

Building a better future for citizens of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and Obiliq/Obilić: Participation, protection, and multi-ethnic partnerships for improved education, health and sustainable livelihoods



UN Trust Fund for Human Security



Fast Facts

Country: Kosovo*

Duration: October 2012 to December 2015

Implementing UN Agencies: UNDP; UNV; UNFPA; UNICEF; WHO

Other Implementing Partners: Municipalities of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and Obiliq/Obilić; local CSOs, Community Office of the Prime Minister

Budget: \$2,737,060 (UNTFHS: \$1,493,078, Others: \$1,243,982)

Key Words: Social cohesion; community development; health; income generation; education

BACKGROUND

More than twenty years after the breakup of former Yugoslavia, Kosovo struggles to transition to greater peace, development and human rights. Today, Kosovans of all ethnicities endure some of the worst poverty in Europe. The private sector remains weak and as businesses fail, almost half of the labour force is unemployed. For young people, the situation is even more worrying, with 70 percent unemployed. Meanwhile, the health system is inadequate and unable to cope with the chronic and acute health

effects of decades of environmental degradation. In addition, inter-ethnic tensions persist and large segments of communities face discrimination in their daily lives with little access to basic social services and meaningful political participation. The combination of acute poverty and poor governance, coupled with inter-ethnic tensions, have resulted in a vicious cycle that limits the aspirations of all Kosovans to be free from want, free from fear and free to live in dignity.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The programme aims to reduce inter-ethnic tensions and reverse the socio-economic decline in the municipalities of Fushë Kosovë /Kosovo Polje and Obiliq/Obilić. To this end, the programme is tackling three of the region's most critical challenges by (i) **stimulating economic opportunities for those**

excluded from the labour market; (ii) improving the health prospects of those at risk due to environmental hazards and unhealthy lifestyles; and (iii) engaging communities and institutions in participatory and inclusive governance systems.

OUR PARTNERS

The programme directly supports over 10,000 people from the most vulnerable communities including Ashkali, Serb, Roma, Egyptian, Bosniak and Gorani, while providing indirect benefits to all 80,000 residents of Fushë Kosovë /Kosovo, Polje and

Obiliq/Obilić. The programme also involves municipal authorities, political representatives and community based organizations from across all ethnic groups, including the Albanian majority.

APPLYING THE HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH

To prevent the further deterioration of social relations at the community level and to improve the well-being of all Kosovans, Kosovo has committed to protect the rights of all communities and to open opportunities for a more inclusive system of governance. This is supported by the “UN Kosovo Common Development Plan 2011-2015” which addresses social exclusion at the institutional and community levels. This programme, through the application of human security, provides a comprehensive approach to make social cohesion and sustainable development a reality in two of Kosovo’s most vulnerable and deprived municipalities.

As a first step, based on the protection and empowerment framework, the programme is building sustainable partnerships between multi-ethnic communities and local institutions. By strengthening the capacities of civil society to carry out inter-ethnic dialogues and mediation services, minority groups are being empowered to develop, implement and monitor community action plans. At the same time, municipal authorities, through training on inclusive planning processes, are being equipped to better respond to the needs of the communities they serve and to provide equitable access to social services, such as health care, education, crime prevention,

judicial oversight, and civil registration for all ethnicities.

Subsequently, local action groups are promoted and provide a forum where municipal authorities, civil society organisations, representatives of minority groups and local businesses collectively design and monitor community action plans that respond to the needs of the participating communities, as well as address the root cause of social tension and under-development in the region. Accordingly, activities were established and include the clean-up of the environment, the provision of health care, the delivery of support to small- and medium-sized enterprises, and the creation of skills training for unemployed youth, teachers and healthcare professionals.

Today, the programme’s innovative multi-sectoral approach is being replicated in other regions of Kosovo where a number of factors continue to undermine human security and its focus on greater peace, development and human rights for all.

*All references to Kosovo are in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).