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**A Country-Wide Peace Education program in
Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Administered by:

**Education for Peace Institute of the Balkans
and
The International Education for Peace Institute**

In Collaboration with:

**BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs
BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs
13 Ministries of Education
9 Pedagogical Institutes
OSCE Department of Education**

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(In-kind & Cash):**

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“The children all over the world are in need of peace and security. On the occasion of the Summit devoted to the children, we recommend the EFP program to all the nations for consideration, as a model of a society oriented towards peace, cooperation and development.”

- Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Children

PURPOSE AND VISION

The purpose of Education for Peace (EFP) is to empower young people with the skills, knowledge, attitudes and confidence to play an active and meaningful role in shaping a peaceful society. Young people develop these skills through a specially designed peace education curriculum, using interactive, process-oriented and student-centered methods of teaching, with the ultimate aim of creating inter-ethnic understanding and harmony. In the face of the challenges that still remain in Bosnia and Herzegovina it has become clear that one of the most significant areas that will effect real and lasting change is the education of the younger generation to build a unified, multi-ethnic society.

The aim and challenge of the Education for Peace program is to educate every new generation of students to become peacemakers and to devote their talents, capacities and energies towards the creation of a civilization of peace based on the pillars of a **culture of peace**, a **culture of healing** and a **culture of excellence**. This requires the engagement of students in a systematic and sustained program of full emersion in the study of the dynamics, principles and practices of peace. The EFP program is a cross-curricular pedagogical approach that integrates the study of these principles into the daily lessons of every subject area.

Peace and education are inseparable aspects of civilization. No civilization is truly progressive without education and no education system is truly civilizing unless it is based on the universal principles of peace. While many universities, government agencies and civil society organizations devote considerable resources to the study of conflict, violence, and war, there are relatively few programs dedicated to a systematic, sustained plan of action to educate children and youth, their parents, teachers and leaders in the principles of peace. Consequently, generations repeat the mistakes of former generations and conflict and violence become permanent facets of human societies. Education for Peace (EFP) is a comprehensive program aimed at breaking this cycle of violence.

HISTORY, BACKGROUND AND PROGRESS TO DATE

The Education for Peace (EFP) program, administered by the International Education for Peace Institute based in Switzerland, was first initiated in June 2000 in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) with the active partnership, cooperation and support of both the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republic Srpska Ministries of Education, the relevant cantonal Ministries of Education and the Brčko District Ministry of Education, as well as the International Community.

The initial two-year pilot project of Education for Peace was implemented in six schools in three different cities, representing the three main ethnic groups of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The pilot project involved approximately 6,000 students, 400 teachers, administrators, support staff, and 10,000 parents and guardians. The selected schools (three primary and three secondary) serve populations that range from the elite and materially advantaged to internally displaced persons, orphans, and direct victims of the war. Together, these schools captured much of the diversity of BiH society.

As a result of the success of the pilot year, the BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the support of the Entity Ministries of Education, requested that a strategy be devised to bring Education for Peace to all

schools in BiH. Likewise, the Office of the High Representative in BiH called for the introduction of EFP to as many schools as possible both in Bosnia and Herzegovina itself, as well as in neighboring countries. With the participation of senior officials from the BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Entity Ministries of Education, Directors of the EFP pilot schools and representatives from various governments and agencies, the necessary funds were raised to introduce a multi-media program of Education for Peace, called EFP-World, into 100 secondary schools across Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as a more intensive program, namely EFP-Intensive, for two secondary schools, representing the Bosniak and Croat communities in the divided city of Mostar.

During joint full-day consultations held in March 2003 with all 13 Ministries of Education, at the Cantonal, Entity and District levels and the eight Pedagogical Institutes, a unanimous agreement was reached to introduce Education for Peace in each region of BiH and a commitment was made to facilitate all aspects of the selection process of the 100 schools. The selected schools were situated in over 60 localities across BiH in both Entities, every Canton and District.

As per the first phase of implementation in September 2003, a two-year Certificate program in Education for Peace began involving two hundred teachers who were awarded scholarships. Through this specialization training, these 200 educators made up the core of the EFP On-site faculty and have since played an essential role as trainers, facilitators and advisors in the second phase of implementation in the one hundred schools. The second phase, which began in September 2003, has involved introducing the EFP conceptual framework and methodology to all 5,000 thousand teachers and staff in the 100 participating schools over a two year period.

One of the main components of implementation of the program involves providing an opportunity, through in-school and inter—school peace events, for students to share their understanding of the principles of peace as they apply in the context of the society and the world at large, in the form of artistic presentations before their teachers, peers, families, media, officials and the wider community. In May 2004, fourteen regional peace events were held around the country which brought together student representatives from the one hundred schools. In June 2004 and December 2005, national “Youth for Peace” Conferences and Events were held with over 1,500 student and teacher delegates. Students came together to discuss how to create a culture of peace in every segment of society and to share creative peace presentations.

In the end of April 2005, EFP-Balkans in collaboration with over 65 municipal and city Mayors proclaimed “Peace Week” and each participating EFP schools held a “Peace Day” with students from different classrooms sharing artistic presentations about peace. On June 4, 2005, seven regional peace events were hosted by participating schools, each bringing together students and representatives of the three ethnic communities.

In January 2005, EFP-Balkans, with the financial support of the Japan International Cooperation Agency, began the implementation of a two-year EFP-Intensive program in four primary schools constructed through Japanese Government funds in the cities of Lukavica, Mostar, Oštra Luka and Matuzići. This intensive program involved over 250 teachers, administrators and staff as well as 2,500 students and over 5,000 parents and guardians.

In February 2005, EFP-Balkans received an invitation and mandate by the BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs, all 13 Ministries of Education and 9 Pedagogical Institutes to formally introduce the EFP program into all 2200+ primary and secondary schools in the country as an integral part of its education reform undertaking. These schools, together, have over one million students, 110,000 teachers and schools staff, and 1.5 million parents.

Based on the results of its initiatives to date, EFP-International has received Consultative Status at the United Nations in August 2006.

At this time, the objective of EFP-Balkans is to implement **institutional integration of the Education for Peace (EFP) program in all 2,200 BiH primary and secondary schools**, thus ensuring its sustainability, institutional ownership at the local level, universal application, and ongoing development. A commitment has recently (March 2008) been made by the 13 BiH Ministries of Education and 9 Pedagogical Institutes to finalize a framework and a plan for the formal integration of the EFP program in the existing educational policy framework at all levels. **In brief, this involves integrating a “culture of peace” perspective, through EFP’s interactive methodology, in all classrooms, every subject area and the program of all schools in this country.** In order to fulfill the mandate that EFP has received from the BiH authorities, EFP-Balkans plans to work with senior educators, advisors and inspectors from within all educational institutions to ensure effective and quality implementation of this scheme. The implementation of the institutional integration will begin as of September 2008.

Program Strategy

The institutional integration involves the systematic integration of the program into **all 2200 schools in BiH and the educational institutions in BiH within the 13 Educational Ministries and 9 Pedagogical Institutes**. During the phase of implementation from September 2008-2010, the mandate before EFP-Balkans includes:

1. Intensive training of all 130 staff of advisors/inspectors of the pedagogical institutes in the EFP Professional Certificate Program;
2. Monitoring and Overseeing, in partnership with all educational institutions, the introduction of EFP to approximate 110,000 teachers/staff/administrators in all 2,200 primary and secondary schools in BiH;
3. Providing supporting EFP teacher manuals, through a multi-media format, for approximately 110,000 teachers, school staff and administrators;
4. Establishing an on-going forum of collaboration between all BiH educational institutions; and
5. Providing creative forums of dialogue and exchange focused on a culture of peace, at the local, regional and national level among the 2,200 schools.

The ultimate objective is that at the conclusion of this second phase, the EFP Program would be fully integrated in the BiH education structure at all levels throughout the country. From program and curriculum design, to implementation and expansion, the EFP program specifically responds directly to the needs in the BiH school system for:

- a. A structure that will affect a systematic country-wide approach to quality in-service teacher training;
- b. Training in classroom practice, emphasizing active learning and the use of modern interactive teaching methodologies;
- c. Integration of modern communication and information technologies in the teacher training process;
- d. Educational dialogue and mutual collaboration among all BiH teachers and education experts in the country;
- e. Formal integration of a comprehensive peace education curriculum for primary, secondary and teacher education which has the specific objective of paving the way for inter-ethnic reconciliation and creation of a culture of healing and culture of peace in BiH; and
- f. A cross-curricular model of integrative learning applied to different subjects and disciplines, with emphasis on the acquisition of critical thinking skills.

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION FOR PEACE IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

A critical element of the peace-building process, one that can potentially contribute more than any other to the long-term peace and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is the empowerment of young people. In the face of the challenges that still remain in BiH almost 13 years after the end of the war, it is becoming clear that what is most needed to effect real and lasting transformation is to give the younger generation the skills, knowledge, attitudes and confidence to build a unified, multi-ethnic society. Young people can be assisted to develop these skills through a specially designed peace education curriculum, using interactive, process-oriented and child-centered methods of teaching, with the ultimate aim of creating inter-ethnic understanding and harmony.

The EFP Program stands out as a unique contribution to the development and progress of the society of BiH. It is the only program within the education sector that has been voluntarily adopted by all three ethnic communities and their respective education authorities, without any change to its fundamental components. The EFP Program has been able to transcend differences that have been obstacles to the creation of peaceful relationships between Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs.

A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE EDUCATION APPROACH

The approach of EFP is comprehensive. It assists the participants to create conflict-free and violence-free environments in their homes, schools, and places of work. It offers special training not only for students, but also for their teachers and parents. EFP focuses on the education and empowerment of girls and women, as well as the training and guidance of boys and men in how to avoid abusing power and resorting to aggression and violence, behaviors which have been typically expected of men. The EFP Program includes a major component on the principles and skills of leadership for peace with the aim of preparing the students, those young women and men who will be the future leaders of the society, to become peacemakers. As a complementary program, advanced Leadership for Peace workshops are offered for the current leadership in each participating community.

Peace education is a multifaceted process involving psychological, social, political, and economic, as well as moral, ethical, and spiritual aspects of the life of the individual and society. In consideration of this reality, the EFP curriculum, which is *specially formulated for every country with the help of their own educators and scholars*, includes study of the principles of peace and its practice at home, in the school, and in the community on an ongoing and sustained basis. These principles include unity in diversity, interethnic harmony, democratic leadership and decision-making, peaceful conflict resolution, and due regard for human rights and responsibilities.

In addition, the curriculum considers both the universal and particular realities of the contemporary world. The children and youth of today need to develop identities that are at once unique and universal, so that they will see themselves as the agents of progress for their respective communities within the parameters of an increasingly global order. Thus the ultimate goal of the EFP Program is to imbue the society with the spirit, thought, and practice of peace, so that peace and daily life become fully integrated into one single reality.

EFP is offered to any group or community with the resolve to create a culture of peace. The primary focus of the program is children and youth, the future leaders of society. This comprehensive nature of the EFP Program renders it most effective among those populations that have suffered and continue to be devastated by the brutal impact of poverty, disease, conflict, and war. It applies equally to communities suffering from economic collapse or from religious and/or ethnic mistrust.