



YOUth can change the future for Kosovo



PROJECT RATIONALE

Inter-ethnic dialogue

Kosovo still suffers from low implementation of the national strategies and legislation relating to a better safeguarding and promotion of human and minority rights. At the local level, inclusion is rarely found and inter-ethnic dialogue, also rare. This is especially apparent between the Albanian and Serbian communities. The current situation of parallel political and educational systems brings little to no organic spaces for those speaking different languages to engage with each other. This is particularly true for youngsters who have to study in different schools and grow-up in segregated neighborhoods. As a result, they are often ignorant of other cultures and unable, reluctant or afraid to reach out to one another. This divide is reflected into the sports sector with no instances of ethnically-mixed professional teams or clubs.

The project addresses this divide and offers opportunities for multi-ethnic youth to meet and connect.

Youth capacity-building

With 49% of its population under the age of 25 (Government of Kosovo Youth Strategy 2013-2017), Kosovo has the youngest population in Europe. Youth are therefore natural levers in the building of a more inclusive and pluralistic society. However, they continue to face significant challenges, given the limited educational opportunities available and with 57% of Kosovo's youth reportedly unemployed (World Bank, 2017) – among whom female and minority groups are disproportionately affected.

The project activates and empowers youth through non-formal education activities supporting their learning and acquiring of valuable life and employment skills.

Children's development

Despite having such a young population, Kosovo offers few opportunities for children to be active. Extra-curricular activities are costly and limited in many areas outside the capital and the quality of physical education at school, often low. Traditional sports organizers and institutions do not consider the use of sports as an awareness-raising, inclusion and education tool. For instance, the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport (University of Pristina) does not include any courses on inclusion or adapted physical activity.

The project provides structured opportunities for children to access leisure time combined with inclusion and awareness-raising methods through youth-led implementation of regular activities.



TIMELINE AND LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The project consists of four phases over two years, **progressively enabling and empowering youth to become active citizens and actors of change** in their communities.

The phases are summarized as follows:



- **Stage 1: Learn the Theory of Sport Animation (Input)**

Youth volunteers are recruited and organized in mono-ethnic groups. They benefit from training sessions equipping them with the basic skills required to conduct cooperative socio-sports activities with children from their local area.



- **Stage 2: Experience Diversity (Change of Mindset)**

Volunteers experience a 5-day Summer Camp, which challenges their stereotypes and prejudices, and facilitates inter-ethnic connections. This experience plants the seeds for volunteers to adopt a conscious, inclusive behavior towards others.



- **Stage 3: Become an Actor of Change, a Champion of Diversity (Transformation)**

Groups of volunteers from the same locality merge into one inter-ethnic team to organize and conduct regular inclusive activities with children of different origins, as well as special, inter-municipal events. Groups are actively linked with local institutions and other actors to ensure coordination, support and sustainability.



- **Stage 4: Grow Beyond the Project (Sustainability)**

Volunteers learn about opportunities to use their skills, knowledge and inclusive outlook in their communities and demonstrate increased civic participation. They are also supported to become part of an autonomous, sustained network of change-makers.

Logical Framework Summary

Project Goal: Through sport youth become active citizens and champions for inclusion and reconciliation in the Western Balkans

Specific Objective 1: Youth obtain the skills needed to become socio-sport animators and run regular inclusive sport activities in their locality

Specific Objective 2: Youth experience a change of mindset about inter-ethnic dialogue and inclusion through sport and play

Specific Objective 3: Youth become long-term agents of change and advocates for peace, inclusion, and inter-ethnic dialogue in their communities.

Expected Result 1: A network of volunteers is created

Expected Result 2: Volunteers acquire necessary skills to lead inclusive sport activities and become certified in Socio-Sport Animation

Expected Result 3: Children of targeted communities benefit from regular inclusive sport activities

Expected Result 1: Youth access opportunities to constructively connect with a diverse group of peers

Expected Result 2: Youth develop skills to positively interact with peers in a multi-ethnic environment

Expected Result 3: Communities benefit from youth-led activities promoting inclusion and inter-ethnic reconciliation

Expected Result 1: Youth become part of an active network of peers from diverse groups and communities

Expected Result 2: Youth have the skills, knowledge, and motivation on how to independently access and create community-based initiatives

Expected Result 3: Alumni join and/or develop local initiatives to promote peace, inclusion, and inter-ethnic dialogue

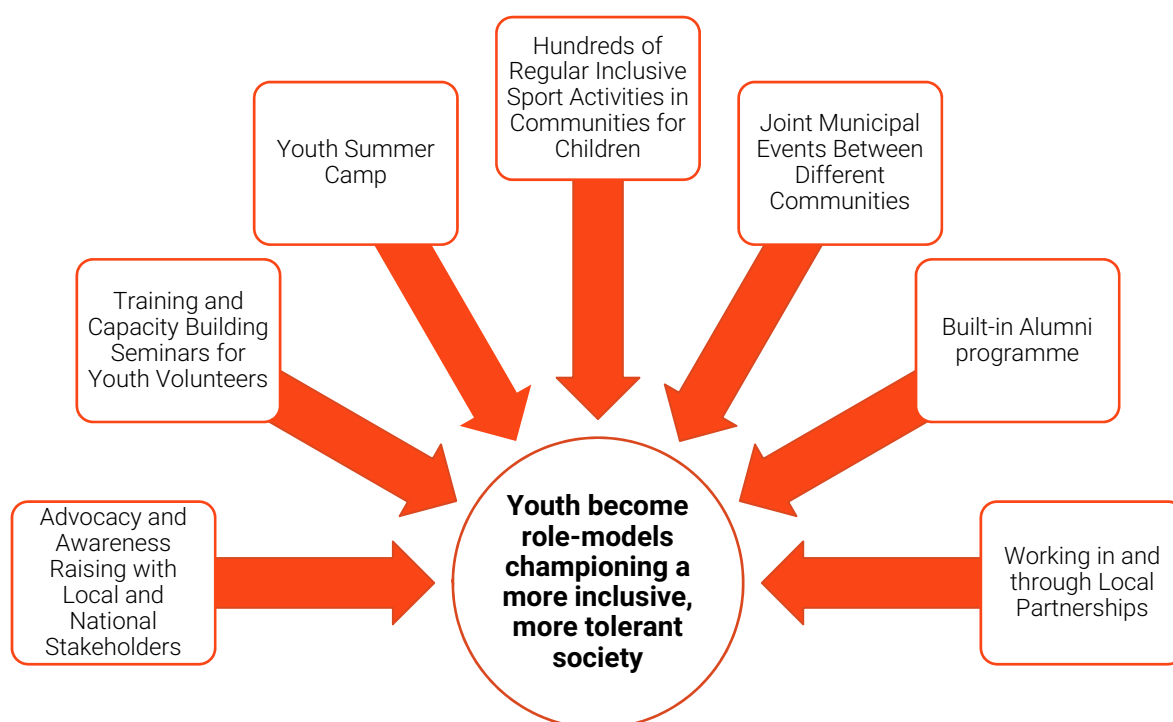
BENEFICIARIES, ACTIVITIES AND TIMELINE

The project creates a significant impact at community-level, involving and benefitting various groups of beneficiaries including 14-20 year-old youth volunteers and 8-12 year-old children representing a broad range of communities in Kosovo (Albanian, Ashkali, Bosniak, Croat, Goran, Roma, Serbian and Turkish). Between 6-10 youth are recruited from each participating municipality.

Youth volunteers – 14-20 years old: Youth from up to five ethnic communities (of which at least 40% are female) are the main beneficiaries of the project, drawn from local schools, organisations and youth groups. Previous participants of the project in former years also have a support and mentoring role to play.

Children – 8-12 years old: Children from five ethnic communities (of which at least 40% female) have the opportunity to participate in activities implemented by youth volunteers during the project.

Communities at large (national and municipal authorities, schools and parents): Broader societies of the project locations are positively impacted by the project through a ripple effect. For example, partnership agreements are signed in each locality with Municipal departments of sport and education. National actors such as the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport and the National Olympic Committee are also in partnership with PLAY International to ensure synergies are identified and used. Other key stakeholders including schools enable the project to identify safe spaces for multi-ethnic activities and parents of beneficiaries are consulted and provide a supportive and enabling home environment.



Timeline	Months 1-6	Months 6-7	Months 8-18	Months 19-24
Stage 1 (Learn the Theory)	X			
Phase 2 (Experience Diversity)		X		
Phase 3 (Become an Actor of Change)			X	
Phase 4 (Grow Beyond the Project)				X

PROJECT LOCATIONS

The project is integrated geographically into the wider work of PLAY International, ensuring multiplied benefits and strengthened sustainability. Localities are all multi-ethnic and work addresses existing divisions and issues. All localities include K-Albanian demographics, except for Graçanicë/Gračanica. 3 localities have K-Serbian presence and 4 localities have K-Roma and K-Ashkali presence, as per the breakdown below:

Locality	% Ethnic Origins Overall
Mitrovica e Veriut / Severna Mitrovica	17% Bosniak, 83% Serbian
Mitrovicë / Mitrovica	60% Albanian, 20% Ashkali, 20% Roma
Plemetinë/Plemetina (Obiliq/Obiliç)	33% Albanian, 17% Ashkali, 50% Roma
Graçanicë/Gračanica	100% Serbian
Kamenicë/Kamenica	57% Albanian, 28% Roma, 14% Serbian
Janjevë/Janjevo (Lipjan/Lipljan)	67% Albanian, 33% Roma
Shtime/Štimlje	50% Albanian, 50% Ashkali
Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje	86% Albanian, 10% Ashkali, 1% Roma, 1% Serbian, 1% Other



SUSTAINABILITY

2019 marks **the 20th anniversary of PLAY International** and corresponds to a new phase of engagement. Our model aims to strengthen collaborative approaches to respond efficiently to the observation that responses to societal challenges lie within ecosystems and networks of actors rather than individual organizations and initiatives.

PLAY's deployment model is based on an operational framework of innovative projects and pedagogical engineering, all while maintaining context-relevance, responsiveness and flexibility. Although the project operates in a post-conflict environment, ensuring long-term benefits and sustainability is at the heart of PLAY International's work.

Partnerships with local actors and influencers: as an organization with a long-term presence in Kosovo, PLAY ensures that key local actors are implicated all projects. The Ministry of Culture Youth and Sport (MCYS) is a strategic partner which actively collaborates to ensure the project's success, "accrediting" the (assessed) completion certification of volunteers. This is further enhanced by the endorsement of the National Olympic Committee of Kosovo (NOC) which formally recognizes the skills and experience of project graduates.

PLAY works in municipalities which have signed an annual partnership agreement recognizing the use of PLAY pedagogical methods in building trust and inter-ethnic dialogue in their communities. This allows PLAY to access local infrastructure (schools, municipal facilities) where regular inclusive sports activities are held. It also provides a foundation of collaboration with each municipality which sows the seeds of long-term sustainability.

The project is part of an interlinked and wider portfolio of endeavors that PLAY carries out in Kosovo. Complementary projects have enabled PLAY to enter into partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) to integrate its pedagogy into the national secondary school "education for peace" curriculum. This offers significant opportunities for synergies, creating promising links between formal education initiatives and non-formal, out-of-school initiatives. This gives rise to opportunities to connect youth leaders with local sport clubs and authorities to ensure new synergies are developed and creative ideas shared for maximized impact.

Since 2008, PLAY has built up a large network of project alumni. Some are already giving back, sharing their stories of success with the next generation of volunteers and this ongoing engagement is set to grow in 2020 and beyond.





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