



On the Record: Civil Society in Kosovo – Rebuilding After the War

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Contents

- **From the AP Editorial Desk**
- **Profile: Igo Rogova - Campaigner for Women's Rights**
 - **The Strength of Women in War**
 - **Squabble in Mitrovica**
 - **Oxfam Builds Local Capacity**
 - **The Kosovo Women's Initiative**
 - **Reconciliation, At its Own Pace**
- **Voices That Matter**

From the AP Editorial Desk by Iain Guest

To talk about peace in Kosovo is to talk about women. The same was true about Bosnia, Cambodia, Haiti and East Timor and virtually every other country that has struggled to recover from war. Women dominate the process. Women's groups are the most motivated, the best organized, and arguably the most effective at lobbying.

Why is this? It is a question that has not received enough attention, but badly needs answering. An answer would help to explain the essence of civil society during and after conflict. It would help donors to make better use of their aid. It might even persuade UN policy-makers to give more responsibility to women in their post conflict plans. Not one of the four UNMIK departments in Kosovo ('pillars') is headed by a woman.

The UK-based group Womankind Worldwide recently conducted a survey of peacebuilding in the Balkans and concluded that out of the 45 or so indigenous Kosovar organizations, about 15 were working on women's issues as such. (The list, together with a brief description, can be found at the end of this issue.) This excluded the much larger number of women who are prominent in other spheres (media, human rights, etc). Sometimes they bring a special 'women's perspective,' but often they don't. Invariably, they make an important contribution.

One important point is that women get involved in building peace begins long before even the war breaks out. In Kosovo, they began to carve out a niche in the long period of instability that began in 1989, when Serbian revoked the autonomy of Kosovo.

Women then played a dominant role in Kosovo's 'parallel' society. Indeed, four of them are profiled in this series of On the Record.

Igo Rogova, who is the subject of this profile, worked in television before she set up the organization Motrat Qiriazhi in the early 1990s to improve the literacy of women and girls. Nazlie

Bala was a leading member of the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms, (which was the preeminent human rights group under the parallel society) until she broke away to found ELENA, a women's legal aid group in the mid 1990s. Aferdita Kelmendi was one of

Kosovo's leading radio journalists when she and a colleague started a media project in 1985 to train young girls in communications skills. Kosovare Kelmendi was a lawyer throughout the 1990s. (Today, she heads the Prishtina branch of the Humanitarian Law Center.)

Kosovo also shows how women help to hold civil society together in war. Usually, women have no choice. Their husbands and sons are the first to be killed or detained, leaving the family entirely dependent on the mother. And one should not underestimate the formidable skills and courage required to organize a group of the very young and the very old, and steer them to safety through fighting, landmines and across a foreign frontier. War brings out qualities of leadership and management in women.

When it comes to the task of rebuilding, many of these women pick up where they left off. Once again, the pressures are probably greater precisely because so many men have been killed. According to one estimate, there are more than 20,000 widows or female heads of household in Kosovo as a result of the war.

Following a war, 'women's issues' are now at the top of the international agenda. This is mainly due to the fact that in Rwanda, Bosnia and now Kosovo, women have suffered from such barbarous treatment. It is self-evident that these victims were singled out because they were women, and that their treatment must also reflect this. It may take the form of counseling. It may be medical. It may even be something as simple as meeting regularly with other women and drinking coffee. Such activities are known in very broad terms as 'psychosocial.'

Providing psychosocial support for traumatized women has become something of a growth industry, generating a huge number of projects in Bosnia and now Kosovo. It is not hard to see why. Just as there is something particularly unpleasant about rape, so there is something particularly comforting about helping rape victims.

But the question is whether this model of donor aid - the NGO-administered project - is the right type of intervention. Does it really address a need? Or does it undermine the unique spark and spirit that motivates women to care for their own in the aftermath of a great trauma? This issue of *On the Record* attempts some answers.

It also tries to address another question that was posed in the introduction to this series -what are the needs of civil society in Kosovo? Once these are dramatically illustrated by women's groups. The new study by *Womankind Worldwide* draws up a useful balance sheet, which is worth repeating here:

A. Strengths

- Discipline and strong organisation as operated underground
- Commitment
- Charismatic leadership

- Creativity
- Courage
- Groups of volunteer activists

B. Vulnerabilities

- Lack of advocacy and lobbying skills
- Dependence on a few leaders
- Too much money
- Over-ambitious plans
- Limited cooperation and networking amongst groups with the exception of the Rural Women's Network whose role is sharing of resources, support and exchange of experience.
- Lack of training in organisational issues.

(WOMANKIND Worldwide)

This is valuable analysis because it shows that the needs of civil society work do not necessarily translate into money. How, for example, can one put a price-tag on 'creativity and charisma?' And yet, if donors are sincere in wanting to support and strengthen women's groups, they need to start by understanding concepts like 'creativity' and 'leadership.' It might just be that easing the load on an inspired leader could do more to strengthen an effective civic organization than a large check. But this is not what relief agencies have in mind when they think of 'capacity building.'

From Iain's diary

A visit to the Center for the Protection of Women and Children in Prishtina shows me how foreign aid agencies can add to the burden on local civil society.

The Center has a world-wide reputation. As Peter Lippman reported in the last series of On the Record, its halls were clogged with patients and visitors during the frenetic months leading up to the war last year. As many as sixty visitors a day would seek medical, legal or psychological treatment.

Now, the Center is largely empty. Most of its medical services have been shifted to the hospital (although the Center still offers gynecological advice). Also, most of the staff are out on the road, travelling around the region in an effort to establish a network of women's houses outside the capital. Sevdie Ahmeti and Melihate Juniku, the Center's director and deputy director respectively, are convinced that the Center's services have to be decentralized.

Sevdie and Melihate are a contrast in styles. Melihate is relaxed and friendly, Sevdie is exhausted and tense. It's hardly surprising. She has been a leader in the international women's movement for years. She stayed in Kosovo through the NATO bombardment and Serbian assault (which claimed a score of Sevdie's relatives) and emerged with an international reputation. Now she's in great demand. The OSCE has been looking for three prominent local human rights activists to participate at a December 10 seminar on human rights, Sevdie is a natural.

She and I arrange three meetings, none of which works out. On the third occasion, I find Sevdie in her office, ill with pneumonia. Hunched up against the cold - there is no heat or electricity - she tries to talk intelligently about rape and women's trauma, while dealing with constant interruptions from international aid officials.

I count six interruptions in twenty minutes. The seventh is from the US State Department, which has made \$10 million available for the 'Kosovo Women's Initiative' (see below). The Advocacy Project cannot compete with that, and I'm bundled out spluttering with indignation.

Standing outside in the cold, I conclude that it is completely impossible to have an extended conversation in Kosovo. Later that day I pick up my photos of Sevdie. She looks haunted and ill. I suddenly realize that whatever pressure she was under during the Serbian rule, nothing has prepared her for working with aid agencies.

I also realize that the source of my stress is a busy timetable that was conceived in Washington, and is totally inappropriate for Kosovo. My impatience has probably added to Sevdie's stress. Like so many others, I'm part of the problem.

Profile: Igo Rogova, Campaigner for Women's Rights

The Strength of Women in War

Last December, grim reports were circulating in Prishtina about organized rape by Serbian forces during the war. Several women's groups said that the basement of the University economics faculty was used as a rape center. Investigators from the Hague tribunal reportedly found bloodstained tights in cubicles. According to one report, women were raped in the evening, 'at shower time,' while Serbian police stood around and jeered. Any policeman who refused was killed.

This report was said to have come from a Serbian policeman who has gone into hiding. It's impossible to tell whether it is true or false, but there is no shortage of evidence that women were singled out by the Serbian forces and paramilitaries. Last December, the papers reported the macabre discovery of a mass grave containing the naked bodies of women who had been raped, bound, and murdered. I was travelling in a car to Mitrovica with Iqballe (Igo) Rogova, a leading woman activist, when the paper was handed around. Igo shuddered as a friend read out the report.

Igo heads the women's group Motrat Qiriazhi, (profiled last year in On the Record.) In March, when the NATO bombing began, she was forced to assume responsibility for the thirty-seven members of her family who crowded into her mother's house in Prishtina. They waited while the Serbian militia methodically went from street to street, forcing Albanians out. Eventually it was their turn. Igo faced down the Serb attackers, and assumed responsibility for helping her terrified relatives reach the border.

Around this time, Marta Palokaj, a colleague of Igo's from Motrat Qiriazhi was also

demonstrating her courage in the region of Has, near the border with Albania. The area was being methodically cleared by Serbian forces, and Marta and the others watched from a hill opposite while the attackers arrived at the village of Krusha e vogel. They saw men being rounded up and killed. The women and children were driven down to the river.

Marta took a tractor, drove it across the river, and started to pick up the panic-stricken women. When they saw this, others from her village rushed down to join her. They managed to rescue scores of villagers, and took them along when they too abandoned their own village.

Everyone has returned to Krusha e vogel now except for the dead. While investigators from the Hague tribunal have been trying to piece together the facts of the massacres, Marta has been working on behalf of Motrat Qiriazhi to provide the widows with something to do - anything to take their minds off what happened.

Neither Marta nor Igo would put it so crudely, but their investment is beginning to pay dividends. Motrat Qiriazhi has been working in Has since 1995, taking great care to respect local traditions and develop a network of contacts.

This had very little to do with money. At one stage, Motrat Qiriazhi was offered a jeep by the NGO Oxfam, but Igo turned down the offer out of concern that it would portray Motrat as a wealthy outsider. Motrat did purchase a second-hand car, but Marta and Igo still make the final leg of the journey from Prishtina to Has by bus whenever possible. They keep their assistance low-key.

The reputation of Motrat Qiriazhi in Has was enhanced by Marta's leadership during the war. Now it is time to translate this into projects that can help to rebuild the villages. Motrat acts as a bridge to international donors, and Igo is full of praise for a German nongovernmental organization (NGO) that is helping to rebuild houses. This group asks Motrat Qiriazhi for advice about who needs what. Another German organization, Kinderberg, has put up small amounts of money to help the women of Krusha e vogel make sheets for the nearest hospital.

Squabble in Mitrovica

The relationship between Kosovars and international NGOs is not always so friendly, as I discovered when I traveled with Igo Rogova to the town of Mitrovica last December.

Mitrovica has become a symbol of division and hatred between Kosovo's Albanians and Serbs. The population was predominantly Albanian, but since last year's conflict it has been physically divided into a northern sector (now almost exclusively Serb) and a southern Albanian sector. The two populations are physically divided by barbed wire and patrolled by French NATO troops. Violence is never far from the surface, and it exploded recently in February with terrible results.

But this tension makes Mitrovica interesting - even appealing - to funders. The result has been a damaging squabble within civil society.

Here is how it happened. In the month of September, Motrat Qiriazhi decided to open a women's

center in the Albanian part of Mitrovica, near the bus station. In one room, about ten women sew gloves and scarves for a local charity - using machines that were purchased by a foreign admirer. Another room is used by their young children, who paint and play. In a third room, women make coffee, smoke and talk.

This time-honored formula allows women a place of their own. In so doing, it addresses a deep and important need that many outsiders - particularly men - often do not understand. It is, says Igo, simple but effective therapy for the wounds of war.

Last November, an Italian aid agency (ADAB - Associazione Per le Donne Dell'area Dei Balkani) opened an identical women's center next door to the Motrat center, offering exactly the same activities, under the direction of two young Italian women who spoke no English. They made no effort to inform Igo and her colleagues, and started to solicit clients in the neighborhood. Much to their distress, local women now found themselves torn between the two centers and pressed to change allegiance.

There was worse to come. During the summer, the Danish Refugee Council, a well-known international agency, had opened a center in the same street to support local Kosovar organizations. By November, it was clear to Igo and her colleagues that this was also evolving into a 'women's center,' offering sewing classes.

Even this may not be the end of the story. CARE has reportedly decided to open a trauma counseling center for women - in the same street.

These international NGOs were apparently prepared to stop at nothing to acquire some of the humanitarian dollars that were pouring into Kosovo. But to attract funding, they also needed to demonstrate a working link with Kosovar civil society. Igo was infuriated to discover that ADAB and the DRC were advertising Motrat Qiriazhi as an ADAB partner - at a time when they were trying to undermine Motrat's Mitrovica center!

Igo was thoroughly disillusioned: 'It follows the same pattern with all these NGOs. I spend a lot of time helping them develop projects. At first, they're friendly. But gradually they forget their principles and start to change. They become the boss and claim the projects - without so much as a thank you. I feel like I'm in a colony!'

Oxfam Builds Local Capacity

On paper, every international agency working with women in Kosovo is committed to 'empowering' local organizations.

One of the pioneers is Oxfam, which established a presence in Kosovo in the mid-1990s. Investing in Kosovo before it was fashionable has given Oxfam a formidable reputation. This, coupled with Oxfam's stated commitment towards grass-roots activism, makes its program on women something of a model for international agencies. I went to see whether this was deserved.

Like virtually every agency working with women, Oxfam has decided to decentralise and is in

the process of establishing ten centers in towns around Kosovo. I questioned Igo on this. Would it not create competing centers in far-off towns, and add to the kind of competition that she had run into in Mitrovica?

No, I was told. There is more than enough room in Kosovo for women's centers. 'What matters is that the locations are coordinated and discussed, and that the initiative comes from Kosovars, not internationals.'

Mindful of this, Oxfam tries to partner with an existing Kosovar organisation every time it opens a new center. If one cannot be found, said Merita Barileva of Oxfam, then Oxfam will seek out leading local women in consultation with local civic leaders, and invite them to start a center. Oxfam helps to find the building, and some of its centers have been provided free of rent. Oxfam also supplies the basic materials for courses in sewing, hair-dressing, computers, and English language. Once all ten centers have been established, said Merita, they could be serving as many as 3,000 women.

Is this model really improving the 'capacity' of Kosovar women, or is it another way of cashing in on the donors' obsession with 'women's projects?'

One answer can be found in Prishtina itself, where Oxfam has supported one of the most famous women's groups in the Balkans. This center was opened in March 1998, by Flora Brovina, a doctor and founder of the Albanian Women's League, at the height of the attacks on the villages of Drenica.

When the refugees started to arrive from Drenica in Prishtina, Flora and her friends went house to house seeking clothes and other emergency assistance. They persuaded a friend to lend a house in Prishtina, and took in several women and their children. Oxfam began to help with small donations - two sewing machines, cloth and wool. A new women's center was born - and it had come entirely from Kosovars..

The center was accommodating twelve women when NATO began bombing in March last year. Two of the women even gave birth there. But on April 20, Flora was seized as she entered her apartment and taken to Serbia, where she is still detained. Police raided the center, and confiscated her papers and the two sewing machines. Flora was taken off to Serbia where she has spent the last eight months in detention. (After being subjected to 226 hours of interrogation, she was recently tried and sentenced to twelve years in jail on a charge of terrorism. The trial has been internationally denounced as a total sham. It was perverse testament to the effectiveness of Flora's work that Serbia felt the need to single her out in this manner.)

Eight of Flora's colleagues continue the work under the direction of Zahide Zaqiri, a teacher. By the time of our visit, they were managing a sewing class for about seventy women, a hair-dressing course, a day-school for 240 refugee children and orphans, and psychosocial sessions for traumatized women. Oxfam was providing some support for the sewing and meetings, but not the hairdressing or the children's center.

Do such activities actually need money? Not necessarily. Take the hairdressing salon.

Comprising one room, it is a small oasis of warmth, companionship and activity. Twelve women were taking this course when we visited, and somehow they all squeezed in. Two trainers were having their hair washed by novices under the watchful eye of Fetije Ruhumni, a veteran of twelve years of hairdressing who earned a diploma from the technical school in Prishtina during the 1990s.

This activity was obviously therapeutic. As one trainee admitted, it was impossible to stay distracted by memories of war when trying to stay dry, juggle a cigarette, pick your way through clutter, and talk to friends.

These women had also invested hugely in the enterprise. They had dug into their pockets and found 70 D-marks to buy a new mirror, combs, and hair clips. Recycled jars were being used to pour water. Never had a jam jar seemed so precious.

If the goal of this hairdressing project is therapy, then it does not need additional funds. If its aim is to generate income, it probably does. As with any enterprise, upgrading the tools (in this case jugs, combs, brushes, towels, mirrors) would probably enhance productivity. The question was whether it also robs the salon of its spirit and weakens the sense of ownership that these women so obviously felt.

This is the dilemma that faces outsiders who would presume to 'improve the capacity' of Kosovar women. How to bestow the capacity without killing the spirit?

In this case, Oxfam was trying rather sensibly to have it both ways. Oxfam will pay the salaries of two sewing teachers, three hair-dressers, a coordinator (probably Zahidi), and a guard. It will also provide three computers, and pay for a computer trainer (at 200 DM a month). In terms of support, all this seemed likely to make the activities easier, without drowning them in money.

At the same time, it is hard to maintain the balance. Ironically, Oxfam is one of the leading participants in a multi-million dollar American initiative that some feel is throwing money at Kosovo's women with very little regard for the consequences.

The Kosovo Women's Initiative

It is known as the Kosovo Women's Initiative (KWI). Modelled on a similar program in Bosnia, it seeks to pump \$10 million dollars into 'women's projects.'

KWI is the kind of project that makes a donor feel good. It reassures electors, satisfies politicians, and helps to expiate the sense of guilt felt by donors at having not intervened to prevent the suffering in the first place. But is it appropriate?

The money must be spent no later than September of 2000 and is channeled through UNHCR to three 'umbrella agencies' (including Oxfam and the Danish Refugee Council) who in turn distribute it to 'local' partners like Motrat Qiriazhi. By November 19, eight agreements had been signed by UNHCR, to the value of \$2.8 million.

Motrat Qiriazhi applied for KWI funds through clenched teeth. Igo Rogova could not understand

why Kosovar groups cannot be entrusted with the money directly, and why international organizations like Oxfam have to take a cut. She was also arguing with UNHCR over how to spend KWI funds in Has, the region that her organization knows so well. UNHCR appeared to know better, even though Motrat Qiriazhi had built up the connections through five long years.

In Igo's view, UNHCR and the US made a major mistake by announcing the KWI with a flourish, and inviting applications. Lured by the big bucks, several Kosovar women's organizations have formed with no other purpose than to apply for KWI money.

Looked at from afar, in Washington or London, this will give the impression of a vibrant civil society and donor money well spent. But the mere existence of NGOs in the Western mould, created with the sole purpose of obtaining donor money, is no guarantee of a strong civic base.

These new groups will be entirely dependent on a fund which will be exhausted within twelve months. In the meantime, they will have to handle the avalanche of paperwork that comes with being an NGO - without necessarily having the skills. This was aid at its most thoughtless.

Reconciliation, At Its Own Pace

'Foreigners push reconciliation too hard,' says Igo Rogova. 'Take my own case. Our (Serb) neighbor was always poor. We used to buy things for her, but she didn't return the favour when the NATO bombing started. We started to run out of everything - soap, sugar, and so on. Albanians were unable to shop, because the Serbs destroyed the Albanian stores. Only Serbs were allowed to shop at Serb stores.'

'The sons of our neighbor put on their militia uniforms and went out to do God knows what. Albanians had set up a network to tell each other which streets were being cleared, and on the tenth day of the bombing they came to our street. We prepared a small bag and got ready to leave. But we kept quiet when there was a knock on the door. The Serbs went away and we were exultant!

'Then I saw our neighbour tell the Serbs that we were hiding. They came back, smashed at the door and started screaming 'Terrorists! Terrorists!' I pointed out our bag and told them we were ready to leave. Thank God, they allowed us to go. But our neighbor was the first one into our house. It will take time to get over this.'

(Motrat Qiriazhi: Igo Rogova and Rachel Wareham, Motrat Qiriazhi, Zef Lush Marku 17 Prishtina 38000 T + 381 63 782 420)

From Iain's diary

There is a kidnapping scare in Kosovo. According to the UN and KFOR, boys and girls are being plucked off the streets of Prishtina by gangs, and sold into the European sex trade. Half the prostitutes in Belgium are said to originate in Albania or Kosovo.

It seems extraordinary that persons can disappear like this. Terrifying, but extraordinary. KFOR

and UNMIK have formed a task force, which is the standard bureaucratic response. But this has done nothing to reassure Kosovars. Nor is there evidence of any counter-measures. According to Sevdie Ahmeti, the only action taken has been to arrest several prostitutes and detain them in Camp Bondsteel, the huge American army base in eastern Kosovo.

As a result, the capital is rife with rumors. These gain currency when KFOR reports that one of its own interpreters was almost grabbed from the street. Perhaps they will now act against this crime of sexual violence.

Voices That Matter

Those wishing to support the work of Motrat Qiriazhi and other women's groups in Kosovo, might wish to contact them directly. The following inventory of groups is taken from 'Future Strategy in Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro,' (Womankind Worldwide, January, 2000. E-mail: info@womankind.org.uk, Web: www.womankind.org.uk).

Local Women's Organizations in Kosovo

Name: Aureola

Purpose: Founded in January 1996 based on volunteer humanitarian activities that began in 1989. Its main aim was to help the Kosovo Albanian population with human rights, peace, health and education.

Structure: Informal with strong leadership - group of nine people. 171 local activists.

Activities: Work began with health education in three villages twice per month for a year. Six month sewing courses were run in 5 villages which 87 women completed. 9 women had literacy teaching and health visits were provided to over 1500 pupils in primary schools. Other work included nutrition and cookery courses, lobbying to get girls to high school, continuation of sewing, literacy and health education. In addition, support was offered to families and individuals as it was needed. They now work in 21 villages of Obiliq district, 10 in Skenderaj and 11 in Gilogovc. Each village has 3-5 activists who develop activities such as health checks, aid distribution and education.

A centre has been opened in Obiliq for displaced women and children for sewing, weaving and psycho-social activities. In addition the association has worked with others to find shelter for the homeless. They now plan centres in each of the districts which cover 20 villages with 3 activists per village who would initiate women into meetings and education courses (such as sewing courses twice a week for 15 women in 6 groups and meetings with women once per week). The centres will also distribute humanitarian aid and hygienic products.

Resources: Oxfam, SIDA and NRC support for centre reconstruction. Applied to KWI.

Contact details: Sanije Grajcevc, Aureola, St. Vllazrim Bashkim No. 162, Pristina, Kosovo T + 381 63 742 041 063 742 041 + 389 96 72 650

Name: Centre for Protection of Women and Children

Purpose: The Centre began work in 1993 to work in the fields of health protection, reproductive rights and the rights of women and children.

Structure: Strong leader. 14 employed in the centre and 60 field staff (once all centres are operational)

Activities: Documentation on violence against women, women's and children's rights, reproductive rights; training and psycho-social support; reproductive health care. The centre documented human rights abuses throughout the war and published these on a web site. Since the war much of their attention has been on raped women - trying to collect testimonies, providing witness protection (in 4 shelters), seminars and other events. They are now establishing 14 centres in the areas that were most affected by war - which will have employment functions, reproductive health care, human rights and advocacy - and which will provide a protective environment particularly for women that have been raped. They are also collecting the names of war widows and hope to employ these women in the centres.

Resources: Each centre costs 10 000 DEM per month to run. All major donors are supporting the Centre - KWI will contract directly with the Centre. Contact details: Sevdije Ahmeti, Rr.Robert Gajdiku 62, 38 000 Pristina + 381 38 29681

Name: LIRIA, Gjilan

Purpose: Initiated in 1997 for the education, emancipation and independence of women in Gjilan.

Structure: Coordinator, lawyer, sociologist and 13 activists in 13 villages.

Activities: Health education and hygiene and other forms of education in private houses. Post-war shift to psycho social support given trauma. Opened kindergartens in 11 villages to aid the rehabilitation of mother and child. Also 120 women on 6 month sewing courses in 2 villages at present. Would like to establish English and computer courses for girls. Also small businesses like chicken farms.

Resources: Oxfam; Contact details: Nazije Jonuzi, LIRIA, Rr.7 Koriku Nr.16/2, Gjilan. + 381 28 027 225 or Nazlie Bala email: nazlie.bala@omik.org

Name: Centre for Training Young Women in Journalism and Conflict Resolution;
Xheraldina Vula + 381 38 501 52 Radio 21 - women's issues, monthly magazine Eritrea for women

Name: NORMA; Virghina Dumnica + 381 38 249 22; Association of women lawyers who are planning a network of 7 free legal advice centres for women.

Name: Women's Liberal Forum; Shpresa Mulliqi; Political empowerment - involvement in election campaign.

Name: Women 2000; Bahtie Gerbeshsi; Emergency assistance and humanitarian aid.

Name: Legjenda; Based in Viti (Habibe Neziri + 381 38 280 820 24); Educational courses and other initiatives in rural villages of Viti region.

Name: CLIRIMI; Ardiana Pacolli, Dardania st.5, + 381 38 41 883; Magazine.

Name: Sfinga; Sazana Greicevci-Qaprici; Monthly journal of translated literature.

Name: Apoteosa in Gjilan area.

Name: Teuta - a woman's magazine.

International Development Agencies and Donors Assisting Women's Work in Kosovo

Name: Kvinna till Kvinna (Women to Women) Maria Tropp, Minja Peuschel. Kvinna till Kvinna, Bregu I Diellit str. Nr.1, Entrance 6, apt.8. T + 381 38 46 977 M + 381(0)637 70 304 Email: maria-tropp@hotmail.com, minjapeuschel@hotmail.com Head Office: Tjarhovsgatan 9, SE-116 21 Stockholm. T + 46 8 702 9820 F + 46 8 643 2360 Email: info@iktk.se

Kvinna till Kvinna began in Bosnia in 1993 at the initiative of the Swedish women's peace movement. It is a fundraising organisation to support women in war torn regions and develop post-war reconstruction. They provide long-term support to local women's initiatives which are carried out by local organisations. Programme coordinators are situated in the region. Since then they have distributed \$5.5m to different women's projects in the region which has mostly been funded by the Swedish International Development Agency. They support health care (particularly gynecological care units); psycho-social support and democracy building (human rights education, participation, information dissemination, legal assistance, meetings). In Kosovo they have had ground staff for five weeks who are on a one year contract. They are supporting Motrat Qiriazhi, the Centre for the Protection of Women and Children and the Rural Women's Network. They provide running costs, moral support, connection to funders and other forms of support. They also support a mobile gynaecological clinic in the Mitrovice area run by Care Austria and they may support rural and Croatian women who have come to Pristina. They also have a discretionary fund. They have about 5m DEM for the region about half of which is for Kosovo.

Name: Oxfam Kosovo Contact persons - Pranvera Racica, Dragodan Nazim Hikmet 34. + 381 38 540 586

Operating in Kosovo since 1995. Focused on 3 strategic change objectives - saving lives, having a say and gender. Started with sanitation in schools. Their main focus was rural women through work with Aureola, Legjenda and Motrat Qiriazhi. They also worked in the camps. They have

supported women's groups centres run by the groups above. One of these was Serb and they no longer have contact with any Serb groups. Now through the KWI they plan to support and build 10 centres in Pristina and Gjilan- 2 run by Aureola, 2 run by the Albanian Women's League, others run by Legjenda. Longer term they would like to develop income generation projects with groups. The basis of their strategy is to support the Rural Women's Network and help it expand - with advocacy, network building and micro finance.

Name: Open Society Fund Lule Vumqi, Kosovo Fund for Open Society, Kodra e Diellit Aktash 1.+ 381 385 49 116

Only just establishing strategy as an independent office. Will be part of Kosovo Gender Task Force. Interest in SOS helplines and support to abused women, NGOs working on legal and human rights, small grants, the Sfinga journal of translated writings, training workshops.

Name: STAR Network of World Learning. (Strategies, Training Advocacy and Resources for Women's Social Change Leadership). STAR has worked for five years in the region. Its current focus is on women's political and economic leadership through cross-border exchanges and working collaborations.

Contact points. In the region: Jill Benderly: Jill.benderly@wl.tel.hr; Washington Office. Mirna Karzen: program Manager, 1015, 15th Street, NW, Suite 750, 20005, USA. Tel 202 4085420. Ext 114. Email: mirna.karzen@worldlearning.

Name: Operation for Security and Cooperation in Europe Democracy Programme. 7th Floor, OSCE Building, Pristina + 381 385 00 162 x282

Their remit is to build NGOs and civil society including the involvement of women in politics. They have held three meetings with about 16 local NGOs on this issue. There have been very few Roma or Serbs involved in this initiative. There will be a seminar on women in politics, followed by training and workshops on lobbying and influencing next year. It is also planned to open some Democracy Cafes as informal meeting spaces for free expression. In the country is planned to use local field offices to encourage local branches of organisations to hold meetings as a way of giving them experience of leadership.

Name: UNHCR - Kosovo Women's Initiative Almaz Zerihuna, UNHCR, 1st Floor, UNHCR building. + 381 38 501 515 x2630

A \$10 million initiative funded by USAID is to 'assist women, their families and their communities to restore normalcy'. It has six components - immediate survival needs; psycho-social and community support; special health care services; empowerment; livelihood; legal rights and legal protection. They have identified 10 local agencies which they are 'trying to group' and since they don't want to have to deal with all (all 10 presumably) of the local agencies they have 3 implementing partners- Oxfam, Danish Refugee Council and Maltese who will each have different geographical areas to cover.

They have all opened offices in their respective areas. Contracts will be up to \$150 000 with each

local organisation and those above \$150 000 will be direct with organisations - Motrat Qiriazhi and Centre for Protection of Women and Children currently. UNHCR find their most common problems are that women's groups don't know how to write project proposals and that most proposals are in Albanian. Their implementing partners on health services (health education, reproductive health, psycho-social work, mobile clinics, health centres) are IRC, International Catholic Migration Council, International Medical Corps and Relief International. In the legal areas they are planning to open 7 legal centres for free advice and counselling. Other plans are radio programmes and articles on women's issues and a leaflet on trafficking and domestic violence.

Name: UNIFEM Suvira Chaturverdi, UNMIK - 5th Floor. + 381 38 549 066 UNIFEM have three main areas of work. First, engendering government, democracy and leadership through legislative and policy issues, data collection and training (with OSCE). The purpose of this is to develop a policy agenda from women's issues. Second, to focus on women's human rights particularly in relation to trafficking (including a concrete project with UNICEF that provides concrete economic alternatives to prostitution). Third, to look at economic opportunities for women and ensuring that all economic planning takes women into account. They have initiated a Gender Task Force which is a forum to bring together the UN agencies, NGOs, media, donors and other women's agencies.

(Taken from 'Future Strategy in Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro,' prepared by Vera Dakova, Jenny Hyatt, Hamide Latifi, Alexandra Vesie for Focus on Development, a subsidiary of The Development School (London, UK). (tel: 44 207 697 9463; fax: 44 207 697 9468) For copies of the full report contact Jenny Hyatt, one of the authors. Email: jhyatt@development-school.org.uk.)

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