, the cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the Bureau for Development of Education by concluding a Memorandum of Cooperation continued. By means of expert opinions, representatives from *Coalition Margins* participated in the creation of the Program for Professional Orientation of Students, Guidelines on Dealing with Violence in Primary Schools and in the development of the Strategy on Education 2021-2023. Especially important were the Guidelines on Eliminating All Forms of Violence, especially gender-based violence and non-discrimination as well as the proposals for capacity building of teachers to deal with these issues. Two representatives from *Coalition Margins* participated in the working group revising the contents of textbooks from all levels of education. Subsequently, from 4 textbooks contents was revised or removed because it was discriminatory or offensive for marginalized communities. A digital card was developed to map the

²⁶ <http://coalition.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/North-Macedonia-Spotlight-report-2020-1.pdf>

²⁷ http://coalition.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/FINAL_Spotlight-Report-on-the-position-of-LGBTI-persons-in-North-Macedonia.pdf

²⁸ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2020>

problematic and discriminatory contents in textbooks. A lawsuit was initiated to determine discrimination in the textbook “Basics of Personology 2” used in the curriculum of the Institute of Psychology at the Faculty of Philosophy.

Success was achieved in strategic representation before national and international courts. Seven (7) cases on legal recognition of gender, 1 case on asylum seeking of a LGBTI person, 1 civil proceeding on the protection of the right to privacy of two transgender sexual workers, representation of 2 persons in criminal proceedings, 2 women for violation of privacy by publishing pornographic contents, 1 LGBTI person victim of violence, representation of a drug-user and a transgender person in criminal proceedings against a police-officer. Seventy (70) cases of human rights violations of people belonging to marginalized communities were recorded and documented and two procedures were initiated at the European Court of Human Rights for the violation of rights of drug-users.

By monitoring the media, contents offensive to marginalized communities was identified and subsequently, 4 appeals to the Media Ethical Council for printed contents, Internet blog portals, Internet portals and national television show were submitted. A complaint was also initiated to the Media Ethical Council and the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination for spreading hate speech against the LGBTI community and the sexual workers.

Representatives from *Coalition Margins* participated in the preparation of the draft-law on prevention and protection of violence against women and domestic violence and the law on gender equality. The legal team prepared and submitted amendments and additions to the Law on Healthcare, Law on Narcotic Drugs Control as well as proposals for developing secondary legislation of the Ministry of Health for securing sustainable mechanisms for funding the HIV prevention programs. In partnership with other civic organizations, amendments to Article 18 of the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination²⁹, were actively advocated including the consultative process for selection of new members of the Interparliamentary Group for LGBTI and participated in the preparation of the Action Plan on Advancing LGBTI Rights for the period 2021–2025.

Prior to the Parliamentary Elections and in cooperation with a group of civic organizations, a Declaration on urgent adoption of the Law on Prevention and Protection Against Discrimination was signed and supported by 17 political parties. After years-long litigation in national judicial institutions for legal recognition of gender based on self-determination, as well as the positive judgement of the European Court for Human Rights in the case Person X vs. North Macedonia, the Records Administration adopted a decision to change the label for sex in the records.

For the purpose of publicly promoting sexual and health rights of marginalized communities, *Coalition Margins* was the main implementer of the activities of the eighth *Skopje Pride Week* titled “Cruel Optimism” on several locations in Skopje where the festival on queer culture, art and theory³⁰ took place.

To promote transgender rights and in partnership with the non-formal group *TransForm*, 2 video campaigns³¹ were developed to mark the day of visibility of the transgender, an infographic³² was created to mark Trans Remembrance Day 2020, and in partnership with the *Association for Support*

²⁹ The law was adopted in October 2020, however the amendment to Article 18 was not accepted.

³⁰ http://coalition.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/skopje-pride-week-20_katalog_web.pdf

³¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3gEi76jktI> и https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_gUkUXiMT0

³² <https://www.facebook.com/CoalitionMargins/posts/3108584135915016>

of *Marginalized Workers STAR-STAR* the brochure [HIV and GENDER](#) was developed. *TransForm* distributed a total of 25 humanitarian packs to help LGBTI persons who suffered consequences from the health crisis. In addition, 121 LGBTI persons were able to receive psychological counselling.

Foundation IDEA Southeast Europe was supported for the purpose of creating media contents for informing the public better in times of COVID-19 pandemic and raising awareness about the danger of non-democratic trends surfacing and threatening to harm open societies. A total of 102 video contents³³ were created concerning the health crisis, out of which 21 focused on decreasing COVID-19 related fake news and misinformation. Eleven published pieces were pertaining to the problems and challenges faced by the Roma community, while more than 13 videos dealt with the life stories of representatives from marginalized communities. The aim of these pieces was to influence and decrease negative narratives about marginalized groups as well as to diminish the tendencies for creating a new stigma due to the health crisis. Thirty (30) videos were published on various health issues, 6 videos were dedicated to education and online teaching during lockdown, 6 videos witnessed the violations of employment rights, while 14 videos were dedicated to culture and cultural workers related issues.

Association for Support of Marginalized Workers STAR-STAR was supported by the Public Health Program of the Open Society Foundations. This year the activities were directed towards helping the community of sexual workers in dealing with health and social-economic ramifications caused by COVID-19. A humanitarian fund-raising activity was organized to help sexual workers, single mothers, and the families of sexual workers whose livelihood is entirely depended on sexual work. Foodstuff vouchers were purchased from the funds raised as well as hygienic and personal protection products and packages for children. Three hundred (300) information brochures with advice on prevention and means of protection of the disease spread were published. An [analysis](#) was developed on the influence of COVID-19 pandemic on the mental, health, social and economic welfare of sexual workers. The findings confirmed the increase of health inequalities in times of pandemic as well as insecurity in accessing basic healthcare services and goods. In addition, an increase of cases of physical and sexual violence against sexual workers became evident. In compliance with the precautionary protocols, the annual March of Red Umbrellas from 17th December was substituted with a press-conference covering the institutional negligence and exclusion of sexual workers from the national anti-crisis economic measures. With the support of the City of Skopje the second artistic performance *Skopje Red Light District*³⁴ took place in the Universal Hall Skopje to mark the occasion of the International Day to End Violence Against Sexual Workers. The event was broadcasted live through a special platform and followed by approximately 9,300 viewers. Seventy-seven (77) media outlets covered the event by direct transmission and reporting. Twelve (12) monthly electronic publications of the magazine “S-Work”³⁵ were prepared.

³³ <https://www.facebook.com/vidivakamedia/>

³⁴ <https://hops.org.mk/skopje-red-light-district-2020/>

³⁵ <https://starsexwork.org/category/swork-magazine/>

LIST OF PROJECTS SUPPORTED IN 2020

Civil Society Engagement in EU Accession

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Coalition for Sexual and Health Rights of Marginalized Communities MARGINI, Skopje	Promotion of Equality by Monitoring and Strengthening the System for Prevention and Protection Against Discrimination	\$45,000
Center for Legal Research and Analysis, Skopje	Monitoring the Implementation of The Strategy for Reform of The Justice Sector 2020-2021	\$44,760
Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis", Skopje	Monitoring the Performance of State Commission for Prevention of Corruption	\$44,965
TOTAL:		\$134,725

COOPERATION AGREEMENT		
PARTY	PURPOSE	AGREEMENT AMOUNT IN USD
Association of Citizens for Research of International Relations and European Affairs "Prespa Institute", Skopje	EU Observatory	\$15,039
Coalition "All for Fair Trials", Skopje	Strengthening Capacities of Investigative Journalists in The Areas of Chapter 23, With Focus on The Judiciary	\$36,706
Broadcasting company 24 NEWS LTD, Shtip	TV debate "Is there a European Solution to the Macedonian-Bulgarian Knot?" Organized on The Occasion of The Second Edition of The Book "The Macedonian Question from 1944 until Today" by Tchavdar Marinov	\$3,000
TOTAL:		\$54,745

Strengthen Systems of Integrity to Combat Corruption at the Municipal Level

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Association Izbor, Strumica	Enhanced Integrity Systems to Fight Local Level Corruption – Dojran Municipality	\$9,434
Multikultura, Tetovo	For a Municipality Without Corruption!	\$9,575
EHO - Educational-Humanitarian Organization, Shtip	Legal Empowerment of Citizens to Fight Local Level Corruption and Conflict of Interests	\$9,600
Coalition "All for Fair Trials", Skopje	Corruption? Not in My Municipality	\$9,586
Association for Legal Education and Transparency Station LET, Prilep	Legal Education to Fight Corruption	\$9,600
TOTAL:		\$47,795

COOPERATION AGREEMENT		
PARTY	PURPOSE	AGREEMENT AMOUNT IN USD
Association for Research, Quality and Development TEAM INSTITUTE, Skopje	Public Opinion Survey in Prilep, Dojran, Ohrid, Zhelino and Karposh Municipalities Regarding Citizens' Views, Experience and Perception of Local Level Corruption	\$5,589.86
TOTAL:		\$5,589.86

Co-creation Support for the 2021-2023 Open Government Partnership National Action Plan

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women – ESE, Skopje	Co-creation Support for the 2021-2023 Open Government Partnership National Action Plan	\$2,500
Center for Civic Communications, Skopje	Co-creation Support for the 2021-2023 Open Government Partnership National Action Plan	\$2,500
		TOTAL: \$5,000

Responding to the Socio-Economic Effects of COVID-19 by Supporting Vulnerable Groups, Low-Wage, Informal and Gig Worker

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Economic Research and Policy Institute "Finance Think", Skopje	Labor Rights Protection in The Region	\$24,600
Citizens Association of Textile, Leather and Shoe Workers "Loud Textile Worker", Shtip	Labor Rights Protection in The Region	\$24,596
Association for Improvement and Protection of Labor Rights "Dostoinstven rabotnik", Prilep	Labor Rights Protection in The Region	\$24,600
Association for Research and Analysis ZMAI, Skopje	Labor Rights Protection in The Region	\$24,600

Association for Rural Development Local Action Group "Agro Leader", Krivogashtani	Labor Rights Protection in The Region	\$24,600
Association for Policy Research Analytica, Skopje	Labor Rights Protection in The Region	\$24,600
TOTAL:		\$147,596

Community Partnership for Advancing Local Democracy

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Multikultura, Tetovo	Procurements in Primary Schools According to the Public Procurement Law	\$9,485
National Roma Centrum, Kumanovo	Adequate Housing Policies and Practices	\$9,874
Union of Associations for Rural Development LAG's Network, Krivogashtani	Public Money for Public Good	\$8,450
Local Community Development Foundation, Shtip	Civic Lenses 2.0	\$9,990
Regional Geography Society GEOSFERA, Bitola	Hey, I want BAIRO CLEAN!	\$7,460
Citizens' Association Media Plus, Shtip	Tell for Others to Know	\$9,778
Aleksandar Kondev	Photomonography PROTEST/S	\$1,103
TOTAL:		\$56,140

COOPERATION AGREEMENT		
PARTY	PURPOSE	AGREEMENT AMOUNT IN USD
Association for Sustainable Development Milieukontakt Macedonia, Skopje	Strengthening Capacities in Three Identified Local Communities in Macedonia (Bitola, Shtip And Tetovo) In the Environmental Field, Implementing Educational Campaign, Consultation with Stakeholders and Publishing Analyses of The Existing Environmental Legal and Strategic Framework with Focus on Climate Change in Each of The Three Municipality	\$37,935.04
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Skopje	Monitoring Hate Speech in Three Identified Local Communities in Macedonia (Bitola, Shtip and Tetovo), 8 months Monitoring, Publishing Quarterly Briefings with Warning System and Publishing Final Analysis	\$24,993
TOTAL:		\$62,928.04

Rapid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis Within the Framework of The Concept Community Partnership for Advancing Local Democracy

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
National Network to End Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Voice against Violence, Skopje	Providing Temporary Housing for Women Victims of Domestic Violence	\$18,765
Machine Production, Skopje	State of Emergency – Coronavirus in North Macedonia Documentary Series	\$13,807
TOTAL:		\$32,572

Regional Creative Hubs: Tapping into the Power of Arts and Culture to Embolden Citizen Action against Corruption

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Dragana Gunin Stojchevska	Gender Based Corruption at Workplace (With Emphasis on Women)	\$10,660
Igor K. Ilievski	Artivism for Changes	\$10,470
		TOTAL: \$21,130

Education of Small Ethnic Communities

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Foundation for Education and Culture Initiatives "Step by Step", Skopje	Strategic partnership with FOSM in implementing the Concept Education for small ethnic communities	\$70,000
Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society, Skopje	Open Educational Resources in Online Teaching	\$10,000
Association for Protection of Child's Rights, Skopje	Social and Educational Support for Street Children for The Period July-December 2020	\$12,165
		TOTAL: \$92,165

Stay@School: Action for Inclusion of Roma in Primary Education

COOPERATION AGREEMENT		
PARTY	PURPOSE	AGREEMENT AMOUNT IN USD
Foundation for Education and Culture Initiatives "Step by Step", Skopje	"Stay@School: Action for Inclusion of Roma in Primary Education" Project Activities Implementation	\$216,391.90
TOTAL:		\$216,391.90

Rapid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis Within the Framework of the Concept Education of Small Ethnic Communities

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Diturija Primary School, vlg. Ljubin, Saraj	Procurement of Technical Equipment for Resource Classroom for Digital Teaching and Learning	\$7,000
Rajko Zhinzifov Primary School, vlg. Orizari, Veles	Procurement of Technical Equipment for Resource Classroom for Digital Teaching and Learning	\$5,000
Sv. Kiril i Metodij Primary School, vlg. Kuchemishte, Chucher Sandevo	Procurement of Technical Equipment for Resource Classroom for Digital Teaching and Learning	\$6,000
Svetozar Markovikj Primary School, vlg. Staro Nagorichane, Staro Nagorichane	Procurement of Technical Equipment for Resource Classroom for Digital Teaching and Learning	\$5,000
Brakja Ribar Primary School, vlg. Tabanovce, Kumanovo	Procurement of Technical Equipment for Resource Classroom for Digital Teaching and Learning	\$6,000
Nexati Zekirija Primary School, vlg. Kodjadjik, Center Zhupa	Procurement of Technical Equipment for Resource Classroom for Digital Teaching and Learning	\$6,000

Goce Delchev Primary School, vlg. Vasilevo, Vasilevo	Procurement of Technical Equipment for Resource Classroom for Digital Teaching and Learning	\$6,000
Strasho Pindjur Primary School, vlg. Karbinci, Karbinci	Procurement of Technical Equipment for Resource Classroom for Digital Teaching and Learning	\$6,000
Mustafa Kemal Ataturk Primary School, Dolno Kolichani, Studenichani	Procurement of Technical Equipment for Resource Classroom for Digital Teaching and Learning	\$6,000
Brakja Ramiz i Hamid Primary School, Shuto Orizari, Skopje	Procurement of Technical Equipment for Resource Classroom for Digital Teaching and Learning	\$7,000
TOTAL:		\$60,000

COOPERATION AGREEMENT		
PARTY	PURPOSE	AGREEMENT AMOUNT IN USD
Foundation for educational and cultural initiatives "Step by step", Skopje	Assessment Study on The Situation, Needs and Challenges in The Implementation of Online Teaching in Primary Schools in Rural Areas, Teaching in Instruction Languages of Small Communities and Children at Socio-Economic Risk	\$2,283.50
Bureau for Development of Education of the Republic of North Macedonia	Translation of Shortened Curricula for Primary Education in All Instruction Languages in The Republic of North Macedonia, Translation of Shortened Curricula for Secondary Education in Albanian And Turkish Language	\$10,686.29
Brakja Ramiz i Hamid Primary School, Shuto Orizari, Skopje	Donation of tablets and internet cards to help students from socially disadvantaged families to attend regularly online teaching and do their school obligations	\$6,800
Svetozar Markovikj Primary School, vlg. Staro Nagorichane, Staro Nagorichane	Donation of tablets and internet cards to help students from socially disadvantaged families to attend regularly online teaching and do their school obligations	\$2,992
Rajko Zhinzifov Primary School, vlg. Orizari, Veles	Donation of tablets and internet cards to help students from socially disadvantaged families to attend regularly online teaching and do their school obligations	\$7,208

Sv. Kiril i Metodij Primary School, vlg. Kucevishte, Chucher Sandevo	Donation of tablets and internet cards to help students from socially disadvantaged families to attend regularly online teaching and do their school obligations	\$1,768
Brakja Ribar Primary School, vlg. Tabanovce, Kumanovo	Donation of tablets and internet cards to help students from socially disadvantaged families to attend regularly online teaching and do their school obligations	\$1,360
Diturija Primary School, vlg. Ljubin, Saraj	Donation of tablets and internet cards to help students from socially disadvantaged families to attend regularly online teaching and do their school obligations	\$1,496
Strasho Pindjur Primary School, vlg. Karbinci, Karbinci	Donation of tablets and internet cards to help students from socially disadvantaged families to attend regularly online teaching and do their school obligations	\$9,520
Goce Delchev Primary School, vlg. Vasilevo, Vasilevo	Donation of tablets and internet cards to help students from socially disadvantaged families to attend regularly online teaching and do their school obligations	\$7,616
Nexati Zekirija Primary School, vlg. Kodjadjik, Center Zhupa	Donation of tablets and internet cards to help students from socially disadvantaged families to attend regularly online teaching and do their school obligations	\$4,080
Mustafa Kemal Ataturk Primary School, Dolno Kolichani, Studenichani	Donation of tablets and internet cards to help students from socially disadvantaged families to attend regularly online teaching and do their school obligations	\$4,760
Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society, Skopje	Institutionalization of the Open Educational Resources Model	\$2,240
TOTAL:		\$62,809.79

Legal Empowerment Network Strategy

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD

Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Skopje	Legal Empowerment of Textile Workers for Self-Representation	\$40,000
Association for Legal Education and Transparency Station LET, Prilep	Access to Justice Center	\$34,000
HERA - Health Education and Research Association, Skopje	Promotion of Reproductive Rights of Roma Women in Shuto Orizari	\$15,790
Association of Education Workers for Protection of Women's and Children's Rights - LIL, Skopje	Monitoring and Documenting Human Rights Violations of Roma Patients	\$6,500
National Roma Centrum, Kumanovo	Office Renovation Assistance for NRC - Kumanovo	\$7,553
Roma Lawyers Association, Skopje	Social Entrepreneurship as Model for Self-Sustainability of Services for Empowering Marginalized Communities	\$8,152
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Skopje	Social Entrepreneurship as Model for Self-Sustainability of Services for Empowering Marginalized Communities	\$8,200
Foundation CEED Macedonia, Skopje	Technical support for starting social business activity as model for self-sustainability of services for empowering marginalized communities	\$8,200
Association for Legal Education and Transparency Station LET, Prilep	Social Entrepreneurship as Model for Self-Sustainability of Services for Empowering Marginalized Communities	\$8,200
HOPS - Healthy Option Project Skopje	Social Entrepreneurship as Model for Self-Sustainability of Services for Empowering Marginalized Communities and Their Economic Empowerment	\$8,200
Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women - ESE, Skopje	Social Entrepreneurship as Model for Self-Sustainability for Economic Empowerment of Women	\$8,200
TOTAL:		\$152,995

Access to Justice for the Most Marginalized

COOPERATION AGREEMENT		
PARTY	PURPOSE	AGREEMENT AMOUNT IN USD
Association for Legal Education and Transparency Station LET, Prilep	Establishing Cooperation Between FOSM and Station LET for Implementation of the "Access to Justice for The Most Marginalized" Project	\$48,270.98
HOPS – Healthy Options Project Skopje	Establishing Cooperation Between FOSM and HOPS for Implementation of the "Access to Justice for The Most Marginalized" Project	\$74,402.76
TOTAL:		\$122,673.74

Rapid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis Within the Framework of the Concept Legal Empowerment Network Strategy

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
IDIC - Initiative for Development and Inclusion of the Communities, Skopje	Promotion of Roma Community Health in Time of Health Crisis	\$65,500
NGO "Kham", Delchevo	Promotion of Roma Community Health in Time of Health Crisis	\$84,500
National Roma Centrum, Kumanovo	Promotion of Roma Women Health Protection in Time of Health Crisis	\$25,000
NGO Romano Chachipe, Skopje	Promotion of Roma Community Health in Time of Health Crisis	\$65,340

HERA - Health Education and Research Association, Skopje	Improvement of Social and Economic Life and Sexual and Reproductive Health of Roma Women in Time of Health Crisis	\$29,998
Association for Roma Democratic Development "Sonce", Tetovo	Providing Paralegal Assistance for Better Health of Roma Community	\$38,000
TOTAL:		\$308,338

Protection of Labor Rights of Low-Paid and Informal Workers During COVID-19 Health Crisis

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Association for Roma Democratic Development "Sonce", Tetovo	Dealing with Economic Consequences of COVID-19 Crisis by Supporting Informal Workers	\$10,000
HOPS - Healthy Option Project Skopje	Protection of Social-Economic and Labor Rights and Legal Empowerment of Drug Users and Sexual Workers in Time of COVID-19	\$20,000
HERA - Health Education and Research Association, Skopje	Reducing Economic and Social Consequences of Health Crisis Among Roma Community	\$10,000
Association for Legal Education and Transparency Station LET, Prilep	Assisting and Organizing Marginalized Communities to Deal with Health Crisis	\$15,000
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Skopje	Support for Workers in Time of COVID-19 Crisis	\$20,000
Association of Education Workers for Protection of Women's and Children's Rights - LIL, Skopje	Protection of Labor Rights of Low Income and Informal Roma Workers in COVID-19 Crisis Environment	\$10,000
Association Izbor, Strumica	Protection of Labor Rights of Low Income and Informal Workers in Crisis Environment Due To COVID-19	\$10,000

EHO Educational-Humanitarian Organization, Shtip	Exercising and Protection of Labor Rights and Facilitated Access to Institutions and Anti-Crisis Assistance Measures in Crisis Environment Due To COVID-19	\$10,000
Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women - ESE, Skopje	Dealing with Two Evils – Health and Economic Effects of The Epidemic on Vulnerable Groups	\$20,000
National Roma Centrum, Kumanovo	Protection of Labor Rights of Low Income and Informal Workers in Crisis Environment Due To COVID-19	\$14,986
Youth Cultural Centre, Bitola	Legal Aid and Support for Citizens in Formal and Informal Economy in Time of Crisis	\$10,000
TOTAL:		\$149,986

Early Parliamentary Elections 2020

GRANTS		
GRANTEES	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society, Skopje	Against Disinformation for Greater Election Turnout	\$12,500
Good Mood Media, Skopje	Promoting Greater Voter Turnout for The Early Parliamentary Elections on 15 July 2020	\$40,000
TOTAL:		\$52,500

Students' Rights and Engagement

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD

Youth Educational Forum, Skopje	Engaging Youth in Student and Youth Policies	\$90,000
Independent Academic Trade Union - NAKS, Skopje	The Quality of The Teaching in Higher Education	\$29,480
Association for Educational Development EKVALIS, Skopje	Youth Packages and Engagement Through Youth Campaigns	\$19,950
Independent Academic Trade Union - NAKS, Skopje	Additional Funds for Completing Project Financial Transparency and Accountability in Higher Education under the Grant No. 10450	\$7,198.26
TOTAL:		\$146,628.26

Rights-Based Health Policies

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Coalition for Sexual and Health Rights of Marginalized Communities MARGINI, Skopje	Promotion of Sexual and Health Rights of Marginalized Communities	\$78,956
HOPS - Healthy Option Project Skopje	Institutional Support to HOPS	\$140,000
Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women - ESE, Skopje	Institutional Support to ESE	\$181,000
Association for Support of Marginalized Workers STAR-STAR	Providing Support to Sexual Workers During and After COVID-19 Crisis	\$45,000
TOTAL:		\$444,956

Rapid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis Within the Framework of the Field Rights-Based Health Policies

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia, Skopje	Distribution of food and hygiene packages in Roma settlements (part 1)	\$100,000
Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia, Skopje	Additional distribution of food and hygiene packages in Roma settlements (part 2)	\$12,500
Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia, Skopje	Distribution of hygiene products packages and supplements in Roma settlements (part 3)	\$166,600
TOTAL:		\$279,100

Protection of Labor Rights of Low-Paid and Informal Workers During COVID-19 Health Crisis

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT IN USD
Foundation IDEA Southeast Europe, Skopje	Institutional Support to Foundation IDEA Southeast Europe In Time Of COVID-19 Crisis	\$50,000
TOTAL:		\$50,000

TOTAL: 2,706,764.59

Foundation
Open Society -
Macedonia

Str. Chedomir Minderovikj no.31
P.O.B 378, 1000 Skopje

Tel: +389 2 2444 488
e-mail: fosm@fosm.mk