

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO COVID-19: PRACTICES, LESSONS AND NEEDS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

REGIONAL ONLINE MEET-UP OF CSOs IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

2 - 4 JUNE, 2020

Report

INTRODUCTION

As a part of EU TACSO 3 mitigation measures that aim at supporting exchange of experiences and learning in emergency response among CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey (WBT), a regional **meet-up event** was organised within the Capacity Development (CD) and People to People (P2P) Programme of the EU TACSO 3 project. EU TACSO 3 has defined facilitation of networking as one of capacity development measures to strengthen regional, European and global linkages among CSOs and those with relevant stakeholders.

With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, CSOs are facing **new challenges**. Namely, significant number of organisations are not prepared to fully function in emergencies and their overall technical, human, and financial capacities deteriorated due to the COVID-19 crisis. However, civil society is adapting to the new circumstances. Many recognised the urgency, showed solidarity and found creative ways to be useful to their communities, to offer tools against isolation, to involve in humanitarian work, to volunteer by providing support to the weak and vulnerable groups, which often happen to be the poorest. Unfortunately, in these hard times, some of the governments in the region did not recognise the importance of the civil society and did not perceive CSOs as relevant partners in dealing with the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, many governments passed set of measures targeted to support the private sector only. A further issue is donors' flexibility. So far, the majority of donors have not cancelled or put on hold projects or announced calls for grants. On the contrary, some foreign donors have showed flexibility by providing budget re-allocations under on-going projects to facilitate urgent sub-granting calls to support CSOs' response to the COVID-19 crisis.

A three half-day online workshops were organised with the purpose to discuss the above situation. The specific **objectives** of the event were:

- To explore the COVID-19 impact on civil society as a whole (i.e. enabling environment, capacities);
- To discuss specific challenges for CSOs dealing with or supporting emergency relief related actions (e.g. humanitarian and social services to vulnerable groups, monitoring of government policies and measures etc.);
- To provide space for exchange of experiences, practices and know-how among CSOs in emergency response;
- To strengthen networking and collaboration among CSOs on emergency response;
- To provide recommendations on the needed support for CSOs to better cope with and respond to emergency situation.

The three half-day meeting was organised on-line, via the Zoom platform. One hundred and thirty-five (135) representatives of CSOs, public institutions, donors (incl. EU) and other stakeholders from the WBT applied to participate, while 85 representatives attended the first day, 82 the second day and 66 the last day, respectively.

DISCUSSION

DAY I: 2 June

Session I: Introduction: Effects of COVID-19 on civil society development

At the start, Tanja Bjelanovic, EU TACSO 3 Capacity Building Expert, as facilitator of the event, provided information about the purposes of the meeting and gave a brief introduction about the profile of participants and proposed the rules to be respected during the discussion.

Main rules for discussion: **One person at the time!** - Everyone on Mute, except the person that has the floor to speak; **Ask to speak through Chat!** – Write your questions clearly or raise your hand to speak in the Chat section; **Give Comments** – Write your comment clearly or raise your hand to speak in the Chat section; **Speak only once** you are **given the floor by the Facilitator**; **Present yourself** – Give name of CSO, country, etc.; **Brief and to the point (3 min max!)** – Try to focus on the main point and the subject of the discussion; **Respect of time** – Let's be on time at the beginning and after the breaks; **Balance** - Participants, topics, geography; **Use Chat to share** - Send links to your researches, actions; You can also target conversation, respond/comment to specific persons etc.; Focus on the **Why** – Let's discuss impact.

Jlenia Destito, DG NEAR, Regional Unit for Western Balkans (WB) and EU TACSO 3 Programme Manager, focused her presentation on the EU support for the WBT in response to the COVID-19 crisis, including support for CSOs in the Enlargement region. She gave three examples of large-scale initiatives: 1) The EU has been supporting the **European Centre for Diseases Prevention and Control (ECDC)** to provide advice to the WB for several years, and it is now sharing all its COVID-19 related guidance and assessments with the WB. 2) The **Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)** aims to strengthen cooperation between the EU Member States (EU MS) and other Participating States in the field of civil protection, with a view to improve prevention, preparedness and response to disasters. When the scale of an emergency overwhelms the response capabilities of a given country it can request assistance via the Mechanism through the Emergency Response Coordination Centre. 3) The [Joint Procurement Agreement \(JPA\)](#) is an instrument for multi-country procurement through which EU Member States jointly purchase medical equipment (e.g. personal protective equipment, respiratory ventilators and COVID tests), using emergency procedures. The WB partners have all signed the JPA and can therefore benefit from joint procurement procedures.

Ms Destito then focused on the **EU Financial Assistance Package to the WB**. The total EU assistance package for the WB in response to COVID-19 currently exceeds **3.3 billion EUR**, as indicated in the [Commission Communication](#) on the Support to the Western Balkans in tackling COVID-19 and post-pandemic recovery of 29 April 2020. This figure is made up of several elements, which were announced in sequence on several occasions.

On 24 March 2020, Commissioner Varhelyi announced the first package made up of reprogrammable bilateral IPA assistance funding as follows:

- 38 million EUR reprogrammed under bilateral IPA for addressing immediate health crisis needs;
- 373.5 million EUR under bilateral IPA for addressing short- and medium-term needs of the health systems and economic recovery.

This package was further complemented by **regional IPA** assistance announced in the [Commission Communication on the Global Response to COVID](#) adopted on 8 April 2020 and made up of:

- 20 million EUR of regional assistance reprogrammable towards supporting the health systems and vulnerable groups, including women, elderly and disable people;
- 454.9 million EUR of reprogrammed financial instruments with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) addressing private sector development, supported through regional IPA. This is for supporting the real economy and focuses on liquidity support to SMEs, start-ups, innovative and sustainable enterprises.

Tanja Hafner Ademi, EU TACSO 3 Team Leader, presented regional overview, emphasising that the region has gone through several extraordinary or emergency situation in the past decade: natural (floods, earthquakes etc.) or man-made (migration/refugee crisis, political turmoil etc.) before the COVID-19 pandemic of this year. Thus, it could be claimed that the countries and with - it civil society - has been functioning in such unstable environments before the virus. She also added that the virus presents a unique “destabilisation” factor, because it is affecting the whole region simultaneously, there is a situation of declined support for civil society development and most importantly, the instability is expected to continue for months or more. In terms of the mid-term effects that the situation could have on the civil society development, she mentioned several challenges: (i) **de-prioritisation of civil society development** issues by public authorities and general public due to the need for public institutions to focus on emergency response and recovery; (ii) disinformation and fake news about the COVID-19 pandemics erodes the general **distrust of citizens** in public institutions, incl. civil society; (iii) **decreasing foreign donor funding** to civil society activities, except to CSOs working in areas directly related to emergency response and recovery; (iv) possibility of cooperation in terms of **design and provision of services, support to vulnerable groups** needs to be further explored; (v) **decreased capacities and operation of CSOs**, decreased number of CSOs who are active; (vi) investments in financial and human sustainability of CSOs are put on hold and **focus** is on **survival**.

Session II: Emergency response and the role of CSOs

Mia Vukojevic, guest speaker and expert in emergency response spoke about types of crises and responses, the way humanitarian system functions globally, the role of CSOs in humanitarian crises, and current related trends and challenges. With regards to the **type of crises**, she explained that COVID-19 is a different type of crisis known to the existing humanitarian system, i.e. it is a health catastrophe, started in nature, but transmitted among people, affects the entire world and assumed that at the end of pandemic around 100 million people would be affected. The health and economic system will not survive all dimensions of the crises in developed and less developed countries. COVID-19 goes beyond anybody’s capacity to handle. **Humanitarian system** is set up to save lives and to provide assistance. It is based on international humanitarian law and other national laws, as well as several self-regulations among the UN and other agencies, as a basic principle for support. Recently,

additional standards for humanitarian accountability, as well as standards for gender and gender-based violence (GBV) for emergency have been introduced. **CSOs** as one of many actors in a humanitarian crisis, can face many challenges, such as: distraction from their core work and mission; taking over most of the burden in partnerships with “big” CSOs and international agencies; lack of (human) resources etc.. It is, therefore, of great importance for CSOs to understand how the humanitarian system functions and strategies/agendas of all parties that play role in it. In terms of trends and challenges, she mentioned several, e.g. the number of affected people, the need to keep all actors accountable, maintain balance between local and national support, focus on development not just on the humanitarian assistance. The main conclusions from the presentation were:

- During the humanitarian crises, such as COVID-19, beside saving lives and providing assistance, **maintaining dignity of people** should be the priority;
- The well-designed humanitarian system works well in theory, but in practice it does not. A lot of **gaps and challenges** have been identified so far;
- Civil society and **CSOs, especially national and local are the main heroes in humanitarian crises**, they provide the assistance first and support local communities from the beginning until the end of the crises. Still, CSOs, should keep focus on their primary goals, and undertake activities that they know and do best. Distributing food packages is not always the best option.

During the **discussion**, several participants contributed by sharing their stories, presenting their activities and support during COVID-19. Examples included distribution of humanitarian packages, although they were not equipped for that, support to women effected by domestic violence with alternative solutions in changed circumstances, bigger national organisations were active in fundraising and used funds to support people affected by COVID-19, as well as in analysing and providing reports that can be used by governments and international community to create relevant policies in different areas. The level of coordination between governments, donors and international community, including cross-sector partnerships in local communities and at the national level could be better organised in the future to curb the effects of the crisis. Coordination was identified as one of the biggest weaknesses of civil society. Thus, civil society should be well coordinated with free media, while donors should be better organised not to put CSOs in competition for the same funds during the crises.

The issue of transparency, accountability and potential corruption during the humanitarian crises was emphasised, as well. Attention needs to be put to risks of public funds being further diverted to corruption, especially in situations of state of emergency and its limiting effect on existing oversight mechanisms. CSOs are there to monitor and to inform the public of all potential corruptive cases. It was concluded that civil society activists should have more positive perspective when discussing CSOs involvement in crises situations. CSOs are working in such circumstances for more than 20 years and very often by relying on volunteer work. While CSOs have ups and down, they remain present and active. It is possible that no dramatic effect and changes would take place within civil society with the COVID-19 pandemic.

DAY II: 3 June

Session I: CSOs in emergency response to COVID-19

Tanja Bjelanovic, EU TACSO 3 Capacity Building Expert opened the second day discussion and presented types of actions reported by participants in coping with the pandemic, i.e. vast majority reported working on sharing information, service provision, humanitarian assistance, analysing of policies, monitoring of state institutions, etc. She suggested to discuss challenges faced by CSOs in their work.

Numerous participants shared their experience in response to COVID-19 crisis, shared their challenges and gave the following advices to others:

- Put emphasis on nutrition support to families in need. It is important that whatever is done, is not approached as helping or saving, but as support in terms of **solidarity** on different level and with maintaining the **dignity of the person being supported**;
- In some of the countries, **monitoring system and data collection** on daily basis for the needs and activities of CSOs were established, as well as CSOs platforms organised to monitor the state of emergency and possible **violation of fundamental rights** and freedoms. Such is the case in Montenegro, where civil society urged the Constitutional Court to examine violation of the right of privacy due to COVID-19 measure proposed by the Government;
- One of common challenges for all countries is the fact that governments did not recognised CSOs as relevant and legitimate factor in service provisions and support of vulnerable groups at the start of the pandemic. CSOs were **not given incentives**, neither access to specific economic measures that were given to the private sector. Also, funds for CSOs in some of the countries (e.g. Serbia and North Macedonia) were cut or have seen CSO funds re-allocated for other emergency activities;
- CSOs are very **active in sharing information and awareness raising** for different target groups, including those that are at the front lines in the fighting against COVID-19, such as health workers;
- National resource centres (**NRCs**) in most countries also played **an important role**. Some of them provided technical support to organisations with access to on-line platforms that can be used for organisational purposes, as well as provided trainings for ICT and use of digital technologies. Some NRCs provided small grants for CSOs for emergency operations;
- For some organisations, the pandemic **did not significantly change the regular flow** of activities. This was mostly the case with organisations in Turkey and those working in ICT area;
- Different **target groups need different support and approaches (methodologies)**. For example, main challenge for organisations that support agricultural producers is communication with them. They are not very well IT literate. They do not use digital tool. Only phone contact is an option. And the biggest challenge is the lack of information and fake news that are present. Challenge for them is also the restriction of funds;
- **Free legal aid**, especially for women survivors of domestic violence, was a common reaction for many organisations all over the region. The assistance usually went through ICT (Viber, Messenger, and other applications) that women have access to. This entailed a learning process, due to the fact that some of the women do not have information how to use it;

- In some of the countries, **research on needs for CSOs in COVID-19** period were undertaken (e.g. in Kosovo* for all CSOs, and in North Macedonia for the youth organisations). According to these, most of CSOs work remotely, have closed their offices, have cancelled some of their new opportunities or daily operations. Part of them suspended their staff or decrease engagement of volunteers. Many provided some kind of support related to COVID-19;
- **Fundraising from corporate and individual donors** was practiced in several countries, including through different methods of collecting funds such as crowdfunding, etc.. Overview of the philanthropy practices shows that a significant amount of money can be collected for emergency support.

Session 2: Study on the state of CSOs in COVID-19 in the Western Balkans and Turkey

Jelena Andjelic, IRIS Network, Programme Manager presented findings from the research on Social Services During Coronavirus Pandemic in Western Balkan Countries. She informed that the Report provides a particular overview of the actual challenges and hardships that CSOs - providers of social services - encounter in working with beneficiaries in light of the pandemic. The survey was conducted during the week of 6 - 13 April 2020 in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and North Macedonia with 86 CSOs. Main points from the survey are:

- In assessing CSOs capacities to efficiently function during the COVID-19, the survey shows that 44.2% of respondents managed to organise their operations from home, while 27% have organised work in shifts. **Over 61% of CSOs have some kind of work plan for emergency situations;**
- Sources of funding constitute by far the greatest challenge in the current situation. Majority of CSOs are funded by donor funds (66.3%). For **26.7% of respondents all funds are currently on hold**, which constitutes a tremendous obstacle. Only 33.7% managed to provide alternative sources of funding in order to cope with the crisis;
- As COVID-19 crisis and government measures that followed took its toll, 38% of CSOs indicated that their **overall technical, human, and financial capacities deteriorated** by 30%;
- Apart from the fact that numerous **regular activities of network members have been stopped** due to the pandemic, the vast number of them has been transferred on-line, to social media and telephone support (particularly psychological counselling, psycho-social support, trainings and educational workshops, etc..).

Rana Cotan, TUSEV General Secretary presented research The Impact of COVID-19 Outbreak on the CSOs Operating in Turkey. Main finding from the research are:

- Almost **one third of organisations fully stopped with their activities** during the COVID-19;
- In addition to their main areas of work, for majority of organisations (57%), COVID-19 **did not create additional demand for activities other areas;**
- In case of **donors, majority of them were flexible** in regards to the needs of organisations. Vast majority of organisations (81%) believe that donors will change their priorities for COVID-19, if asked. But also, for almost half of organisations' (49%) donations has been decreased due to COVID-19, for 47% they remain the same, and only 4% of organisations increased their donations;

¹ * This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

- **95% of organisations did not dismiss any employees** due to COVID-19, but predictions for sustainability are not positive as 46% of them report they can sustain themselves up to 6 months.

At the end of the discussion, several lessons learnt for emergency response work by CSOs were shared:

- Act carefully and respect **human dignity**: Demonstrate support and solidarity;
- **Integrity and reporting**: If you cannot conduct some activities for your constituencies, share this, explain and propose solutions instead;
- Working in emergency is challenging for the core work of organisation: There is the need to **shift work methodology**;
- Digital communication: CSOs must learn how to use **digital tools**;
- There is not enough support from **international organisations**;
- Some **donors** showed great flexibility, which was helpful;
- **Re-directing of funds** is taking place;
- Cooperation with **public institutions**: CSOs were not recognised by governments as partners; things are clearer now in terms of real perception and attitude of government; developing strategic partnership in advance was crucial for successful collaboration with government; lack of support of local institutions as they focus on other issues;
- Challenges in **specific areas** of work: Increase of violence, especially psychological violence; agriculture; women and girls in social and economic sensitive situations and in rural areas;
- CSO should **stay connected, well-informed**;
- CSOs should **plan long-term**, rather than react impulsively;
- **CSOs are more adaptable** than institutions and respond more quickly, they also performed their role as watchdogs;
- There was **great response from communities** in philanthropy: An opportunity – private actors.

DAY III: 4 June

Session I: How to create larger impact in response to emergency crisis?

The first part of the discussed was related to EU TACSO 3 project opportunities available to CSOs. At the beginning of the session, Tanja Bjelanovic, EU TACSO 3 Capacity Building Expert gave an overview of CD Programme planned within the framework of EU TACSO 3 project, main beneficiaries of the programme, methods, and key areas of support.

Emina Nuredinoska, EU TACSO 3 P2P Manager followed with presentation of P2P On-demand Programme. The presentation included details on three general objectives of the Programme, number of events planned (70 events with 42 regional and 28 single beneficiaries), application process, type of organisations and events that are eligible, priority areas of support. She presented the on-line application form and the 2-step application process. Several questions were asked, including on P2P On-demand focus on sharing experiences and networking, support to activities that are part of wider EU projects, but do not overlap, support to single national conferences in terms of organisation, technical support, logistics.

Jlenia Destito, DG NEAR, Programme Manager joined the discussion and expressed satisfaction with the interest showed in this event. She emphasised two points:



- The European Commission counts on findings from this meeting and other suggestions coming from EU TACSO 3, so that CD and P2P Programme can be better adjusted to meet “new realities” of CSOs. In the process of CSOs becoming more resilient, it’s important to use EU TACSO 3 to find new modalities to collaborate on-line and cooperate with other stakeholders (such as local self-governments);
- CSOs should not only apply to organise their own P2P events, but also participate in the P2P events to be organised as part of core EU TACSO 3 project. Efforts will be made to make P2P event visible and invite other CSOs and grassroots that need to express interest.

The discussion was closed with emphasis on the importance of **cooperation** among CSOs and institutions at national and regional level related to emergency situations. It was proposed to establish an on-line solidarity platform to share and support CSOs among each other and use it for advocacy purposes. CSOs should be a part of the national and local coordination bodies responsible to cope with the pandemic. Finally, the need of transparency and accountability of all stakeholders was stressed.

CONCLUSIONS

The following points were raised in the conclusion session as possibilities for further common actions:

- There is a **specific legal framework** that regulates emergency/pandemic situations, which should be considered in the future as an issue that does not belong to some specific sector but is relevant for all sectors;
- There is a need to **keep integrity** of civil society regardless the circumstances;
- Several participants asked for **country specific strategies** for emergency situations to be included in donor’s strategies;
- Focus on **long-term impact**, which means preparation for other crises of such scale, that will require quick and strong response;
- There is a need for **education and informing** the community about the on-going situation;
- Importance to have **policies for emergency and crisis management**, including preparedness to manage response, well trained staff, and developed protocols;
- In terms of the internal CSOs’ procedures for emergency situations, it is most important to **take care of CSOs staff**;
- CSOs will need further support to **diversify funding** in terms of their pro-activity in such situations, and sustainability in general;
- There is a need to **advocate for improved conditions for philanthropy development**;
- CSOs should explain connection between crisis and government abuse of funds, related to possible corruptive situations to citizens and **regularly monitor the state institutions and budget spending**;
- All participants agreed that **new technology provides for more opportunities** to collaborate and to have access to needed information, knowledge, connections;
- The involvement and **cooperation of CSOs with other stakeholders**, mainly with government emergency bodies but also with Red Cross/Crescent, or other agencies is important;
- Civil society cannot be treated as a uniformed sector as **there are various CSOs and different needs** among civil society. However, there is a **need for join efforts of civil society** in emergencies! There should be a CSO network- platform in times of crisis.

Given the high interest and positive feedback to the event, EU TACSO 3 will consider a follow-up in the similar format or adjust it to the needs of participants as expressed in the evaluation of the event.

Annex 1. Agenda

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO COVID-19: PRACTICES, LESSONS AND NEEDS OF CIVIL SOCIETY REGIONAL ONLINE MEET-UP OF CSOs IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY AGENDA

DAY I

Tuesday, 2 June

14:00 – 14:30

Introduction

- Objectives, agenda, ground rules, about EU TACSO 3
- The steps of European Commission to tackle the crisis,
*Jlenia Destito, Programme Manager, Western Balkans Regional
Cooperation and Programmes, DG NEAR*

14:30 – 15:00

The effects of COVID-19 on civil society development

- Brief on the state of civil society in the Western Balkans and Turkey,
Tanja Hafner Ademi, Team Leader, EU TACSO 3
- Discussion

15:00 – 15:30

Break

15:30 – 17:30

Emergency response and the role of CSOs

Guest speaker, Mia Vukojevic, Expert in emergency response

- Q&A
- Discussion

DAY II

Wednesday, 3 June

14:00 - 15:15

CSOs in emergency response to COVID-19

- Exchange of experiences
- Discussion

15:15 – 15:30

Break

15:30 – 17:00

Study on the state of CSOs in COVID-19 in the Western Balkans and Turkey

- *Social Services During Coronavirus Pandemic in Western Balkan
Countries, Jelena Andjelic, IRIS Network*
- *Impact of COVID-19 Outbreak on the CSOs Operating in Turkey,
Rana Cotan, TUSEV*
- Discussion on key challenges and needs of CSOs



DAY III

Thursday, 4 June

14:00 – 15:00

How to create larger impact in response to emergency crisis?

- Possible strategies of CSOs to deal with challenges
- Means of support to CSOs by EU TACSO 3 and others

15:00 – 15:15

Break

15:15 – 16:30

EU TACSO 3 opportunities for CSOs

- *People to People (P2P) On-demand Programme and Mitigation Measures*, Emina Nuredinoska, EU TACSO 3 P2P Manager
- Discussion
- Wrap-up

Facilitator: Tanja Bjelanovic, Capacity Building Expert, EU TACSO 3

Co-facilitator: Elizabeta Markovska Spasenoska, Country Coordinator for North Macedonia, EU TACSO 3



Annex 2: List of applicants/invited participants²

Name	Last name	Country	Organization
Yusuf	Kanli	Turkey	Association of Journalists, Ankara, Turkey
Ersida	Teliti	Albania	Qendra "Konsumatori shqiptar"
Marija	Stankovic	Serbia	Women's Association of Kolubara District - WAKD
Igor	Chelov	Turkey	Association of Journalists
Güliden	Alkoçoğlu	Turkey	Sivilartı
Sabra	Decevic	Montenegro	Djeca Crne Gore
Esma	Smajkan	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Muslim Aid Sarajevo
Gülay	Celik	Turkey	Hasta Yaşlı Engelli Bireyler Bakım ve Eğitim Derneği
Hayriye	Atas	Turkey	CHECKS AND BALANCES NETWORK
Emre	Gur	Turkey	Sivil Dusun
Tona	Kareva	North Macedonia	HERA - Health education and research association
Damjan	Nikolovski	North Macedonia	Association for Support and Development Humanost
Natasha	Amdiju	North Macedonia	TA for Improving the enabling environment for CSOs
Valentina	Kolman	Montenegro	NGO "Novska Kredenca"
Ermelinda	Myzeqari	Albania	Mil (Mendime dhe Inisiativa te Lira)
Miroslava	Despotović	Serbia	Human rights committee Vranje
Dimitar	Nizamovski	North Macedonia	Association of citizens "Youth Educational Forum"
Sanja	Atanaskovic	Serbia	Office for cooperation with civil society
Alara	Sert	Turkey	Association for Monitoring Equal Rights
Tuğçe Zeynep	Kaleali	Turkey	YouthArt
Jana	Vujic	Serbia	A 11 - Initiative for Economic and Social Rights
Maja	Smilevska	North Macedonia	SOS Children's Villages North Macedonia
Merve	Nebioglu	Turkey	International Hrnt Dink Foundation
Marija S.	Dedovic	Serbia	Association of Lawyers AEPA
Ayşe Nur	Gedik	Turkey	KAMER Foundation
Inanc	Misirlioglu	Turkey	Sivil Sayfalar (Civil Pages)
Tutengul	Kucuker	Turkey	hrant dink foundation
Gani	Rashiti	Serbia	Center for Advocacy and Democracy Development
Deniz	Öner	Turkey	TÜSODER-Tüketici Sorunları Derneği (Consumer Rights)
Anđela	Čeh	Serbia	Citizen Association EGAL
Gordana	Rodic	Serbia	SIEC, Social Integration&Empowerment Centre
Antoaneta	Ivanova	North Macedonia	Balkan Green Foundation
Dajana	Bogdanovic	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
Anesa	Agovic	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Global Analitika
Dino	Sinanović	Bosnia and Herzegovina	ALD Zavidovići
Kristina	Cetkovic	Montenegro	NGO 35mm
Elif	Öztürk	Turkey	YADA Foundation
Liana	Varon	Turkey	Support Foundation for Civil Society
Elvira	Hadzibegovic	Montenegro	Forum MNE
Darko	Arsenovski	Bosnia and Herzegovina	World Vision Int.

² Note that this was online event and the exact list of attending participants is not available as it was not possible to confirm the details of identify of all participants.



**EU TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS
IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY**

Ariola	Agolli	Albania	Partners Albania / National Resource Centre
Ivana	Petrovska	North Macedonia	European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA)
Nikica	Lubura Reljic	Bosnia and Herzegovina	World Vision BiH
Andrew	Stone	N America and SE Asia.	consulting with colleagues in EU.
Ylldose	Brahimaj	Albania	REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
Valentina	Atanasovska	North Macedonia	MCIC/National Resource Center
Dren	Puka	Kosovo*	The Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF)
Marija	Vishinova	North Macedonia	Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN)
Venera	Hajrullahu		CPM
Tereza	Kiš		Moja podrška dojenju
Maida	Zagorac	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mreža za izgradnju mira
İsmail	Menteş	Turkey	Kure Mountains Ecotourism Association
Veselche	Leontevska	North Macedonia	Inter Alia
Isijda	Sinjari	Albania	Institute for sustainable policies
Irena	Cvetkovikj	North Macedonia	Coalition MARGINS
Myftar	Doci	Albania	ANTTARC
Seida	Saric	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Žene za Žene International
Nerdzis	Caplja	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Muharem Berbic Foundation
Snezana	Danilovic	Montenegro	NGO MEDIA TEAM
Meliha	Sendic	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Udruzenje Centar zenskih prava
Elma	Teršana	Albania	Observatory for Children and Youth Rights
Amina	Muric	Montenegro	Civic Alliance
Hasan	Idrizi	North Macedonia	Humanitarian and voluntary association of the Roma
Rana	Arıbaş	Turkey	Aksder
Matea	Markić Vučić	Bosnia and Herzegovina	SPARK school
Branka	Ivanovic	Bosnia and Herzegovina	IN fondacija
Avdyl	Gashi	Kosovo*	Global Shapers Community Prishtina
Dragan	Mihajlovic	Albania	Transparency International - Secretariat
Nenad	Jovanovic	Western Balkan	Uzor NGO
Lidija	Prokic	Albania	Transparency International Secretariat
Feride	Rushiti	Kosovo*	KRCT
Irem	Cosansu Yalazan	Turkey	The Confederation of Persons with Disabilities
Vanja	Rakočević	Montenegro	Montenegrin Association of Pedagogues
Muratcan	Isildal	Turkey	Genç Düşünce Enstitüsü
Daniela	Lavurovska	North Macedonia	NGO Edu-Aktiv plus
Hamid	Bayram	Turkey	Happiness Makers Org
Ahmet	Doğan	Turkey	PELDA Association
Evgenija	Jordanoska	North Macedonia	Center for Civic Initiative
Arben	Kelmendi	Kosovo*	KDI - TI Kosovo
Ülker	Sözen	Turkey	Birarada Derneği
Dubravka	Kovačević	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Foundation for Women's Empowerment in BiH
Bledar	Taho	Albania	Institute of Romani Culture in Albania - IRCA
Milos	Bulatovic	Montenegro	Psychological Association of Montenegro
Maja	Raicevic	Montenegro	Women's Rights Center
Majda	Tolic	Bosnia and Herzegovina	GiZ



**EU TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS
IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY**

Mirela	Arqimandriti	Albania	Gender Alliance for Development Centre
Tea	Zeqaj	Albania	Qendresa Qytetare/ Civic Resistance
Liljana	Jonoski	North Macedonia	Rural Coalition
Elizabeta	Tosheva	North Macedonia	Innova Lab
Dicle	Doğancıoğlu	Turkey	Civil Plus
Marjan	Icoski	North Macedonia	Association for education Mladiinfo International
Dogan	Bermek	Turkey	ADO ALEVI DUSUNCE OCAGI DERNEGI CENTER
Adrian	Eminu	Kosovo*	Resource Center Kosovo/Forum for Civic Initiatives
Kozeta	Jana	Albania	Hope for the future
Saimir	Bakalli	Albania	Joscelyn Foundation
Ana	Dajovska	North Macedonia	GET INNOVATION Bitola
Mimoza	Hajdarmataj	Albania	WPS Albania
Petre	Mrkev	North Macedonia	Council for Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency
Valdimir	Stojcevski	North Macedonia	Macedonian Montessori Association
Kimete	Mazari	Albania	LAGIntegration
Dragica	Kostadinovska	North Macedonia	Mozaik Meik
Toni	Stankovski	North Macedonia	Ljubeznost
Lela	Sadikario	Albania	JDC
Visnja	Bacanovic	Serbia	Gender Knowledge Hub and Women's Platform of Serbia
Bojana	Mandevska	North Macedonia	cattleya
Fatbardha	Restelica	Kosovo*	Institute for Development Policy (INDEP)
Nurgul	Elcik	Turkey	Yuva Derneği Kırıkhan
Rifat	Bozacioglu	Turkey	YUVA Association
Vebi	Mujku	Kosovo*	Institute for Social Policy Development
Tanay Sidki	Uyar	Turkey	Renewable Energy Association (EUROSOLAR Turkey)
Baris	Yasbala	Turkey	Change.org Foundation Turkey
Natasa	Petrovic	Albania	GMF Balkan Trust for Democracy
Yusuf	Kanli	Turkey	Association of Journalists, Ankara
Lindita	Hyseni	Albania	Youth Movement for Democracy Puke
Simona	Ognenovska	North Macedonia	European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL)
Linda	Pino	Albania	Albanian Coalition for Education
Kemal Vural	Tarlan	Turkey	KIRKAYAK KÜLTÜR
Suela	Kocibellin	Albania	Vizion OJF
Arta	Nikolli	Albania	Consulting and Development Partners
Bojana	Stojkovic	Serbia	National association of youth workers - NAPOR
Marija	Maljan	Serbia	Lawyer Committe fro Human Rights-YUCOM
Nathan	Koeshall	Serbia	Catalyst Balkans
Ana	Koeshall	Serbia	Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation
Predrag	Radulovic	Serbia	CSO Smile
Ivana	Peric	Serbia	Sos women's center
Sonja		Serbia	Belgrade Centre for Human Rights
Ivana	Teofilovic	Serbia	Civic Initiatives
Goce	Kocevski	North Macedonia	Macedonian Young Lawyers Association
Biljana	Dakic Djorgjevic	Serbia	Trag Fondacija
Sandra	Anastasovska	North Macedonia	Foundation Open Society - Macedonia



**EU TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
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Naile	Selimaj Krasniqi	Kosovo*	Kosovo Women's Network
Aleksandar	Krzalovski	North Macedonia	Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation
Fatmir	Sarachini	North Macedonia	Macedonian Occupational Safety and Health

DG NEAR

Jlenia Destito

Invited EU Delegations Programme/Task Managers

Stefano	Calaretta	Turkey
Dario	Di Beneretto	Kosovo
Ana Margarida	Mariguesa Lorentzen	Montenegro
Irena	Ivanova	North Macedonia
Ekmel	Cizmecioglu	Serbia
Alessandro	Angius	Albania
Vladimir	Pandurevic	Bosnia and Herzegovina

EU TACSO 3 Project Team

Tanja	Hafner-Ademi	
Tanja	Bjelanovic	
Eris	Kasmi	
Emina	Nuredinoska	
Natasha	Mazari	Albania
Goran	Bubalo	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ardita	Metaj-Dika	Kosovo
Aleksandra	Gligorovic	Montenegro
Elizabeta	Markovska-Spasenoska	N. Macedonia
Jelena	Pajovic Van Reenen	Serbia
Özge	Konuralp	Turkey

Guest Speakers

Mia	Vukojevic	Expert
Rana	Kotan	TUSEV, Secretary General, Turkey
Jelena	Andjelic	IRIS Network, Programme Manager, Montenegro

Annex 3: Evaluation forms summary

Number of filled-in evaluation forms: 30

Table 1: Evaluation according to the answers, provided as a number of replies

Nº	Question	Average score
1-5.	Not mandatory questions: Name, Surname, Organisation, Country and Position	
6.	The event met my expectations Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly agree 11 Agree 19
7.	The content of the event was relevant to the interests of my organisation Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly agree 9 Agree 21
8.	I understand more and feel better informed about issues than before Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly agree 7 Agree 23
9.	The event allowed to share good practices and lessons learnt Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly agree 11 Agree 19
10.	The timeliness and completeness of information related to the organisation and logistics before the event was: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good 16 Good 11 Satisfactory 3
11.	The general organisational assistance provided during the event was Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good 17 Good 12 Satisfactory 1
12.	How will the information, knowledge and experience gained at this event serve you in your work? SUMMARY: The knowledge gained will help in terms of recognizing the necessity to have in place a plan for crisis management; The importance of networking and stronger cooperation with other CSOs as well as the use of technology; Will help to better cope with future challenge; Planning long-term impact; The information, programmes and strategies explained by the EU representatives as well as by colleagues served to orient our work on new situation of COVID-19, and we are adapting some programmes and processes; The period of crisis is not over yet, thus it is valuable that our network continues to discuss topics of common interest, share best practices of CSOs' engagement and development in the Balkans amid COVID-19; Learning about the difficulties encountered because of the pandemic and ways figured out to overcome those problems was inspiring.	Replies 29 No Replies 1
13.	Which aspects of the event were the most useful for your work?	



	<p>SUMMARY: Exchange of knowledge and experience among participants in coping with the COVID-19 pandemic; Lessons learnt from previous crisis situations; information provided by the key note speakers; EU TACSO 3 further opportunities for cooperation and support of CSOs; We could really apply the advice given by Mia Vukojevic, Expert in emergency response, as well as those from other NGOs. We were able to map both challenges and develop potential strategies thanks to the facilitated process by the organizers; To think about strategies with long term impact, sharing information, to get informed about the best practices and opportunities for support and networking, P2P On-demand programme; All were equally, but the Balkan experiences will give us a lead; Definitely, the first day and the great speakers, where we saw what is the approach of the EU as our main donor and the experiences in an emergency situation of Mia; The all speakers were very well, but I can congrats the EU TACSO 3 Team Leader, where she spoke about the challenges faced by the CSOs in the region, how the pandemic has affected them, etc..</p>	Replies 29
		No replies 1
14.	<p>Which aspects of the event were the least relevant to your work? SUMMARY: Participants were unified in their opinion that all aspects of the event were very useful. Maybe some very detailed discussions could be avoided.</p>	Replies 28
		No replies 2
15.	<p>What could be improved in terms of content, speakers, logistics? SUMMARY: To have the meetings capped at 2 hours instead of 3 hours, this is valid for all on-line meetings; Meetings/sessions with more than 20 participants could be divided into separate sessions, or it could be done as a webinar programme where participation is ensured through Q&A; The content and all other aspects I found quite useful, the event was well organized and the speakers shared some quite useful experiences; Reminding participants to keep their speeches in line with the topic, some participants shared information on the work they do which was not necessary -> time is limited.</p>	Replies 25
		No replies 5
16.	<p>What would you recommend as a follow up? SUMMARY: I would suggest more concise discussions with far lower level of participants; Developing post-crises patterns; Developing policies and protocols for crisis management in place; To share and stay up to date with Information about CSO network – platform in times of crisis, support programs, follow up on P2P On-demand program; Similar events or meetings like this but maybe structured and divided in another way; Sectorial meetings or something like that; Creation of an international platform is a really good and needed activity, so each organization could share experiences, to discuss on different topics, to ask for support or advice how to overcome different situations; Dissemination of information on the on-demand programme in some of the local languages of the target group could be helpful.</p>	Replies 28
		No replies 2



17.	Please indicate whether, and how, you will answer to others the experience gained at the event SUMMARY: Share the experience with organization' members and volunteers, best practices, to think about new ideas for project applications in the future, to tackle the needs for the vulnerable groups of people, especially. Short written report. I will make sure to put in practice the information gathered in this event. As usual, a follow-up meeting and materials were sent to all the staff. The valuable experience heard and learned would be transferred directly to the organization's actions and strategy for prevailing COVID-19.	Replies 29
		No replies 1
18.	Please provide us with any other feedback you would like to share about this event SUMMARY: On of the best organized on-line events with so many participants. Please have in mind that only this type of projects as TACSO may organize these types of events, so be aware that discussions in civil sector never stop so we needed more and more events on international level that will cover different topics and your project is the one which could organize its, so we will expect new invitations for new CSOs events; Congratulations to the team that organize, manage and implement the event. Keep going with good work; Positive feedback, valuable discussions, knowledge shared, an excellent occasion for peer learning, and networking; Keep up the good work and thank you for supporting CSOs. You are much appreciated!	Replies 26
		No replies 4



Annex 4: Links to COVID-19 related research and information shared

1. M4D 2019 Media Monitoring Report (situation of media in Turkey)
http://media4democracy.org/public/uploads/reports_6076987.pdf
2. M4D 2020 Media Monitoring Report - quarterly report
http://media4democracy.org/public/uploads/reports_8897343.pdf
3. Access to M4D other reports (in English) <http://media4democracy.org/en/reports/>
4. **The impact of COVID 19 outbreak on civil society organizations operating in Turkey, TUSEV**
<https://www.tusev.org.tr/usrfiles/images/TheImpactofCovid19OnCSOsOperatinginTurkey.pdf>
5. **Balkan Civil Practices – online edition BCSDN (situation on civil society development in WBT under COVID-19 overview)**
<http://bcp.balkancsd.net/homepage-promoting-civic-space/>
6. Be a man change the rules – regional initiative YMI
<https://youngmeninitiative.net/sr/>
7. **Support NPO Sector Adaptability to COVID 19 Emergency – Assessment Report, Partners Albania for Change and Development**
<https://resourcecentre.al/support-npo-sector-adaptability-to-covid-19-emergency-assessment-report/>
8. #halfofit - We demand half of the Corona funds for women, You Move Europe
https://you.wemove.eu/campaigns/halfofit-we-demand-half-of-the-corona-funds-for-women?utm_campaign=AnDCrvFgIX&utm_medium=facebook&utm_source=share&fbclid=IwAR3GYGrW-Tc0SgPSdNkNIzo_8qeM0TLboQQGjgrYv6q9omzxxRzjemfo1g
9. **Catalyst survey on nonprofit usage / skill sets in using digital tools and their needs during COVID-19 in increasing their access to or knowledge about tech tools**
<https://civicatalyst.org/NPtech>
10. **Catalyst tracking domestic philanthropy directed to COVID-19 related impacts across the WB region,** <https://givingbalkans.org/srbija/node/5352>
11. Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation secured help in the amount of \$550,000 from bilateral donors, individuals and companies provide support to Serbian citizens, CSOs and medical institutions
<https://fondacijadivac.civicatalyst.org/civicrm/mailling/view?reset=1&id=615>
12. Roma Education Fund's statement on COVID 19 effecting Roma communities and access to education, <https://www.romaeducationfund.org/roma-education-funds-statement-on-covid-19-effecting-roma-communities-and-access-to-education/>
13. **Impact of Social Isolation on Mental Health and Intimate Relations, Act Society Albania – document in Albanian and abstract in English**



https://a35310f697574946b6f4202a66143bb4.filesusr.com/ugd/da3f0e_2aaf08acb0ac41108497ef0c9d153d3e.pdf

14. Association web site, <https://happinesmakers.org/>
15. Facebook profile , Association Kindness, <https://www.facebook.com/ljubeznost/>
16. On Line campaign, "Are you OK", Act for Society
<https://www.facebook.com/CenterACTforSOCIETY/photos/a.517022225049125/2899383150146342/?type=3&theater>
17. Online campaign "Red Flags" on GBV, Act for Society
<https://www.facebook.com/CenterACTforSOCIETY/photos/a.517022225049125/2939590596125597/?type=3&theater>
- 18. IRIS Network, Social Service During Coronavirus Pandemic**
<https://iris-see.eu/iris-network-report-social-services-during-coronavirus-pandemic-in-western-balkan-countries/>
- 19. How is COVID 19 affecting CSOs, Kosovar Civil Society Foundation**
<https://www.kcsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/How-is-COVID-19-affecting-CSOs.pdf>
- 20. Report on Youth CSOs in North Macedonia, Mladiinfo International**
<http://www.mladiinfo.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Report-on-the-situation-of-youth-organizations-during-COVID19.pdf>
21. WPS Albania social media, <https://www.instagram.com/wpsalbania/>;
<https://www.facebook.com/womeninpublicservicealbania/>
22. **Statement/report, Transparency International**, <https://www.transparency.org/en/news/if-we-want-a-less-corrupt-and-more-equitable-world-after-the-covid-19-pandemic-we-must-plan-for-it>
23. **Kosovo Women Network, Recommendations to Government**, <https://womensnetwork.org/kwn-proposes-measures-addressing-covid-19-from-a-gender-perspective-recommendations-to-the-government-of-kosovo/>
24. **Impact of COVID 19 on NGOs in Montenegro**
http://www.crnvo.com/sites/crnvo/files/article_files/covid_19_impact_ngo_mne.pdf