

2nd April 2002

Final Report of the ECMI Project "NGO Roundtable on Inter-Ethnic Relations in the FYR of Macedonia" by Farimah Daftary and Sunoor Verma titled "Launch of the ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia and of the ECMI Regional NGO Centres".

ECMI Report # 20 was published and circulated in Albanian, English and Macedonian language. The report can be downloaded from the Network Web Site www.ecmingonet.org.mk or may be requested through the ECMI Branch Office in Skopje at Drezdenska Street 9. Telephone:+389 2 391 451, 392 452; Fax:+389 2 391 453

12th April 2002

Meeting with the Local Government Reform Project (LGRP) Team

The meeting was held at the ECMI Branch Office in Skopje. Mr. Bekim Ymeri, Municipality Management Specialist, Mr. J. Hugh Nichols, Consultant and Ms. Kristina Hadji – Vasileva, Citizen Participation Assistant, represented the LGRP (Funded by USAID/ DAI). ECMI Regional Representative presented to the guests the ECMI initiative in Macedonia. He elaborated on the role of the six Regional NGO Resource Centers as support structures to the Members of the **"ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Inter-ethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia"**. The Regional Centers on a regular basis consult the Local Government in design of initiatives and project proposals. It was proposed that the Citizens Advise Centers and the ECMI Regional Centers could collaborate and further improve the relationship with the Local Government. It was decided that the Resource Centre members will schedule joint meetings and address issues of interest to the respective communities and the regional NGO community.

15th April

New Appointment at ECMI Branch Office Skopje

Ms. Biljana Soleva has joined the ECMI Branch Office in Skopje as Finance Manager and Web Content Manager. Ms. Soleva will be responsible for the maintenance and upgrade of the Network web site www.ecmingonet.org.mk . She will work closely with the web master and the Technical Assistants at the ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centers in developing the web site.

15th April

Web Team Meeting

The Web Team of the site www.ecmingonet.org.mk met at the ECMI office in Skopje to discuss the upgrade of the Network web site. The rapid growth of activities of the ECMI Regional Centers and of the Network Members has resulted in the need for some additional features on the web site. It was decided that a new button will be added titled "Regional Centers". As the name suggests information related to the Regional Centers will be made available through this button. The News, Grants and Links section is being updated on a regular basis. Survey questionnaire has been developed and circulated to the Network Members in order to assess the performance of the site.

17th April

Meeting between Confidence Building Initiative / IOM- Kochani Staff and the Members of the ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre, Kumanovo

Members of the ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre, Kumanovo invited Ms. Shannon Martinez, Program Officer, IOM Kochani Office to introduce her with the members of the Kumanovo Centre and discuss with her the scope of funding of joint inter-ethnic project proposals generated by the Kumanovo members. All members of the Kumanovo Centre were present and presented their organizations. Many questions were put forward to Ms. Martinez about the Confidence Building Initiative. Ms. Martinez expressed her willingness to work with the Network members and encouraged them to develop community initiatives in Kumanovo.

A quick impact project proposal titled "Slozuvalka", developed jointly by members was submitted to Ms. Martinez. The proposal addresses the urgent need for building confidence of the Albanian school children who have refused to return to their schools since the armed conflict started in the year 2001. The working group identified this issue as a burning problem in the education sector in Kumanovo, which continues affecting negatively the confidence levels in the community. The pilot proposal foresees working closely with the parent, teacher and children groups from the two communities. The proposal has received the support of the Municipality, Ministry of Education and the entire ECMI Network in Kumanovo.

20th April 2002

Project Proposal - ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre in Bitola

Association of Albanian Women- Bitola in collaboration with other members of the **Resource Centre in Bitola** have developed a project proposal addressing the needs of women in Bitola. The proposal was generated following the project development cycle adopted by the ECMI NGO Network. A meeting with a representative group of women was organised at the Resource Centre and problem areas were identified and discussed. The results of this meeting were used as agenda for the next meeting which was held between the local government representatives and the ECMI Bitola members. And finally the conclusions of the two meetings were consolidated as the agenda for a meeting with 25 women NGOs and members of the ECMI Bitola Centre. The conclusions of these meetings were used in designing the project proposal which aims at establishing a recreation centre for women in Bitola. The Bitola municipality has agreed to provide space for the centre, donor support is being sought for renovation and equipping the centre.

20th of April

Panel discussion "Women rights are human rights"

Under the motto "Women rights are human rights" League of Albanian Women, branch Cair, Skopje, organized a panel in which 58 women, experts and activists participated belonging to a number of fields such as : education, health, law, politic and NGO on topic: "The position of Albanian Women in Macedonia and her inclusion in the democratic processes". After presentation of factual situation of position of Albanian women in our society and statement that the situation is very negative, panel continued with work in four groups in which aimed at discussing possibilities and new accesses for improving of current situation.

This panel was encircling of project which the League of Albanian Women, Branch Cair, Skopje had undertaken for promotion of Women Rights. Activity of this project consisted of eight tribunes in local communities in Skopje region and educative campaign (brochures, leaflets and TV Clip) on the mentioned theme.

This project was implemented with the support of the EUROPIAN COMMISION- European Initiative For Democracy and Human Rights

22nd April 2002

Tribune on Unemployment organized by the ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre in Tetovo

On 22nd of April the ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre in Tetovo hosted a tribune on the issue of unemployment in Tetovo.

The Chief Speaker was Mr. Mevaip Abdiu, Director of the local office of the Ministry of Labour and Social Politics in Tetovo. The event was attended by numerous unemployed people, representatives of local NGOs and local media. The tribune was opened by the Technical Administrator of the ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre Elvira Murtezani, who greeted the guests in two languages, and welcomed the lecturer to present his views on the unemployment situation in Tetovo. Presented were the reasons for the high percentage of unemployment in Tetovo and Tetovo region, supported by real numbers for the rates and educational structure of the unemployed people in Tetovo. Many questions were put forward to the speaker and a lively discussion followed. Various possibilities for improvement of this situation were discussed, as well as initiatives which the Non-Governmental sector in Tetovo could undertake to address this situation.

22nd April 2002

Grant Approval

The **ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre, Kumanovo** submitted for funding to the ECMI, Pilot Project Proposal "Inter-Ethnic Radio Kumanovo". The proposal has been developed by Network member ARKA and their partners. The members of the Kumanovo Network felt that the proposal would have better chances of funding if a pilot study is done including a technical analysis of setting up a radio station. The proposed radio station will broadcast in six languages. Details about the project can be obtained directly from ARKA (Contact Details: 11 Oktomvri 17/1-1, Tel. and fax: +389 31 21 362; e-mail:arka_ku@yahoo.com) or from the network web site www.ecmingonet.org.mk/projects. ECMI has agreed to finance the pilot project.

23-28th of April

Presentation of the Union for Vlachs Culture in Macedonia at the Book Fair and Librographics in Skopje

At the Fair for Book and Librographics held in Skopje from 23rd to 28th of April 2002, Union for Vlach Culture in Macedonia presented their publications on Vlach language as well as bilingual publications, Macedonian – Vlach and French-Vlach. The Union for Vlach Culture in Macedonia presented their forty bilingual publication and thirteen issues of their magazine in Vlach language "The Vlach Voice".

24th April

Opening of ECMI Regional Resource Centre in Shtip

The **ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre opened in the city of Shtip** on the 24th of April 2002 at 1200hrs. The Regional Centre is located at Street Vanco Prke 62/ 3- 2.

The opening ceremony was attended by all members of the Shtip ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre, representatives of Non-Governmental Sector, Local Government, International NGOs and Inter-Governmental Organizations, electronic and print media. Present also were Members of the Coordinating Body of the **ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Inter-Ethnic Relations in Macedonia**. Mr. Shenai Osmanov, Representative of the Shtip NGOs in the National Coordinating Body of the Network welcomed the guests and introduced the Action Plan of the Shtip Centre. This

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was followed by a brief address with an overview of the project by the ECMI Regional Representative Sunoor Verma. Mr. Dimitar Efremov, Mayor of the Shtip Municipality in his address assured the members of the Resource Centre of the full support of his office. Dr. Dijana Georgievska, Member of the National Coordinating Body of the Network greeted the Shtip Members on behalf of the National Coordinating Body. Mr. Efremov and Dr. Verma then cut the ribbon and declared the ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre in Shtip open. This was followed by cocktail. Present also was the Chairman of the City Council Mr. Blagoj Golomeov.

26th – 27th April 2002
International Round Table

All member organizations of the **ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre in Bitola** were invited to participate in the international Round Table titled “Fostering Inter-Community Dialogue and Cooperation Through Transfrontier Cooperation in the Lake Prespa/Ohrid Region.Towards the Establishment of the Euroregion”. The event was held at Hotel Mollika and was organized by the East West Institute (www.iewws.org). Dr. Dijana Georgievska, Coordinator of the ECMI Centre in Bitola made a presentation in the session on NGO Collaboration. She presented to the audience the advantages of NGO Networking and alliances. The meeting provided an opportunity for network members to meet and exchange views with their counterparts from the cities of Korcha (Albania) and Florina (Greece)

30th April
Training of the Technical Assistants from the ECMI Regional Centres

Training course for education of Technical Assistants ECMI Resource Centres in Macedonia was held by the team of ECMI BO Skopje. The aim of the training course was to strengthen the capacity of the ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centres for support of NGO members. The training covered basic issues of administrative work, financial management and web site content management.