

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Foundation Open Society – Macedonia

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INTRODUCTION

In 2022, the Foundation Open Society - Macedonia (FOSM) worked on attainment of both strategic goals defined in the 2021-2024 strategy: 1) **shape the policy debate on reducing inequalities faced by marginalized communities**, by securing evidence on root causes and effects of social determinants on injustice and by empowering marginalized groups to participate and articulate their needs in order to have a clearer focus on structural deficiencies in the field of education, health and environmental protection; increased understanding and willingness of policy makers to address inequalities in systemic manner; shifted dominant public narrative about the fact that responsibility for policy design and implementation lies only with the authorities; and improved representation, participation and contribution of socially marginalized groups in policies and processes that affect their wellbeing; and 2) **strengthen civil society for scaling up its engagement and input by mainstreaming inter-sectoral approach to policy shaping**, by applying structured oversight by thematic civil society networks to better understand the intersections between corruption, deficiencies in the rule of law, and social (in)justice; increased inter-sectoral knowledge, coordination and cooperation between thematic civil society networks; and increased advocacy power of civil society for transformation of policies based on social justice principles.

In 2022, all activities planned for attainment of both strategic goals were implemented within the four concepts: **Civic Engagement for Social Justice, Green Leap - Partnership for Climate Action, Education of Small Ethnic Communities and Health in All Policies**. Moreover, FOSM implemented activities to counteract malignant effects of disinformation, regional economic cooperation and common regional market in the Western Balkans, and support for evacuated activists from Afghanistan to North Macedonia.

The total amount of funds spent on implementation of FOSM's activities by 20th December 2022 is 4.375.690 USD (261.592.958 MKD), of which 3.547.648 USD (212.731.999 MKD) are funds from the Open Society Foundations, while 828.043 USD (48.860.959 MKD) are funds from other donors.

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED IN 2022

Common Regional Market

To contribute towards enhanced regional cooperation and promote free movement of people and goods within the Open Balkan Initiative, the Foundation Open Society - Macedonia supported three economic think-tank organizations: Finance Think - Economic Research and Policy Institute, Association for Research and Analysis ZMAI, and Policy Research Association ANALYTICA, all oriented to enabling the EU four freedoms of movement: people, goods, services and capital.

With the project “Open Balkan: Free Regional Movement of Labor in Conditions of Shortage of Qualified Workers?”, Finance Think - Economic Research and Policy Institute aims to assess how free movement of (skilled) labor in the open Balkan Initiative will affect the labor market in North Macedonia, and to encourage a reasoned debate and adjustment of policies to maximize benefits and minimize risks.

With the project “Connecting Countries from the Open Balkan through Solid Customs and Tax Policy”, the Association for Research and Analyses ZMAI aims to address customs and tax barriers to free movement of goods and services among the countries that are part of the Open Balkan Initiative. More specifically, the project researches the specificities of tax and customs policies in the countries that are part of the Open Balkan and those that expressed interest to join the initiative, and produced an analysis document titled “Taxes and customs duties in the Open Balkan countries and how they support integration of markets”.

With the project “Strengthening Regional Economic Integration: Opportunities and Benefits of the Common Regional Market for Agriculture and Tourism in North Macedonia”, the Policy Research Association ANALYTICA aims to determine challenges, opportunities and benefits for North Macedonia from strengthened regional cooperation in the field of agriculture and tourism. They have mapped the progress of the Republic of North Macedonia in terms of the Western Balkans integration processes for tourism and agriculture, i.e. conducted an analysis

and developed future scenarios for the sectors on agriculture and tourism and their socio-economic effects in North Macedonia.

Support for the Evacuated Activists from Afghanistan to North Macedonia

As part of the global humanitarian action to help evacuated citizens from Afghanistan, upon approval from the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and on behalf of the Open Society Foundations (OSF), FOSM engaged in cooperation with the Red Cross of the City of Skopje (RCCS) and continued to assist and support 67 persons from Afghanistan evacuated to Skopje, North Macedonia on October 7th, 2021, until their final immigration abroad, conducted in several rounds, which ended on September 30th, 2022.

Except for the high number of packages containing personal hygiene products and necessary clothing distributed daily and periodically, and when needed, FOSM also secured sets of season clothing, shoes and strollers, diapers, infant and toddler food, additional supplies of fruit, drinking water, special religious holiday dietary arrangements and menus, etc.

As regards medical services, RCCS medical teams secured ongoing assistance and high number of routine and necessary medical interventions both, at public health institutions and private clinics and specialist medical practices. In addition to regular therapy for chronic diseases, the highest number of medical examinations is recorded in respect to dental, ophthalmological, and phyco-social assistance. Team from the Ministry of Health conducted regular immunization of children (MRP, polio) and general health examinations, but also secured COVID-19 vaccines.

As part of FOSM's support, each member of the groups was awarded monthly allowance for personal needs, and the adults were given SIM cards with regularly renewed vouchers. The children's corner was used as playground, computer space for communication and other educational needs (IT courses), but also as fitness area, and was accessible to all members of this group throughout the entire day. Except for service provided by the regular volunteer teams at RCCS, around ten people from the group accommodated at Hotel Continental ensured communication and coordination and other daily activities outside the building, including collection and exchange of necessary information. RCCS's expert service also helped for successful re-union of displaced family members.

The operational group for coordination, comprised of representatives from the National Security Agency, the Ministry of Interior, Red Cross of the City of Skopje and FOSM and established at the start of this action in September 2021, successfully organized visits to shopping centers and cultural and historical attractions, including departures from the country.

All visa applications, completed with assistance from the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association, were approved. In the period from June 16th to September 30th, 2022, all families evacuated to our country under the auspices of OSF/FOSM have permanently moved to Canada.

CONCEPT: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

In 2022, under the concept *Civic Engagement for Social Justice*, FOSM worked to encourage and support direct participation of the civil society in sector policy design and oversight to limit corruption effects on attainment of social justice. Specific objectives defined under this concept were: 1) better understanding of policy interrelations between corruption, deficiencies in the rule of law and social (in)justice; 2) supporting thematic networks of civil society organizations to participate in innovative inter-sectoral cooperation and advocate for public policy changes in line with the sectoral approach; and 3) conducting evidence-based monitoring of social justice policies such as health, education and environmental protection, which are exposed to greater corruption risks and pose significant threat to the rights of marginalized communities.

In 2022, we continued to work on supporting the reform agenda under the EU accession process in the areas of **justice, anticorruption and antidiscrimination**, thereby contributing to Europeanization of the society. Acknowledging the challenges faced by the civil society, FOSM continued to cooperate with and support three thematic informal networks: the Blueprint Group for Judicial Reform, Platform of Civil Society Organizations for Fight against Corruption, and Network for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination. This allowed them to participate in inter-sectoral cooperation and contribute to inclusive policy dialogue that addresses the connections between social justice, corruption and deficiencies in the rule of law. By doing that, FOSM enhanced the capacity of all three networks, allowing them to increase effectiveness of civil society advocacy as part of the sector-wide dialogue with policymakers.

[The Blueprint Group for Judicial Reform](#) worked on improved impact of civil society organizations in the justice reform process as precondition for human rights protection and social justice. As regards sectoral policies in the judiciary, the Blueprint Group actively monitored the 2017-2022 Strategy on Justice System Reform during its last implementation year and published the analysis titled [“Comprehensive Assessment of the Implementation of the Strategy on Justice System Reform \(2017- 2022\) and Semi-Annual Monitoring Brief on the Strategy Implementation in the period January-June 2022.](#) Other documents prepared and published included the [Blueprint Group’s opinion on the judiciary chapter in the European](#)

[Commission's 2022 Progress Report for North Macedonia titled "Where we stand and what is next?"](#).

The Blueprint Group regularly reacted to new developments in the judiciary by issuing press releases on matters like [insufficient transparency and omissions in the process for selection of the chief prosecutor at the Public Prosecution Office Against Organized Crime and Corruption \(PPO-OCC\)](#), [discussions at the Council of Public Prosecutors' session in respect to the Blueprint Group's opinion concerning the selection of PPO-OCC's chief prosecutor](#), as well as [reaction against use of violence and hate speech at the protests organized against the French Proposal](#) on opening accession negotiations between RNM and the European Union.

As regards the criminal justice reform, the Blueprint Group took part in the working group tasked with development of the Criminal Code and the Law on Criminal Proceedings.

[The Network for Protection against Discrimination](#) continued to work on promoting equality and social justice for marginalized communities aimed to contribute to advanced policy and practices on prevention and protection against discrimination and access to social justice. For that purpose, a series of policy briefs were developed and published: [Improving the employability of persons with disabilities](#), [How to provide efficient protection in the cases of sexual violence?](#), Analysis on the alignment of national legislation with EU Directive 2010/41/EU on application of the principle of equal treatment between man and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC, Report on implementation of the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination and performance track record of the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, and Shadow Report on performance track record of the Ombudsman Office concerning antidiscrimination matters. Furthermore, in 2022 the Network drafted three factsheets on discrimination ([1](#), [2](#) and [3](#)), infographics with [key findings and recommendations from the Monitoring Report on Implementation of the new Law on Social Protection](#), infographics addressing [gender gap in terms of salaries](#), infographics based on the document ["How to make the State Labor Inspectorate effective and efficient mechanism for protection against discrimination of workers?"](#), and series of other visualizations based on policy document findings on matters such as: improving the employability of persons with disabilities and efficient protection in the cases of sexual violence.

As part of its activities, the Network for Protection against Discrimination organized [training for members of the Commission for Prevention and Protection Against Discrimination](#), [training for inspectors at the State Labor Inspectorate](#), and advocacy training for representatives from its member organizations, as well as training on detecting and preventing discrimination for women farmers in rural areas.

As part of its advocacy efforts in cooperation with the Network on Protection against Discrimination and LAG Agro Leader from Krivogashtani, the Foundation Open Society - Macedonia **started an initiative** with policy creators to amend the Law on Labor Relations and the Law on Health Insurance aimed at guaranteeing **the right to paid maternal leave for women - managers of agriculture holdings and registered individual farmers** which cannot be exercised under the applicable legislation, meaning that these groups of women are not entitled to benefit payments in case they are absent from work due to pregnancy, childbirth and motherhood. Correcting such injustice against registered women farmers in their reproductive years will lead to gender equality, strengthened position and status of women in the society, equal access to resources and equal participation in decision-making in all spheres of social life.

FOSM supported the [Platform of Civil Society Organizations for Fight against Corruption](#) to implement the project **Adjusting to Climate Change by Preventing Corruption in Public Procurements**, aimed to monitor implementation of environment-related public procurements to detect corruption risks and research relations between low use of so-called green procurements and corruptive influences. To map corruption in these procurements, consultations were organized with civil society organizations profiled in the area of environmental protection.

Through the Anti-Corruption Platform, FOSM participates in the working group tasked to drafting amendments to the Law on Preventing Corruption and Conflict of Interests.

As part of the USAID Civic Participation Project of the East West Management Institute, financed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), FOSM implemented the project **Strengthened Systems of Integrity to Combat Corruption at Local Level**, aimed to promote good governance at local level by strengthening corruption resistance of local governments and introducing integrity systems in 10 municipalities. In 2022, memoranda of cooperation were signed the following municipalities: Berovo, Valandovo,

Kavadarci, Kichevo and Shuto Orizari, and work activities continued in three municipalities covered with cooperation memoranda signed in the previous year: Dojran, Zhelino and Ohrid.

FOSM secured expert support to partner municipalities, resulting in development of 5 documents on assessing corruption risks and conflict of interests, 5 individual integrity plans, organization of 5 capacity-building workshops for municipal administrations, and bylaw that regulates the procedure for reporting corruption and conflict of interests at the level of local governments. Furthermore, in all 5 municipalities FOSM conducted [public opinion survey on corruption and conflict of interests](#). Other documents deemed needed by the municipalities were developed as well and include functional analyses for Shuto Orizari, Kichevo and Zhelino; 2021 financial audit for Dojran; audit of the procedure for issuance of construction permits in Berovo; procedure for engagement of persons under task contracts, copyright contracts or temporary employment for Valandovo; and guide on preventing conflict of interests for Kavadarci. In order to contribute to development of integrity policies, FOSM took part in the integrity working group at local level, formed by the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption.

With FOSM's support, the **Prespa Institute** implemented the project **Climate Mainstreaming for Just Transition**, aimed to contribute towards alignment with the EU Green Agenda and EU accession process of the Republic of North Macedonia. The project aimed to ensure adequate financial management and implementation of green funds and provide relevant recommendations to improve consistency of funding priorities and law harmonization, as well as RNM's compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals. For that purpose, the project monitored the process for programming funds under IPA 3 and the Economic and Investment Programme, conducted a comparative assessment of green funds in relation to the National Programme for Adoption of the EU Acquis, and monitored public finance planning and climate action mainstreaming in the budget.

With FOSM's support, the **Association for Rural Development LAG AGRO LEADER** implemented the project **Social Justice in Rural Communities by Strengthening Digital and Entrepreneurial Skills of Women in Rural Areas** aimed to improve the social and economic position of women in rural areas by enhancing their digital and entrepreneurial skills for creating economically sustainable farms and rural businesses, providing access to legal assistance and counselling, and shaping social justice policies. Moreover, project activities included an

upgrade to the online platform domasno.mk with digital space for publication of agriculture and rural development support programs and will offer free advice for utilization of funds available under current programmes. At the same time, the project offered advisory support services through field visits to villages and sharing information with residents on available support programmes and measures in the fields of social protection, employment, agriculture and business development in rural areas, and developed a document with recommendations to promote the social and economic position of residents in rural areas, with special focus of women. In Prilep, the project organized a conference titled "[Sustainable Development Goals for Ensuring Gender Equality, Access to Rights and Opportunities for Women in Rural Areas](#)" and [fair of agriculture products](#).

As a result of FOSM's efforts **to advance the environment for operation and development of the civil society**, the Fifth [Open Government Partnership National Action Plan \(2021-2023\)](#) includes a commitment focused on free access to data on civil society organizations. This action aims to promote transparency of the civil society, improve quality and access to public and free-of-charge information, create opportunity for analytical use of civil society data, and create opportunity for more inclusive policy development and/or monitoring by allowing thematic, geographical and other targeting of civil society organizations.

As part of 2022 support from the **Open Government Secretariat**, in partnership with the Center for Civil Communications (CCC) and the Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women (ESE) and in cooperation with the Ministry of Information Society and Administration (MISA), FOSM continued activities initiated under the project **Support to Implementation and Monitoring of OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023**. To ensure unhindered implementation of the OGP process, a series of joint meetings, consultation and coordination events were organized between the OGP National Coordinator at MISA and partner organizations, which resulted in designed timeline, plans and activities for the OGP work plan and its timely update. At the first of [three sessions held thus far](#), members of the OGP Council were informed about and approved the proposed dynamics for implementation of OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023.

FOSM organized the High-Level Conference for Promotion of the Fifth Open Government Partnership National Action Plan 2021-2023, ensuring political support for its implementation. The event was attended by 37 participants from 19 state institutions, 62 participants from 30

civil society organizations, 4 diplomatic missions and 6 media outlets. For the conference needs and to increase visibility of the initiative, OGP-branded promotion materials were designed, including publication of OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023 in [Macedonian](#), [Albanian](#) and [English](#) language, available on the platform www.ovp.gov.mk and produced a [video](#) with subtitles in Albanian and English language, promoted at the event and posted on the platform www.ovp.gov.mk.

In order to improve quality of stakeholder involvement, FOSM opened dialogue for implementation of OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023 and, in cooperation with the OGP National Coordinator, established a procedure for selection of new members to the OGP Council, on the basis of which, under transparent process and pursuant to previously developed documents,¹ the new structure of the OGP Council was selected. More specifically, new 16 members and deputy members of the OGP Council 2021-2023 were selected and, for the first time, they include representatives from the judicial and legislative branches of government, while FOSM's representative was elected to serve as the OGP Council Co-Chair.

Activities implemented as part of this project included capacity-building workshop for new council members and deputy members, aimed at developing and promoting a transparent and inclusive approach to implementation of OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023. Promotional material on [OGP Council Members](#) was published on the platform www.ovp.gov.mk in Macedonian and Albanian language. Furthermore, representatives from institutions involved in implementation of all 5 priority areas under OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023 received training for entering data on the platform www.ovp.gov.mk.

Involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in supporting and implementing OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023 was ensured by means of capacity-building training for members of working groups formed within the [OGP Network of Civil Society Organizations \(OGP Network\)](#), in partnership with the support unit at the Open Government Secretariat. This training, attended by 27 participants, resulted in formation of 5 working groups within the OGP Network.

¹ Decision on formation of the Council for Coordination and Monitoring the Open Government Partnership 2021-2023, [Guidelines for Formation and Work of the Council for Coordination and Monitoring the OGP Process](#) and [Rules of Procedure for the OGP Council](#).

In addition to selection of an expert to develop the monitoring methodology, the project also designed a targeted call for members of the OGP Network to participate in monitoring implementation of OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023, followed by process for selection of 5 monitors who developed the draft monitoring reports for all 5 priority areas under OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023. With support from the selected expert, these 5 monitoring reports were integrated into Summary Report on Monitoring Implementation of OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023.

Public awareness on milestones achieved with implementation of OGP National Action 2021-2023 was increased by continuous provision of information on recent trends under the OGP process, educational information, activities for stakeholders, events related to OGP in the country and across the world, on the platform www.ovp.gov.mk, in both Macedonian and Albanian language, and through the OGP Network. In addition, the project's visibility was enhanced with promotion of activities and results on official websites of all three partner organizations and social media plugins, official website of MISA, and especially on the platform www.ovp.gov.mk.

In continuation of FOSM's long-standing effort to promote financial support for citizens' associations and foundations from the Budget of the Republic of North Macedonia and advancing the model for state funding, through the Council for Civil Society Cooperation and Development, FOSM's representative is member of the [working group on state funding reform](#). In 2022, this working group drafted legal provisions for establishment of reformed model on state funding for civil society.

As part of the project **CSO Dialogue - Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations**, implemented by FOSM in cooperation with partner organizations (Center for Civil Communications, Reactor - Research in Action and Eurothink - Center for European Strategies), advocacy efforts were made to establish structural dialogue between the government and civil society organizations. This project was financially supported by the European Union's IPA Civil Society Facility and Media Programme 2016-2017 and co-financed by FOSM, and was implemented in the period April 1st, 2019 to August 30th, 2022.

The created web-platform www.dijalogkoneu.mk provides a central place for sharing project information aimed at improving the structural dialogue between civil society organizations and

institutions, and hosts more than 1,000 items of content. To present, the platform has recorded more than 57,000 visits and approximately 12,000 users.

The central place on this platform is given to information on all 12 sector working groups (SWGs), covered by total of [38 performance reports](#) for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021. All 15 reports published in 2022 underlined the fact that SWGs do not have a uniform approach to selection and status of civil society representatives. Furthermore, SWGs perform only a small portion of their mandate, meaning they are limited only to IPA programming. The low number of meetings held by these sector groups further contributes to their inefficiency. Moreover, there are insufficient materials of relevance for civil society organizations and citizens published, whereby the platform www.dijalogkoneu.mk provides rare opportunity for information dissemination on work of these sector groups.

To address the formal shortcoming on meaningful participation of civil society organizations in SWGs, in 2021 and 2022 FOSM and the Secretariat for European Affairs (SEA) worked on revising the rules of procedure for SWGs and presented the proposed model for selection and participation of civil society representatives in sector working groups.

In 2022, the project published the third consecutive research survey on civic engagement, indicating that, in 2021, interaction between citizens and institutions has increased by 47% compared to the pandemic year (2020). Hence, 60% of surveyed civil society organizations reported interaction with institutions in respect to policy creation. Also, the research observed increased preparedness among citizens to participate in future policy creation. In 2020, 45% of citizens reported preparedness for participation in future decision-making, while in 2021 their share stood at 60%.

The web-platform also serves as resource and education center for civic engagement and has been extended with various resources over the last three years, such as: [Guide on Institutional Mechanisms for Civic Participation in Policy Making](#); (12) [tutorials and videos](#); (30) [policy briefs](#) and (60) [infographics](#) on topics related to EU integrations; [3 nation-wide research surveys on civic engagement](#). More information on the project's milestones and key efforts is featured in the [video](#) published in September 2022.

In the period January - May 2022, together with the Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society, FOSM implemented the project **Anti-Disinformation Hub: Exposing Malign Influence through Watchdog Journalism**, supported by DT Institute from Washington. The project aimed to ensure public dissemination and promotion of media content to counteract propaganda and disinformation coming from Russia. In order to ensure that information and content reaches the general public, the project included cooperation with *TV 24Vesti* for broadcasting a total of 8 shows, of which 4 were organized as TV debates featured in regular programming “Openly” with journalist Mladen Chadikovski and included relevant guest appearances, and 4 call-in shows with journalist Ognen Janevski.

Moreover, project activities included production of 5 animated videos on the following topics: 1) [Russian Propaganda: Myth or Truth?](#); 2) [Malign Influence of Propaganda](#); 3) [Media Role in Fight Against Disinformation](#); 4) [Pandemic to Infodemic](#); 5) [Media Literacy on Disinformation](#).

CONCEPT: GREEN LEAP – PARTNERSHIP FOR CLIMATE ACTION

The concept *Green Leap - Partnership for Climate Action* aims to encourage civil society actors and socially and marginalized citizens to assume and maintain leadership role in shaping the debate on sustainable development policy in relation to the environment.

Grants awarded in 2021 continued to implement activities in 2022:

- **Impact Assessment of Climate Change and Possibilities for Adjusting the Agricultural Sector in Bitola** is implemented by the Union of Associations for Rural Development - LAG Network, in cooperation with the Agency for Agriculture Development and Support from Bitola - Advisory Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, Bitola Centre for the Pelagonija Planning Region. It aims to embed climate change adjustments in work programs of local governments and institutions. In 2022, project activities included development of the program on climate change adjustment in the agriculture sector, which is presented for adoption by the Municipal Council in Bitola.
- **3Rs - Reduce, Recycle, Reuse - Business Models for Use of Textile Waste** is implemented by the Local Community Development Foundation - Shtip (LCDF) and was focused on research and promotion of sustainable models for use of textile waste as opportunity for business development by socially vulnerable groups. In 2022, project activities included launch of videos on domestic and international good practices for reusing waste and organization of education events for secondary education students in Shtip. The final event titled “Business Models for Use of Waste Textile” included promotion of the concept of circular economy and the models for integration of persons at social risk on the labor market by using waste textile, thereby increasing awareness of the local community about recycling, especially of waste textile.
- The Regional Geographic Society GEOSPHERE - Bitola implemented the project **We Can Do it to Bair, Too!**, aimed to increase environmental awareness among the population and create healthy, ecological living environment, primarily for the youngest residents of Bair (settlement in Bitola). In 2022, project activities were promoted with a Facebook campaign (outreach to 151,000+ users) and [video](#), an eco-action for increasing environmental

awareness among Bitola residents to eliminate use of plastic in their daily lives, and brochure with project achievements.

- Association Multikultura from Tetovo implemented the project **Positive Change for Communal Waste Management in the Municipality of Tetovo**, aimed to raise awareness among the local population and the local government on the need to adopt sustainable strategies for handling communal waste in the municipality. 2022 activities included finalization of the analysis that identifies shortcomings and challenges in implementation of enforceable environment laws, ongoing problems and challenges concerning waste management, and recommends measures to improve waste management practices in the municipality. Youth activities organized two urban actions and an eco-exhibition of works by young artists on the topic of waste management.
- **The Law in Defending the Negative Impact of Small Hydropower Plants in Macedonia** was implemented by the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA) - Skopje, in cooperation with the Center for Environmental Research and Information EKO-SVEST - Skopje. It aimed to impact policies and practices that stimulate construction and operation of small hydropower plants (SHPPs) in order to prevent and reduce their negative effect of their construction and operation and thereby reduce the negative effect on the nature and people. Hence, the project developed an [analysis of regulations that govern operation of small hydropower plants](#), [document on public participation in procedures on water use by SHPPs](#) and [policy document](#) with proposals to address problems in implementation of legal regulations, accompanied by infographics that underline the most important deficiencies in the system for SHPP operation and support. Moreover, project activities were promoted at meetings with competent institutions, via press releases and media appearances. The project team drafted and motioned lawsuits before the Administrative Court of RNM on the ground of failure to develop plans for river basin management and water economy in the Republic of North Macedonia.
- **Utopia? Green East, Clear Waters** was implemented by the Citizens' Association MEDIA PLUS, Shtip. It aimed to alert institutions and inspectorates to perform their competences and responsibilities, and encourage citizens to improve their attitude towards the nature, but also mobilize the public around the need for greater care for the Bregalnica River. The campaign continued in 2022 with regular press releases on this topic aired on the Radio

Channel 77 and published on the online news website <https://mms.mk>. Measurement findings and recommendations verified in consultation with stakeholders were shared with the public at the final event held in February 2022.

- **Clean Vodno** was a project implemented by an activist volunteer initiative “Smetlana”, led by Vladimir Sikavica, and aimed to raise awareness among citizens that rubbish should be disposed everywhere, but only in places specially designated for that purpose. The project organized two workshops on reusing waste and promoted a video on the importance of healthy and clean environment.
- Association for Sustainable Development Milleukontakt Macedonia implemented the project **Recommendations for Chapter 27: Environment and Climate Change**. For that purpose, focus groups were formed for several sub-areas: horizontal legislation, air quality, waters, industrial pollution and risk management, waste management, nature and climate changes, and each group defined 2 to 3 priorities for urgent action. Furthermore, focus groups drafted recommendations and incorporated them in the 2021 Shadow Report, including specific solutions and proposals to address obstacles and deficiencies in implementation of relevant legislation. A comparative analysis was developed in respect to gaps in the legal framework (national and local regulations in RNM) that regulates the status of the environment in the Republic of North Macedonia.

In order to enable civil society actors to perform credible monitoring and advocacy for timely and adequate environmental policies that meet their needs and their right to prosperous life, FOSM awarded grants to several civil society organizations to implement the following projects in 2022:

- **MEF 2022: Socially Just and Democratic Energy Transition to Mitigate the Energy Crisis** was implemented by the Citizens’ Association ZIP Institute for Policies and Good Governance, Skopje. This project was focused on alleviating the current energy crisis through socially just and democratic energy transition. The fifth edition of the Energy Forum was held on June 30th and July 1st, 2022, in Ohrid, in cooperation with the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and the United States Embassy to North Macedonia. By means of hybrid participation (physical and online attendance) and cooperation with various expert, the forum elaborated the process of energy transition in

the Western Balkans thus far, and put forward recommendations to address the ongoing energy crisis. It provided a high-level platform to discuss challenges in the Western Balkans in terms of just energy transition and access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all (SDG7).

- **Innovative Solutions for a Green East** was implemented by the Citizens' Association MEDIA PLUS Ship and aimed to introduce innovative, nature-based solutions to environmental problems that affect citizens and their health, through a series of consultation meetings for community engagement and contribution to decision-making for implementation of such solutions. The project developed a [map of black ecological points in Shtip](#). This was followed with proposal for nature-based solutions and [brochure on implementation of practical solutions](#). A campaign was designed and conducted which, in part, focused on the fight of civic activists for clean environment and climate change adjustment. The project paid special attention to the fight Tursko Rudari residents (neighborhood in Probishtip), who have been left without irrigation water after the construction of small hydropower plant. Journalist reports and videos were created and covered air pollution lawsuits in Kochani to inform citizens, institutions and the wider public about applicability of innovative and nature-based solutions. Activists from Kochani and Probishtip benefited from legal aid provided by the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association. As a result of advocacy efforts, the Mayor of Kochani arranged for air quality metering stations to be installed, in cooperation with the Ambicom Laboratory at the University "Goce Delchev" in Shtip.
- Macedonian Young Lawyers Association implemented the project **Action for Advanced Legal and Institutional Water Protection**. The project's main objective was to strengthen legal and institutional protection of waters by promoting secondary legislation that arises from the Law on Waters, and support for internal organization and operation of the sector on waters within the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning. MYLA signed a memorandum of cooperation for development and advancement of bylaws arising from the Law on Waters with the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning and invested its capacity to ensure overall improvement of environmental legislation through direct participation in drafting regulations, analyzing previous practices, and recommending better practices. It developed the [Rulebook on the technical conditions, manner and procedure for measuring quantity and quality of irrigation waters at capture or pumping](#)

[sites](#). The principles of inclusion, transparency and publicity in developing secondary legislation were ensured with organization of 4 consultation meetings with 10 institutions and 2 field visits to water capturing and channel systems, publication of information on consultation activities and the process for development of bylaws, and publication of draft rulebook, followed by public debate and possibility for submission of written comments to the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning. Based on the survey research conducted among employees at the sector on waters inquiring about challenges in their work and implementation of legal competences from the Law on Waters, the project developed a [policy brief](#) on the need to reform this state administration body. A much broader public debate on the need to change the institutional framework was initiated, together with promotion of the policy brief, at the panel discussion organized with the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, the State Environmental Inspectorate, and the Association of Local Self-Government Units around the issue of institutional capacity for environmental protection.

- **Analysis of Legislation in the Field of Waters and Recommendations to Improve the Quality of National Documents (Strategy on Water Management and Water Economy in RNM)** was implemented by the Association for Sustainable Development Milieukontakt Macedonia and aimed to provide an overview of national legislation's alignment with EU Water Directives in order to obtain an actual image about current state-of-play, but also determine priorities for improvement. The analysis of legislation on waters in terms of planning document and bodies anticipated by the law was accompanied with recommendations to amend the Law on Waters, especially in respect to articles that concern basic planning documents. At the same time, the project worked on proposed model for the Strategy on Waters, developed on the basis of insights from the research and comparative analysis of water strategies in neighboring countries (Bulgaria, Croatia and Serbia) and development of the Rulebook on the content, methodology and manner for implementation of the process for public consultations when developing the national strategy on waters.
- **4Rs - Reduce, Recycle, Reuse and Repurpose: Social Inclusion through Circular Economy** was implemented by the Local Community Development Foundation - Shtip and aimed to advance understanding of benefits from proper disposal of textile waste and its use as commercial resource, with specific focus on persons at social risk in Shtip. The

project informed the public about responsibilities and benefits from the new Law on Extended Producer Responsibility for Waste Management Schemes. For that purpose, an informative leaflet and video content was created, underlying benefits from the law, its implementation and timely preparation for responsibilities arising from the law, aimed to increase awareness about the need for adjusting habits in line with waste treatment regulations. The regional debate on the challenges from the Law on Extended Producer Responsibility for Waste Management Schemes, with special emphasis on waste textile, was attended by representatives from the local government, textile companies, textile traders, associations working on waste-related matters and large number of citizens. Actions were taken to sensitize the public and local community about the need for and social contribution of skills acquired for reuse of textile with specific categories of citizens. Workshops were organized at secondary schools “Iskra” and “Poraka” in Shtip. At the primary school “Vancho Prke” in Shtip, the project worked with children to familiarize them with the culture of waste recycle, reuse and proper disposal. As part of the established training center, persons at social risk from Shtip (long-term unemployed, single parents, people who lost their jobs due to the pandemic, etc.) acquired skills related to selection and reuse of waste textile and development of semi-final products with added value, which offer new opportunity to earn additional income and/or employment, and accordingly, reduces the poverty among these groups. Moreover, products created in this manner contribute to reduced textile waste in the Municipality of Shtip. Short videos with guidance on law compliance and promotion of the training center and project activities are available on the Foundation’s digital platforms (<https://frlz.org.mk/>; [YouTube](#), <https://recikliraj.mk/>).

- Citizens’ Association Center for Climate Change - Gevgelija implemented the project **Analysis of Progress in National Legislation’s Alignment and Implementation of the EU Acquis on Environment and Climate Change (2022 Shadow Report on Chapter 27)**. The project aimed to strengthen the role of civil society organizations in assessing state-of-play related to environment and climate change from the perspective of alignment with the EU acquis on environment and climate, its implementation, and administrative capacity for implementation of the environment legislation. In that, efforts were made to raise awareness among civil society organizations about the need for active monitoring of the situation related to environment and climate change through continuous capacity-building for monitoring skills. Several CSOs developed and published the 2022 Shadow Report on Chapter 27, which provides an overview of progress made in respect to

horizontal legislation, air quality, water quality, waste management, industrial pollution and risk management, nature protection and climate change, and evaluates alignment and implementation of environmental and climate change legislation and administrative capacity. This report also includes recommendations aimed to improve state-of-play in each sub-section of Chapter 27.

As part of FOSM's institutional support, the Contemporary Art Center - Skopje (CAC) carried out a series of urban art actions and education activities. As regards the themes, actions were mainly staged in reaction to acute community problems or aimed at revealing problems in the society which the political elites would like to keep away from the public. Funds awarded were intended for implementation and support to implementation of local community initiatives. At the year's start, CAC published an open call for ideas which later, through joint work, grew into local initiatives in communities where they originate from. A total of seven local community initiatives were organized (Radovish, Valandovo, Mavrovo-Rostushe, Bojane - Skopje region, Vinica - Kamenica region, and Gostivar area below the Shar Planina), whose development and implementation involved more than 100 participants:

- **Different, but Equal** (in cooperation with NGO Blesok from Radovish and local population from villages Kalauzlija and Kodjalija) was an initiative aimed to involve the Yuruk community and their creative potential in the cultural living of the Radovish region;
- **Together for Better Life of All** is an initiative implemented in cooperation with 6 local NGOs from the Valandovo region, secondary school "Goce Delchev", Community Centre Valandovo and Municipality of Valandovo. It was comprised of five different segments, starting with creative familiarization of youth with functions performed by public services, enterprises and institutions, and ending with environmental actions and ideas for improved energy efficiency.
- **A More Beautiful Nature for Every Child**, implemented in village Kamenjane, Shar Planina, was aimed to raise youth awareness on nature protection and its importance, and promoted economic opportunities offered by the Shar Planina and its key resources, through information, education, training, promotion and environmental activities.
- The initiative "**I am Human**", implemented together with the Association Iscekor from village Stojakovo, individuals and social workers in municipalities Dojran, Valandovo and

Bogdanci, was dedicated to persons with disabilities and problems they are facing. In addition to the research on obstacles faced by persons with disabilities, activities also included actions to increase physical accessibility of institutions for this group of people.

- **Partisan Memorials in Reka** concerned landscaping and rehabilitation of five abandoned memorial plaques in the Reka region. It resulted in refurbishment and landscaping around memorial plaques commemorating partisans in the villages Janche, Velebrdo, Bitushe, Trebishte, Rostushe and Zhirovnica.
- **2022 Festival of Grape, v. Bojane** was implemented in cooperation with ZIP Institute and represents one of rare civic events that include villages Svilare (upper and lower), Kopanica, Bojane, Rasche and Radusha, marking the inception of civil engagement in this region which, although very close to Skopje, still lives in the style of Turkish-governed medieval times in cultural and socio-anthropological sense.
- **Arranging the area around the Blatec Dam** was implemented in cooperation with the local neighborhood unit “Blatec”. Together with the local population and the scout group “Artmonia” from Vinica, an area of around 600 m² was equipped with benches, litter bins, fireplace, outdoor classroom, and protective fencing around steep paths leading to the lake. The entire space is now enriched and can be used by the local population, but also by visitors to this region.

Around 30 artists, activists and community members implemented 6 urban actions addressing local problems, thereby mobilizing the local population to join initiatives for problem resolution. Three of six problems were resolved, while success in the case of other problems implied informing the broader public and raising public awareness. Moreover, the project organized 6 workshops (Mavrovo, Valandovo, Vinica, Kochani, Shtip and Dojran) to discuss local problems and potentials, but also possibilities for their articulation.

- **Happy New Year, Skopje** was a creative and artistic urban action dedicated to Skopje residents and staged before the New Year celebration to capture the holiday spirit and magic (having in mind that the city administration has forfeited this obligation) by surprising and bringing joy to the most vulnerable categories of street children with NY packages and similar gifts. This action received exceptional coverage and was one of the top three NY news with an outreach of 200,000+ citizens. The decorated “Lada Niva” (passenger vehicle)

was driving around town and distributed packages to street children and other vulnerable groups, while some groups of children (not at social risk) were also presented with a copy of “The Little Match Girl” by Hans Christian Andersen, using this sad children’s story to instigate their humanity and solidarity and encourage them to share what they have with their peers and friends who do not have enough.

- The action called **Penguins, Metamorphoses and Evolution: Skopje Residents and District Heating** included placement of penguin mannequins on several locations in Skopje representing its citizens who had woken up to stone-cold radiators in their homes on several occasions, making their homes resemble igloos. At the same time, this action was intended to send warning to the City of Skopje, the Government, BEG (district heating company) and Energy Regulatory Commission to work on resolving this problem because of looming danger for lukewarm or stone-cold district heating radiators at minus degree outdoor temperatures, making the residents of Skopje feel like penguins.
- **I Have Down Syndrome - Touch Me, Please** was organized around the scandal with young Embla from Gostivar, who was exposed to discrimination in the education on the account of having the Down Syndrome. The action “Touch Me, Please” reminded us that not all people are tolerant to anything different around them. An interesting piece of information is that only 3% of people passing by the action staged on several locations in downtown Skopje, i.e. slightly less than 100 from 3,000 people, actually stopped and engaged in contact with, i.e. touched the activists.
- **Let’s not Oversleep the Change to DUP** was created as sign of support to citizens and civic activists from Vlae who fought to prevent adoption of the new detailed urban plan (DUP) last year, which would have multiplied by several times the number of residents in this neighborhood and would have destroyed good portion of public space and greenery (area between Vlae Gate, Blvd. Partizanski Odredi, Vardar River and St. Adolf Cibrovski). Fortunately, actions taken by activists, some of which were supported by CAC, proved successful and resulted in new change to DUP for this part of the settlement.
- **Golden Petrol: Sky is the Limit** is an artistic action, i.e. series of actions, in response to enormous price increases of products and energy fuels and decreased standard of living for citizens. It aimed to remind competent authorities that discontinuation of measures to

reduce petrol prices has left Macedonian citizens barely able to complete daily tasks, with around 100,000 citizens being directly dependent on petrol prices.

- **Vinica Water Taps, Vinica River and Vinica Monastery** addressed the problem of irresponsibility on the part of public communal services and public enterprise in Vinica. For that purpose, three different actions were implemented: planting flowers and installation of water taps on places where the communal enterprise had opened up holes in the case of defects to the water supply system, but regularly forgets to close and arrange them afterwards; placing water meter polls in the basin of Vinica River which, after the creation and arrangement of the dam and over a short period of 3-4 years, is buried with gravel accounting for $\frac{3}{4}$ of its river bed whereby, at times of heavy rains in August, the water level is only 10 cm short of overflowing the streets; and placement of meteor near the group of large stones that have been left in the middle of the street for several years and pose danger for both vehicles and pedestrians. After the smaller problems for which actions were (road hole and rocks) were solved, EVN (electricity supply company), local firefighting brigade and the police requested the Municipality of Vinica to resolve the issue of sedimented gravel in the river basin.

As part of the cooperation agreement, the Contemporary Art Centre and FOSM organized the conference [Time to Reset: Reinventing the Power of Communities through Creative Activism and Engaged Art](#) with participation of renown theoreticians, engaged artists, activists and representatives of civil society organizations from Africa, Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Germany, the United States, North Macedonia, Serbia and the Netherlands. The conference was dedicated to exchange of experience in the function of designing new approaches to advocacy for social change. The event aimed to capitalize on experiences and lessons learned by renowned theoreticians, engaged artists, activities and organizations that promote similar or complementary initiatives. The participants analyzed lessons learned and discussed upcoming challenges and possibilities, with special focus on multiplying the effect of this type of engagement and increased impact in the communities. The conference was also used to promote two books: [CREATING CHANGE: Exploring Creative Approaches to Act against Corruption in West Africa and the Western Balkans](#) and [Artistic/Creative Activism in Macedonia: Reclaiming Public Space through Civic Engagement 2006 - 2020](#), and projection of the documentary feature “CreACT: Creative Approaches toa Act against Corruption in the Western Balkans and West Africa”, produced as part of OSF Regional Creative Hubs ([short version](#), [full documentary feature](#)).

In 2022, three civil society organizations implemented actions to advance creative activism methods used in their work as part of 2021 grants awarded with support from OSF Culture and Art Program:

- Citizens' Association Contemporary Art Centre implemented the project **ART(ivator): Art and Creativity for Active Citizens and Communities**, whose objective is to fight against melancholia and lethargy among citizens, strengthen civic power and develop new skills and methodologies for active and creative approach to resolution of problems that affect them (environment, climate change, anticorruption and social justice). The project trained more than 30 activists, citizens and representatives from civil society organizations (from Tetovo, Shtip, Valandovo/Dojran, Kochani, Vinica, Strumica, Skopje and Mavrovo Rostuse) at 4 workshops on methodologies and tactics for artistic/creative activism, leadership and group work, forum theatre, using storytelling methodologies and audience/public behavior as precondition for successful communication and mobilization. Around 20 representatives from local civil society organizations and initiatives were networked and equipped with skills for independent creative activism, resulting in development and implementation of several actions:
 - "Waiting for Godot" - action dedicated to the European Union's treatment of the Republic of North Macedonia;
 - "Sunflowers" - action implemented with the healthy life initiative in Kochani and initiatives for clean Bregalnica region in response to air pollution in Kochani caused by the waste paper treatment factory *Paper Mill*, whose use of methane as non-polluting energy fuel was replaced with suspicious sunflower pellets that are considered extreme polluters. After the action and under pressure from the public and the media, the competent inspectorate conducted several inspections, but the results thereof are still not available in spite of the fact that use of pellets as production fuel has been discontinued in the action's aftermath.
 - "Rubbish-Eating Containers" - action implemented in cooperation with several artists in response to rubbish pollution in Mavrovo/Rostushe. Direct interventions included artistic creations on 10 containers showcasing showing which category of rubbish is disposed in containers, followed by education campaign.

- The action “Identitol Forte” showcased the widely accepted absurdity in Macedonia with stories about the danger from losing the national identity on the account of concessions made to the EU and Bulgaria.
- “Cry of the Ohrid Trout” - action aimed to alarm the public about the worrying population status of the endemic Ohrid trout.
- “Mural for Kumanovo River” was an action for painting a mural representing rubbish disposed in the Kumanovo River and turning it into landfill. After the action, the Municipality of Kumanovo started an action to clean the river basin.
- The action “Golden Plaques for Shovels” was comprised of 12 shovels that were awarded golden plaques (awards) to remind competent officials at the Ministry of Health about their promises for construction and putting into operation of the new Clinical Centre in Shtip. Shortly after the action, the competent authorities issued a statement that intensive efforts are made to overcome problems and continue construction works. The fight of activities continues and they are working on exhibition with promises made by politicians for construction of the Shtip Clinical Center.
- The action “Blatec - Mural Dedicated to Water” appealed for preservation of the river that is under threat of being disturbed with placement of pipes for small hydropower plant.
- The action called “Bribe-Catcher and Handbook” was dedicated to the fight against corruption that destroys our society and eats our money, used to celebrate the International Anticorruption Day (9 December).
- As part of the project **Creative Youth Action for Environment**, the Citizens’ Association Youth Educational Forum actively monitored key problems, issues and needs of young people related to the environment and ecology, and continuously analyzed the situation in local communities. A total of 17 local environmental problems were engaged with engagement of youth and local communities in mapping and resolving local problems. YEF organized 5 creative environmental actions aimed to increase public awareness and

alarm the institutions about environmental pollution on following locations: Municipality of Kisela Voda - lack of cycling paths; Prespa - reduced lake water level; Kumanovo Spa - determine the water issue; Municipality of Veles - pollution of the Vardar River; and Municipality of Mavrovo and Rostushe - illegal landfills. The continued process of research and data collection and creative actions attempted to address specific problems faced by young people. YEF conducted education and capacity-building training to promote the existing program on youth activism and encourage sustainable activist practices and creation of dialogue between different factors for joint action aimed at resolving environmental problems in local communities. Radio YEF continuously reported on topics related to activism and environment. In the period - January - October 2022, a total of 215 news items were published on topics related to activism and environment and generated more than 47,000 views. Five documentary and journalist products were created to promote the actions and inform the wider public about key problems affecting high-school students from the clubs within the Youth Activism Program. Videos titles “Sunset on the Prespa Lake”, “Bike Rider visits the planet Earth”, “I’ll flow like River Vardar and bring rubbish”, “Youth eco-action in Rostushe” and “Is water near Kumanovo Spa safe to drink?” have more than 150,000 views on Radio YEF’s Facebook profile. An additional action of the project implied an added value: “Are we going to breathe this winter?” concerning air pollution in the capital during the winter months.

- The public institution Culture and Social Space CENTAR JADRO Skopje implemented the project **Generosity Places - Transformative Stations (socially engaged art practices as tool for social change)**, which motivated artists in different art disciplines to increase their knowledge and skills in the field of socially engaged art and encouraged them to create participatory projects to exert influence in the community and raise awareness on topics and problems in the fields of environment, anticorruption, human rights and social justice. Project activities included organization of 6-day training/workshop “Kitchen for critical recipes and united (non)skills” and series of 3 online lectures by world renowned artists attended by 10 domestic artists and creators of different areas who were able to acquire and expand their knowledge and skills in the field of socially engaged artistic practices. Online lectures streamed on the Facebook channel of Centar JADRO allowed more than 500 individuals interested to learn about artistic practice of three renowned authors (Jeanne van Heeswijk from the Netherlands, Thomas Hirschhorn from Switzerland/France, and Dmitry Vilenski from Russia). The open call for implementation

of socially engaged artistic project (with focus on environment, anticorruption, human rights and social justice) resulted in selection of 5 projects that were awarded financial and logistic support. These projects were implemented on several locations in Skopje and other towns across the country (Kochani, Kavadarci, Veles). Project activities covered a broad spectrum of actions and artistic disciplines, including creative and education workshops, collective artistic and interdisciplinary research on above indicated topics, local actions, participatory theatrical performances, exhibitions, installations, etc. Implementation of these actions involved more than 50 artists and creative professionals of various profile, with more than 300 citizens directly included in project activities are participants and audience. All projects were presented at the final exhibition staged in November 2022.

With support from OSF Culture and Art Program and as part of the Regional Creative Hubs, three grants were awarded in 2022.

- The project **Together for Better** was implemented by the Contemporary Art Centre (institution) to listen to citizens' needs and attitudes towards activism, civic initiatives and problems they are facing. Public debates were organized in 6 towns with more than 200 participants to openly discuss problems and potential opportunities for civic action and modality for civic mobilization. Strong emphasis was put on interconnection of initiatives and activists, and opening space for joint work on applying new skills and methodologies and active creative approach to communities and audiences (citizens) and their problems on topics that are close and affect them. Furthermore, the project organized a workshop on the topic "Activism, creative activism, mobilization of the public, animation and engagement of audiences and exerting pressure on competent institutions", with participation of 30 representatives from local civic initiatives, activists, former activists and members of civil society organizations. Workshop participants were able to upgrade and/or acquire new knowledge in the field of activism, work with communities, artistic and creative activism, and communication with audiences and the public. Together with representatives from 10 initiatives and organizations, the project created a hub for mutual support which, in the future, will open corridors for mutual support between initiatives and organizations for implementation of their activities and the fight to find solutions to problems.

- The project **Generosity Places - Transformative Stations 2** was implemented by the public institution Cultural and Social Space CENTAR JADRO, Skopje, as the second phase of the previous grant. The project was comprised of a series of training workshops and lectures: series of 5-day workshops for participatory theatre titled “Theatre of the Oppressed: Powerful Transformations and/or Transformations of Power!” for 10 domestic artists and creative professionals, resulting in 3 forum theatrical performance at primary schools in Skopje with audience of around 60 visitors; series of workshops and lectures on critical writing titled “Critical Matter and Matter of Criticism”, “Criticism at the Disfavor of Likes and Instant Culture” and lecture on critical writing, as well as 5-day workshop on participatory art - series of lectures, talks, practical exercises and field visits with 12 domestic artists and participants of different professional background: lectures on participatory art and critical writing “On Publicity and Circulation”. A documentary video collage was produced and publication with project activities.
- The project **Anxiety Landscape: Culture and Art for Future Co-Habitation with Environmental Crises and Climate Change** is implemented by the Museum of Contemporary Arts by June 2023, and is aimed to create conditions for quality exchange of knowledge, cooperation, education and art production by means of which new generations of artists, researchers and citizens from Macedonia will engage in environment and climate change issues, i.e. how to use art practices and culture models for awareness raising among citizens on broad spectrum of important issues. Through a series of presentations, workshops, discussions and production of works in several towns, MCA assumed an important institutional role focused on the effects of climate change, erroneous local policies, air pollution, landfills, loss of biodiversity.

CONCEPT: EDUCATION OF SMALL ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

By the end of 2021, the Foundation Open Society - Macedonia awarded a project grant to the Association for Research and Analysis ZMAI to conduct an analysis of existing conditions and level of preparedness for implementation of the new Primary Education Concept in first to fourth grade. The project “Preparedness of Primary Schools and Effects from Implementation of the New Primary Education Concept in RNM“ included a research survey targeting 11 municipalities and 48 schools that provide instruction in languages spoken by small ethnic communities. In particular, the analysis was based on responses obtained from 628 parents, of which 241 are parents of first-grade pupils (38.38%), 340 are parents of fourth-grade pupils (54.14%) and 47 are parents of pupils from other grades (7.48%), as well as 231 teachers in first to fourth grade, of which 106 are first-grade teachers in the school year 2021/2022, 101 are fourth-grade teachers in the school year 2021/2022 and 24 are subject teachers from other grades. The analysis shows that the concept provides good basis for continued work in upper grades and classes. Based on responses obtained to the survey questionnaires, both parents and teachers welcome this innovation and reported that children are most interested at classes. 62% of parents agreed that teachers had used innovative methods at classes. However, all of them stressed that schools need better information technology infrastructure and more training for teaching staff. Portion of findings from ZMAI’s analysis refer to high level of agreement among parents (71%) that pupils attending instruction in languages spoken by smaller ethnic communities have demonstrated increased feeling of belonging to the society. Respondents have welcomed innovations offered by new technologies. In their opinion, it facilitates better learning among children. 62% of parents agreed that teachers have used innovative methods at classes, which facilitated learning of their child, and similar level of agreement (64%) is noted in respect to responses from teachers. The recommendation that printed materials and textbooks should be used in addition to digital tools remains valid, as 86% of parents indicated such need.

ZMAI’s analysis findings were presented on October 12th, 2022, followed by productive discussion with participation of renowned university professors, mayors of municipalities where the survey was conducted, representatives of international organizations that work on children

development and education, representatives of state institutions in the field of education and promotion of the rights of small ethnic communities, and relevant experts.

The research is published on ZMAI's website and serves as useful tool for additional analyses by relevant institutions in the field of education, aimed to improve quality of teaching and instruction and implementation of the Primary Education Concept.

At the end of 2021, FOSM awarded a project grant to the Citizens' Association Youth Educational Forum (YEF) to implement the project "Youth Policies for Better Living Standards of Young People in Small Environments" aimed to create advocacy activities for improving local youth policies and creating possibilities for youth development activities and conditions in small environments and rural areas. Through the processes of advocacy and networking of youth organizations, informal groups, schools and associations for youth, and youth themselves, YEF created an informal platform for dialogue between young people and local institutions and provided ongoing mapping and information for youth on policies, processes and projects that affect them, and produced professional journalists reports, press releases and other products.

YEF organized six workshops for youth in Ohrid, Struga, Shtip, Gevgelija, Bitola, Delchevo and Tetovo, in cooperation with its partner organizations: Center for Research and Analysis NOVUS - Strumica, Local Community Development Foundation - Shtip, Center for Education and Development - Tearce, Regional Center for Sustainable Development - Gevgelija, NGO KHAM - Delchevo, and Association for Development and Activism AQUA - Struga, allowing young people to identify areas at local and national level where they need to be involved with own proposals and suggestions for improvement. In the aftermath of youth workshops and meetings with representatives from local governments, YEF summed project results and recommendations into advocacy document on youth involvement in local self-government units and presented them at the public event held on October 20th, 2020, attended by representatives from the Government, the Agency for Youth and Sports, local governments and young people from municipalities where project activities were implemented.

Throughout project implementation, Radio YEF published texts, analyses and produced 10 youth shows called "Insta(nt) News" on relevant topics that affect youth at local level.

As part of FOSM's support approved in late 2021, the Foundation for Education and Cultural Initiatives "Step by Step" continued its work on promoting teaching and learning at 10 primary schools with instruction in languages spoken by small ethnic communities in the course of 2022, thereby supporting the new Primary Education Concept and contributing to its implementation. The library-on-wheels organized 3 visits. A teacher manual was developed with activities for picture-books from the edition "Our First Library". Two picture-books were adapted in Roma, Turkish, Serbian and Bosnian language, and are available to children, teachers and parents through the Foundation's digital library. Video materials were produced and filmed on the topic "Education and Arts: Importance of Arts and Drama in Development of Children". Other efforts included project promotion by sharing information on implemented project activities.

To support implementation of the Primary Education Concept, in 2022 FOSM awarded a grant to Bureau for Development of Education intended for development and translation of 12 manuals in five instruction languages: Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, Serbian and Bosnian. Manuals are aimed to improve teacher competences and implement teaching programs from the new Primary Education Concept and are intended for first, second, fourth and fifth-grade teachers, covering a total of five subjects. FOSM's support will be used for technical and graphic design of manuals and workbooks that are integral part of manuals, as well as translation of these materials in four languages.

As part of the project "Piloting Solar Panels at Schools in the Republic of North Macedonia", in 2022 the Foundation Open Society - Macedonia visited several locations across the country to identify schools in smaller urban and rural settlements that have adequate technical conditions for installation of photovoltaic solar systems. With own funds and as part of the regional initiative also implemented in Albania, Serbia and Kosovo, FOSM selected four municipalities (Delchevo, Valadovo, Chucher Sandevo and Centar Zhupa) for realization of its donation. This project covers five school buildings, of which two are secondary schools - "Goce Delchev" in Valadovo and "Metodi Mitevski Brico" in Delchevo, and three are primary schools in rural areas - "Strasho Pindzur" in village Josifovo, Valadovo; "St. Cyril and Methodius" - village Kuchemishte, Chucher Sandevo; and "Nedjati Zekirija" in village Novak, Centar Zhupa. The project's objective is to enable utilization of solar energy and rational energy use at the pilot schools, thereby supporting environmental transition of these institutions, while aiming to create so-called green schools through education and involvement of students and school employees in energy efficiency improvements. To implement the project, FOSM signed

Cooperation Agreements with municipal mayors under which the donor committed to install photovoltaic solar systems on school buildings through the selected economic operator, while the municipalities committed to assume maintenance responsibility for the installed systems.

Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Program

FOSM joined the 7-month initiative called **Regional Youth Leadership Mobility Program**, launched by OSF Albania and OSF Serbia in October 2021 and ending in May 2022. In the pilot phase, FOSM organized a workshop at which partner organizations (Centre Science and Innovation for Development (SCiDEV) from Albania, Centre for Education Policies (CEP) from Serbia and Youth Educational Forum from North Macedonia) developed a joint concept for continuation and expansion of the regional project in the next three years (2022-2025). The project aims to strengthen regional cooperation by capacity building of young people in all three countries aged 21 to 30 years (youth from the academia, graduated students, master and/or doctoral candidates, young professionals and youth activists from civil society organizations) through data-based and informed advocacy, youth leadership, activism and intercultural exchange. Candidates selected on the open call will work on individual projects around one of following topics: 1) regional cooperation; 2) education and employability; 3) migrations and brain-drain; 4) youth engagement; and 5) youth action for environment. They will also receive training to enhance their competences and skills, mentor support, will have a three-week mobility work engagement and will work their colleagues on data-based advocacy within mixed regional teams.

Stay@School: Action for Roma Inclusion in Primary Education

The three-year project **Stay@School: Action for Roma Inclusion in Primary Education**, financed by the European Union, ended in October 2022. It was implemented by FOSM since October 2019, in partnership with the Foundation for Education and Cultural Initiatives “Step by Step” and in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science. The project’s goal was to ensure equal access to education for Roma children and motivate children to stay at school, but also help schools provide an inclusive environment for learning that respects differences and where children will feel welcomed and equally stimulated to succeed.

A total of 595 scholarship for the school year 2021/2022 were awarded to Roma pupils, of which 316 attend second and 279 attend third grade at total of 74 primary schools in 33 municipalities. 50% of scholarship beneficiaries are girls and 50% are boys. Right to apply for scholarship is given to Roma pupils whose families are beneficiaries of social allowance based on family income and who have renewed their scholarship awarded for the school year 2020/2021. At the beginning of the school year 2021/2022, the project secured these pupils with branded backpacks and school supplies. A total of 556 pupils (94%) successfully completed the school year 2021/2022 and transitioned to the next grade.

Through scholarship award, the project contributed to reducing the financial burden on Roma families related to schooling of their children. Scholarships were awarded for a period one school year, in the amount of 400 EUR annually (in MKD counter-value), on the condition of children staying at school and regularly attending classes. These funds were intended to cover costs for schooling, food, clothing, school supplies and materials, sport and other equipment for extracurricular activities.

A total of 60 assistants were trained and engaged to support the Roma community and contribute to identification of children in the community that are not included in the education system, encourage families to enroll their children in school and regularly attend classes in order to successfully transfer to the next grade. For that purpose, assistants for supporting the Roma community were engaged in regular communication and cooperation with Roma families and the schools.

In cooperation with the local authorities and schools, in the period May-June 2022, the project organized 10 round tables in Bitola, Prilep, Veles, Kavadarci, Negotino, Strumica and Kriva Palanka, attended by total of 389 participants, of which 299 were Roma parents/guardians, as well as representatives from municipal administrations, primary schools and non-governmental organizations, education and health mediators. The purpose of these events was to motivate parents to enroll their children in school and regularly attend classes, as well as to increase cooperation among schools, local authorities and parents.

At the beginning of 2022, 47 primary schools attended by project scholarship beneficiaries have submitted reports on extracurricular school activities implemented in the first school semester and including games and joint activities to encourage inclusion of Roma pupils. Project support

in the maximum amount of 2,500 EUR per school concerned didactic materials, school supplies, sport equipment, school furniture, library material, equipment, and supplies for landscaping school yards, as well as small-scale adjustment works to arrange creative and pleasant school corners for learning and joint activities of children, parents and teachers. With a series of activities, the schools promoted equal opportunities for all pupils, establishing positive school climate and transforming school premises into inclusive and stimulative learning environment.

CONCEPT: HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES

To keep health as high priority of the Government, FOSM continued to support partner organizations that work on social rights and equitable access to health services for members of marginalized communities (women, children, Roma, people who use drugs, sex workers, LGBTI, people living with HIV, people living in rural areas, etc.).

In order to engage citizens in the process for planning, implementing and assessing legal regulations, budgets and services in the areas of social and economic rights, the **Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women (ESE)** continued its capacity-building activities for Roma organizations related to implementation of the concepts of social accountability and legal empowerment to assess the quality of health services in Roma and rural areas. After the inception training on the primary healthcare system operation in RNM, a group of 25 civic activists conducted a survey with 2,444 respondents from Roma communities and rural areas and assessed access to primary healthcare services to identify barriers to full and quality exercise of these services. In addition, the survey identified factors that affect mental health of the Roma population and people living in rural areas. In partnership with COPASAH Europe, two online modules were organized to train 24 civil society representatives from the region² to implement the methodologies on social accountability, legal empowerment and fiscal transparency when monitoring performance of public institutions.

ESE continued to monitor implementation of four preventive healthcare programs of the Ministry of Health (Program for Active Health Protection of Mothers and Children, Program for Systemic Examinations of Pupils and Students, Program for Uterine Cancer Screening and Program for Breast Cancer Screening). Reports³ developed on the basis of this activity have noted key changes and inconsistencies in implementation of planned activities and execution of program budgets. The monitoring also assessed negative consequences from incomplete

² North Macedonia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Montenegro and Albania

³<https://esem.org.mk/pdf/Publikacii/2022/1/Vo%20RSM%20nema%20organiziran%20skrining%20an%20karcinom%20na%20grlo%20na%20matka.pdf>
<https://esem.org.mk/pdf/Publikacii/2022/1/Vo%20pandemija%20nema%20skrining%20na%20karcinom%20na%20dojka.pdf>

implementation of these programs and their effect on access to preventive healthcare services for all target groups, with special focus on Roma women.

ESE attended the 91st session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and made an official submission⁴ elaborating problems and barriers identified in respect to access to healthcare for Roma community members (with special focus on mothers and children) in 2020 and 2021. A special working group was formed in partnership with COPASAH Europe, comprised of civil society representatives and practitioners, which developed advocacy plans⁵ for fiscal transparency in the areas related to exercise of social and economic human rights. Moreover, ESE tested usefulness and applicability of WHO Guide on engaging communities in contact tracing at times of communicable disease outbreak and spreading in Roma environments. The testing process⁶ was conducted in Roma-populated settlements in the municipalities Shuto Orizari and Prilep, and established inconsistencies in contract tracing, as well as the need for active engagement of community members in contact tracing under conditions of communicable disease outbreaks.

In partnership with 4 civil society organizations,⁷ ESE conducted a research survey to assess environmental effects on Roma people by identifying ecological risks that affect the health status of Roma communities in 6 municipalities. Moreover, 80 photographic and video products were created to document the effect of socio-economic determinants and environmental conditions on the health status of the Roma population. Results from the survey conducted among 2,171 Roma households will be used for advocacy before competent institutions at local and central level to change the concept of environmental justice, with special focus on Roma communities.

The focus of 2022 advocacy efforts by **HOPS - Healthy Options Project Skopje** was continued financial sustainability of health quality and psycho-social services for marginalized communities planned under the 2022 HIV Population Protection Program. On the account of reduced budget for this program by 40% of funds earmarked for civil society organizations and

⁴https://esem.org.mk/pdf/Voved/Monitoring%20na%20chovekovi%20prava/Megjunarodni%20dokumenti/Addicional%20information%20CRC%20North%20Macedonia_2022.pdf

⁵ Final-Action-Plan-July-Dec-2022.pdf (copasaheurope.org) и Final-Action-Plan-2022-2026.pdf (copasaheurope.org)

⁶https://esem.org.mk/pdf/Publikacii/2022/1/Engaging%20Roma%20communities%20in%20contact%20tracing_ESE_NMacedonia.pdf

⁷ NGO Romano Chachipe, Skopje; IRIZ Skopje; Station LET - Prilep; NGO Mother - Kjumanovo

late disbursement of funds by four months, HOPS and partner organizations implemented an awareness campaign targeting decision-makers about the need for ensuring financial sustainability of services for people who use drugs and sex workers. The campaign was focused on underlying high risks and challenges that could emerge in the society as a result of reduced budget for program implementation. HOPS successfully advocated before the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy to change the Rulebook on provision of social services in order to ensure service provision license for HOPS's support centers for people who use drugs and sex workers. In order to decriminalize personal use of drugs, including cannabis, in partnership with the Coalition MARGINS, HOPS participated in the expert group tasked with drafting the new Criminal Code that anticipates decriminalization of narcotic and psychoactive substance possession for personal use.⁸ HOPS continued to advocate for adherent implementation of the Law on Control of Opiates and for setting a catchment share from excise collected from sales of alcohol, beer and tobacco, to ensure financial sustainability of services provided by the Fund on Special Fees for Cannabis Producers and Traders.

In 2022, HOPS doubled its legal services for people who use drugs and documented 42 cases of human rights violations, 19 cases of discrimination, 7 cases of police torture and degrading treatment, 25 cases of violated right to health insurance and health protection and the right to addiction treatment, and 7 cases of gender-based domestic violence. The two support centers provided around 1,500 different services to more than 120 clients, mainly in the field of administrative procedures, right to social protection, procedure for obtaining personal identification documents, health protection and right to health. Furthermore, at the two support centers for sex workers, HOPS's legal team provided 850 services resulting in documenting 7 cases of gender-based violence, 11 cases of domestic violence, 91 cases of human rights violations, and 244 violations of the family law. In line with the free legal aid mechanism, HOPS provided 44 legal advices on violated rights in the field of family law, civil law, labor relations, discrimination and domestic violence, while the Harm Reduction and Social Service Program allowed 860 individual clients to receive psychosocial support, medical equipment for drug use, HIV counseling and testing, and information on social and health rights.

To promote the quality of harm reduction services, with support from the Association ESE, HOPS conducted the "Analysis on Execution of Budget Funds from Tobacco and Alcohol

⁸ https://ener.gov.mk/default.aspx?item=pub_regulation&subitem=view_reg_detail&itemid=74071

Excise and Trade, Export and Import of Cannabis”⁹ and published 2 new editions of the magazine “Drugs: Policies and Practice”¹⁰ that will be used as advocacy tools for quality harm reduction services.

In 2022, the **Coalition Sexual and Health Rights of Marginalized Communities - MARGINS** continued to advocate for protection and respect of fundamental human rights of marginalized communities, with focus on LGBTI people, people who use drugs, sex workers, people living with HIV and marginalized women. It actively participated in the working group formed by the Ministry of Justice and tasked to draft the new Law on General Records that will include recommendations put forward by MARGINS for legal recognition of gender, and was part of the expert group tasked to draft the new Criminal Code, which was presented to the Parliament of RNM with amendments aimed at full enforcement of provisions from the Istanbul Convention in the new Criminal Code, and was part of the regional informal group of civil society organizations that submitted a joint letter to Western Balkan governments to deal with all forms of violence against women, with special focus on online violence. MARGINS was part of the group of civil society organizations that presented the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child with report on cases relating to violence against, discrimination and inequality of LGBTI people¹¹ and worked on developing secondary legislation arising from the Law on Compensating Victims of Violent Criminal Offences. Coalition MARGINS drafted a proposal aimed to improve and promote the Developmental Strategy of RNM concerning protection of the rights of marginalized communities in respect to gender equality.

In 2022, the legal team recorded 76 cases of human rights violations of marginalized communities and was engaged in strategic litigation before national and international institutions for cases of recorded violation of the right to privacy of two transgender women in the media, initiated a procedure before the Public Prosecution Office in Gevgelija where two women had been targeted with online violence, and motioned lawsuit for legal recognition of gender for 10 trans-people. Active advocacy was conducted for the rights of LGBTI people through 3 cases of established multiple harassments of sex workers on the basis of gender by media outlet, publication of discriminatory content against transgender people by the media and existence of intersectoral discrimination by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy.

⁹ https://hops.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/HOPS_web.pdf

¹⁰ <https://hops.org.mk/mikrodozirane-2/> и <https://hops.org.mk/trevata-veke-ne-e-droga/>

¹¹ <http://coalition.org.mk/archives/1225>

Aimed at public promotion of respect for sexual and health rights of marginalized communities, Coalition MARGINS organized the Jubilee 10th Pride Weekend 2022¹² (Skopje Pride Weekend). To promote the rights of transgender persons, on November 20th, 2002, the informal group TransForma, which is member of MARGINS, organized an online event around the Trans Remembrance Day, distributed food and hygiene packages to members of the trans community at social risk and affected by the economic and health crises, and organized the Visibility March of Transgender People in partnership with STAR - STAR.¹³

To decriminalize sex work, the **Association for Support to Marginalized Workers STAR - STAR** drafted a strategic and position paper¹⁴ on legal regulation of sex work and successfully organized an online campaign to celebrate the International Day of Sex Workers (2 June), including promotion of the short video “Why does Skopje deserve to have Red Light District?”¹⁵ and podcast titled “Breakfast with Miss Strawberry”.¹⁶ Moreover, STAR - STAR successfully organized a humanitarian fundraising for support to sex workers and single mothers “Action for Reaction 2”, collecting a sum of 7,950 MKD which was distributed to 16 sex workers at social and economic risk. Field activities of 4 regional gate-keepers and regional paralegal offices¹⁷ resulted in provision of paralegal assistance for exercise of health, social and economic rights by 113 sex workers and documented 5 cases of human rights violations that were later followed up with lawsuit motioned before competent institutions. Moreover, STAR - STAR developed a software program for data analysis on marginalized communities for the purpose of creating individual or group advocacy plans to promote human rights of sex workers, developed the “Integrated analysis of deficiencies in the social protection system for sex workers”, published

¹² <http://coalition.org.mk/archives/11818> ,

¹³ <https://starsexwork.org/%D0%BC%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%88-%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D0%B2%D0%B8%D0%B4%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D1%82%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%81%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5-%D0%BB%D0%B8-2/>

¹⁴

<https://starsexwork.org/%d0%ba%d0%be%d0%bb%d0%b5%d0%ba%d1%82%d0%b8%d0%b2%d0%b5%d0%bd-%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b0%d0%b2-%d0%bd%d0%b0-%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b0%d1%80-%d0%bf%d1%80%d0%b2-%d0%ba%d0%be%d0%bb%d0%b5%d0%ba%d1%82%d0%b8/>

¹⁵ <https://starsexwork.org/%d0%b7%d0%be%d1%88%d1%82%d0%be-%d1%81%d0%ba%d0%be%d0%bf%d1%98%d0%b5-%d0%bf%d0%be%d0%b2%d1%82%d0%be%d1%80%d0%bd%d0%be-%d0%b7%d0%b0%d1%81%d0%bb%d1%83%d0%b6%d1%83%d0%b2%d0%b0-%d1%86%d1%80%d0%b2%d0%b5/>

¹⁶ https://www.mixcloud.com/HOPS_mk/%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B4%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%83%D1%87%D0%B5%D0%BA-%D1%81%D0%BE-miss-strawberry/

¹⁷ Skopje, Gostivar and Strumica

12 editions of the monthly online magazine “S-Work”¹⁸, and organized the traditional Red Umbrella March on December 17th, 2022.

Support for the **Foundation IDEA Southeast Europe** was intended for creation of different formats of educational and informative content for the public, raising awareness with audiences on the emergence of fake news and disinformation, and sensitizing the Macedonian society to differences and the need for greater inclusion. In that, various types of media products were created,¹⁹ including videos, multimedia stories, animations, short and long documentary features,²⁰ and stories covering topics such as human rights, rights of LGBTI people,²¹ women rights, labor rights, Roma community,²² persons with disabilities, poor people, people at social risk and other marginalized groups. In 2022, the Foundation IDEA continued its successful cooperation with 13 local media outlets²³ for presentation of its documentary features to their respective television audiences. The success of *Now This* at the Foundation IDEA was recognized with numerous awards on investigative journalism, innovative media products and solutions, journalist stories on inclusive reporting and reporting on environmental issues.

To promote the health, social and economic status of Roma, in 2022 FOSM supported 9 civil society organizations²⁴ active in 14 municipalities²⁵ with significant Roma population, resulting in provision of around 8,242 legal and paralegal services. Compared to 2021 figures, legal and paralegal service provision is marked by increased coverage of citizens from these groups by 13%. Roma, single parents, low-income workers, people without income, beneficiaries of social transfers and low-pension retired people, people without personal identification documents and other groups at social risk appear as the most frequent seekers of legal and paralegal services.

In 2022, violation of human rights were most often identified in respect to exercise of the rights to health insurance and health protection and patient rights (2,401 services), exercise of social

¹⁸ www.starsexwork.org

¹⁹ <https://vidivaka.mk/>

²⁰ <https://vidivaka.mk/category/dokumentarci/>

²¹ <https://vidivaka.mk/category/temi/lgbt-prava/>

²² <https://vidivaka.mk/pristapot-do-voda-e-osnovno-chovekovo-pravo/>

²³ TVM Ohrid, Kiss Menada - Tetovo and Gostivar, TV Edo - Skopje, TV koha - Gostivar and Tetovo, TV Kochani LD, Kanal 8 - Kochani, TV Protep - Probishtip, TV Kaltrina - Struga, M Ner HD - Shtip, TV Nova - Gevgelija, TV Spektra - Vevchani, TV Kobra - Radovish and MTM Skopje.

²⁴ NGO KHAM - Delchevo, IRIZ Initiative for Community Development and Inclusion, Romano Chachipe, Station LET - Prilep, Sun - Tetovo, HERA, Initiative for Rights of Women in Shuto Orizari, LIL Skopje, NRC Kumanovo.

²⁵ Skopje, Delchevo, Pehchevo, Vinica, Shuto Orizari, Prilep, Dolneni, Krivogashtani, Karposh, Gjorche Petrov, Saraj, Tetovo, Gostivar, Kumanovo

and child allowance (2,353 services), economic empowerment, employment and self-employment (356 cases), support to Roma families in the education system (670 cases), obtaining personal identification documents and birth certificates (603 cases), family and misdemeanor law, property tenure issues and communal services (1,481 cases) and various (378 cases). At the same time, 200 humanitarian packages were distributed to poor Roma families in the Municipality of Kumanovo.

FOSM provided continuous support and coordination for the group of 12 organizations that continued daily field activities to assist the most vulnerable Roma community members. In 2022, a total of 14 coordination meetings were held online to share information on ongoing field developments and to agree on joint petitions and reactions to competent institutions. Most important joint civic initiatives included the establishment of registered gynecological practice at the Policlinic in Shuto Orizari (October 2022), submission of petition for employment of general practitioners and pediatricians at the Department on Preventive Healthcare for Pre-School Children at the Policlinic in Shuto Orizari, increasing the number of employed health professionals from the Roma community in the public health system, and organization of on-duty medical service at the Policlinic in Shuto Orizari. Aimed at introducing regular public transport via lines 19 and 20, a petition was submitted and public protest was organized, followed by demand to the Public Transport Enterprise PTE Skopje to address this problem. A creative gorilla action “You Deserve...” was organized on the International Women’s Day (8th March) to raise awareness about problems faced by Roma women in respect to access to healthcare services, including a request for refurbishment of the Social Work Centre in the Municipality of Shuto Orizari and capacity-building for its employees to ensure timely delivery of social services. Furthermore, 2022 activities included monitoring budget spending of the Municipality of Shuto Orizari earmarked for urgent monetary assistance for municipal residents. As a result of joint advocacy, the Municipal Council in Delchevo adopted a decision to increase municipal budget funds earmarked for single payment monetary assistance in 2023 by 30%, while the Employment Service Center in Vinica adopted a decision for employment of 12 Roma in the business sector and the public utility enterprise in the Municipality of Pehchevo resolved numerous communal and environmental problems faced by residents of village Crnik. In addition, health workers at healthcare centers in Delchevo, Vinica and Pehchevo organized field activities to promote several preventive healthcare programs of the Ministry of Health and detected several cases of non-immunized pre-school children.

Access to Justice for the Most Marginalized

Access to Justice for the Most Marginalized is a project financed by the European Union and implemented by FOSM, in partnership with HOPS - Healthy Options Project Skopje and Station LET from Prilep. Only in 2022, project activities resulted in provision of 1,572 legal and 1,602 paralegal services for more than 1,500 members of marginalized communities. Most often, citizens address these organizations for issues related to social protection, health insurance, housing, personal identification documents, agriculture rights, family relations, discrimination, domestic violence, etc. Services were provided by legal practitioners and paralegals by relying of different tools, including field visits, telephone calls, online platforms and office-based counselling. The mobile office for paralegal assistance that was formed last year continued to provide legal and paralegal services for citizens in rural areas who, due to distance of their residence from central hubs and absence of public transport, have limited access to services offered by public institutions.

Moreover, the project mapped immunization coverage with COVID-19 vaccines among sex workers, people who use drugs, Roma and people living in rural areas. The research showed that majority of these marginalized communities are already immunized, and if they have not been vaccinated, that is generally due to accepted myths about side effects of these vaccines. Research results were used to produce three videos aimed to inform the general public.

Two audiocasts were produced on topics relevant for sex workers. [The first podcast](#) “Breakfast with Miss Strawberry” was aired on June 2nd, and was intended to celebrate the International Sex Workers Day. [The second podcast](#) covered the theme of sex work and the energy crisis and featured interviews with one sex worker and field worker, both discussing challenges of this profession at times of energy and economic crisis.

Paralegals working with people who use drugs were mobilized around the community action at D-Festival. This event was used to disseminate harm reduction materials related to drug use, violence (including gender-based violence) among people who use drugs, and other promotional materials related to the project.

Paralegals received training of trainers aimed to strengthen their capacity and enhance their knowledge. As a result, trained paralegals organized 24 cascade educational workshops with

people who use drugs, sex workers and their families on topics such as gender-based violence, decriminalization of drug use and decriminalization of sex work. Cascade workshops were attended by total of 45 marginalized community members. Moreover, two additional trainings were organized for legal practitioners, paralegals and human rights activists. The [first training](#) aimed to enhance participants' skills and knowledge on community mobilization around detecting human rights violations and which institutions should be addressed in case of such violations. The [second training](#) was attended by 14 participants from 6 civil society organizations that provide legal and paralegal assistance to vulnerable groups of citizens. The purpose of this training was to introduce them to the concept of creative activism and how creative actions can be used to trigger change in the society. This training resulted in 4 creative actions that will be implemented in the forthcoming period.

As part of their work, partner organizations identified 4 individual cases of human rights violations and drafted a reaction to competent institutions: barriers to exercise of parental rights by fathers with custodial rights for their minor children, delayed procedure for issuance of citizenship certificate for a woman in rural area who is living in Macedonia for more than 15 years, request for dormitory accommodation of high-school student whose application has been rejected because his place of residence is not at least 15 kilometers distant from Prilep, reporting a case where parents have forced an underage girl into marriage.

Together with its project partners, FOSM actively participates in implementation of the fifth Open Government Partnership National Action Plan under the priority area *Access to Justice*. In respect to the commitment on legal empowerment of citizens through available information and open institutions, activities started on development of the National Plan on Legal Empowerment. In that respect and under a comprehensive and transparent process, meetings were organized with representatives from the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, as well as two focus groups with civil society representatives and two focus groups with representatives from social work centers and MoJ regional offices.

As a result of project advocacy efforts, in October 2022, the Minister of Health adopted a decision on formation of the commission tasked with developing the treatment protocol for drug abuse intended for persons under the age of 15 years and one member of this commission is representative from HOPS.

In addition to regular content on project activities, the designated website www.pravnozajakni.mk also hosts information on cases related to most frequent human rights violations, including advice and guidance for actions to be taken by citizens in such situation. At the same time, all news on project activities are regularly shared on the Facebook page [Access to Justice](#).

GRANTS AND COOPERATION AGREEMENTS IN 2022

Common Regional Market

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Finance Think - Economic Research and Policy Institute, Skopje	Open Balkan: Free Regional Movement of Labor in Conditions of Shortage of Qualified Workers	\$40,000
Policy Research Association ANALYTICA, Skopje	Strengthening Regional Economic Cooperation: Opportunities and Benefits of the Common Regional Market for Agriculture and Tourism in North Macedonia	\$40,000
Association for Research and Analysis ZMAI, Skopje	Connecting Countries from the Open Balkan through Solid Customs and Taz Policy (cooperation)	\$40,000
TOTAL:		\$120,000

Support for the evacuated activists from Afghanistan (Reserve Fund of the Open Society Foundations, New York)

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia, Skopje	Support for the evacuated persons from Afghanistan in the period February - April 2022	\$35,000
Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia, Skopje	Support for the evacuated persons from Afghanistan for the period April - June 2022	\$42,730
Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia, Skopje	Support for the people from Afghanistan accommodated in Skopje for the period June 9 th - July 31 st 2022	\$26,700
TOTAL:		\$104,430

COOPERATION AGREEMENTS		
PARTY	PURPOSE	AMOUNT IN USD
Red Cross of the Republic of North Macedonia - Red Cross of the City of Skopje	Support for the evacuated persons from Afghanistan to the Republic of North Macedonia and facilitated stay in the country	\$4,000
Macedonian Young Lawyers Association MYLA, Skopje	Assistance to evacuated persons from Afghanistan to the Republic of North Macedonia developing documents necessary for applying in the special program of the Government of Canada for accepting evacuated citizens from Afghanistan	\$3,420
TOTAL:		\$7,420

Civic Engagement for Social Justice

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Center for Civil Communications, Skopje	Adjusting to Climate Change by Preventing Corruption in Public Procurements	\$45,000
Prespa Institute, Skopje	Climate Mainstreaming for Just Transition	\$30,000
European Policy Institute, Skopje	For Justice: Civic Contribution to Promote the Judiciary	\$44,997
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Skopje	Self-Evaluation of the Human Dimension according to Guidelines from OSCE in RNM	\$12,060
TOTAL:		\$132,057

Support to Implementation and Monitoring of the Open Government Partnership National Action Plan 2021-2023

COOPERATION AGREEMENT

PARTY	PURPOSE	AMOUNT IN USD
Foundation IDEA Southeast Europe, Skopje	Production of video for the project "Support to Implementation and Monitoring of the Open Government Partnership National Action Plan 2021-2023"	\$2,459
TOTAL:		\$2,459

Exposing Malign Influence through Watchdog Journalism

COOPERATION AGREEMENT

PARTY	PURPOSE	AMOUNT IN USD
Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society, Skopje	Exposing Malign influence through Watchdog Journalism	\$35,850
Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society, Skopje and TRD 24Vesti	Exposing Malign influence through Watchdog Journalism	\$16,000
TOTAL:		\$51,850

Green Leap - Partnership for Climate Action

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Citizens' Association ZIP Institute for Policies and Good Governance, Skopje	MEF 2022: Socially Just and Democratic Energy Transition to Mitigate the Energy Crisis	\$5,400
Citizen's Association MEDIA PLUS, Shtip	Innovative Solutions for Green East	\$18,455
Macedonian Young Lawyers Association, Skopje	Action for Advanced Legal and Institutional Water Protection	\$19,192
Association for Sustainable Development Milieukontakt Macedonia, Skopje	Analysis of Legislation on Waters and Recommendations to Improve Quality of National Documents (Water Management Strategy and Water Economy of RNM)	\$25,450
Local Community Development Foundation, Shtip	4Ps - Reduce, Recycle, Reuse, Repurpose - Social Inclusion through Circular Economy	\$29,980
Citizens' Association Center for Climate Change, Gevgelija	Analysis of Progress on the National Legislation's Alignment and Implementation of the EU Acquis on Environment and Climate Change (2022 Shadow Report for Chapter 27)	\$24,895
TOTAL:		\$123,372

Regional Creative Hubs: Tapping the Power of Art and Culture to Stimulate Civic Action against Corruption

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Contemporary Art Centre (institution), Skopje	Together for Better	\$20,000
Cultural and Social Space CENTAR JADRO, Skopje	Generosity Places - Transformative Stations 2 (socially engaged art practices as tool for social change)	\$19,500
Museum of Contemporary Arts, Skopje	Anxiety Landscape: Culture and Art for Future Co-Habitation with Environmental Crises and Climate Change	\$22,450
TOTAL:		\$61,950

Education of Small Ethnic Communities

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Bureau for Development of Education, Skopje	Translation into 4 instruction languages and technical design of teacher manuals	\$42,000
TOTAL:		\$42,000

COOPERATION AGREEMENTS		
PARTY	PURPOSE	AMOUNT IN USD
Municipality of Chucher Sandevo	Piloting Solar Panels at Schools in the Republic of North Macedonia	\$18,449
Municipality of Delchevo	Piloting Solar Panels at Schools in the Republic of North Macedonia	\$18,449
Municipality of Centar Zhupa	Piloting Solar Panels at Schools in the Republic of North Macedonia	\$13,104
Municipality of Valandovo	Piloting Solar Panels at Schools in the Republic of North Macedonia	\$42,749
TOTAL:		\$92,751

Health in All Policies

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Skopje	Skopje PRIDE 2022	\$9,708

Association of Roma Lawyers - ARP, Skopje	Legal Aid for the Roma Community	\$20,000
Association - Initiative for Rights of Women from Shuto Orizari, Skopje	Promoting Access to Health and Social Rights of the Roma Community in Shuto Orizari	\$20,000
TOTAL:		\$49,708

GRANTS FOR INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Judicial Reform

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Macedonian Young Lawyers Association, Skopje	For Justice:- Civil Society Organizations for Independent and Efficient Judiciary	\$100,000
TOTAL:		\$100,000

Human Rights

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Skopje	Promoting Protection Mechanisms for Free Legal Aid and Hate Speech in the Republic of North Macedonia	\$120,000
TOTAL:		\$120,000

Transparency and Accountability

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Center for Civil Communications, Skopje	Monitoring Public Procurements	\$80,000
Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society, Skopje	Transparency and Accountability of State Institutions in RNM	\$120,000
TOTAL:		\$200,000

Civic Engagement

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Local Community Development Foundation, Shtip	Institutional support to strengthen local democracy	\$120,000
TOTAL:		\$120,000

Culture and Arts/Creative Activism

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Institution - Contemporary Arts Center, Skopje	Institutional support for creative activism	\$80,000
Cultural and Social Space CENTAR JADRO, Skopje	Institutional support for Centar Jadro	\$80,000
TOTAL:		\$160,000

Student Rights and Engagement/Education

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Citizens' Association Youth Educational Forum, Skopje	General institutional support for the Youth Educational Forum	\$150,000
		TOTAL: \$150,000

Education

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Foundation for Education and Cultural Initiatives "Step by Step", Skopje	General institutional support for the Foundation for Education and Cultural Initiatives "Step by Step"	\$120,000
		TOTAL: \$120,000

Public Health

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women - ESE, Skopje	Institutional support for the Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women (ESE)	\$180,000
Coalition Sexual and Health Rights of Marginalized Communities MARGINS, Skopje	Institutional support for the Coalition Sexual and Health Rights of Marginalized Communities - MARGINS, Skopje	\$140,000
HOPS - Healthy Options Project Skopje	Institutional support for HOPS - Healthy Options Project Skopje	\$160,000
		TOTAL: \$480,000

Regional project: Balkan Tender Watch

GRANTS		
GRANTEE	PROJECT	AMOUNT IN USD
Center for Civil Communications, Skopje	Balkan Tender Watch	\$195,000
		TOTAL: \$195,000

TOTAL for GRANTS and COOPERATION AGREEMENTS in 2022: \$2,432,997