

THE GCERF CAROL BELLAMY LEADERSHIP AWARD 2023 AWARDEE REPORT: ASSIST KOSOVO CENTER

AT A GLANCE: ASSIST KOSOVO CENTER

Assist Kosovo Center (ASSIST) was registered in Kosovo in 2018 as a non-governmental organisation. ASSIST is an NGO which works to develop democracy, gender equality, social protection and youth empowerment in Kosovo. It was established with the support from the Women Democracy Network, which itself has partners throughout the world.

ASSIST works through trainings, consultations, awareness-raising, monitoring of central and local decision-making processes, and by lobbying and advocating for gender equality and women's rights.



**ASSIST has
operated in Kosovo
since 2018**

PROJECT OVERVIEW

ASSIST was awarded the CBLA prize for their project "Advancing Young Women's Leadership in Kosovo through 'Active Community Leaders' (ACL)."

The purpose of this Project is project is to bring women leaders together, empower them with the necessary skills to organise P/CVE projects, become advocates of their own fundamental rights, leaders in their communities, and integral contributors to a powerful network they will build together.

ASSIST seeks to achieve this through training programmes that will involve youth and women who may be target of the VE recruiters operating throughout Kosovo. ASSIST will also establish and build a network of active community leaders ("ACL") who will work together to empower communities to prevent violent extremism throughout Kosovo, while raising awareness of the dangers of violent extremism, too.



ASSIST believes the role of women in P/CVE is essential and, through its work, seeks to improve women's ability to tackle violent extremism.

ASSIST distinguishes itself as the sole organization in Kosovo dedicated to engaging with youth communities through an intersectional, gender-inclusive approach. Furthermore, ASSIST Kosovo has also consistently championed inclusivity and diversity.



COMMUNITY-BASED AND POLITICAL AWARENESS RAISING

ASSIST initiated sensitisation campaigns highlighting the nexus between GBV and violent extremism, making presentations to municipality officials and political leaders. Multiple presentations were also made at the community-level, engaging approximately 250 women from three Kosovo municipalities. The role of women in preventing and rehabilitating victims of extremist ideologies was both emphasised and discussed.



FUTURE STEPS

- Moving forward, ASSIST will prioritise efforts to secure institutional support and funding for the establishment of a dedicated center for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE).
- Given the prevalence of right-wing extremism and nationalism in Kosovo, ASSIST Kosovo should prioritise research initiatives to better understand the drivers and dynamics of these phenomena.



INTERVENTIONS IN LOCAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

Following a rugby match which was hosted for local high-school girls, ASSIST also hosted a screening of the film "Misogyny in Digital Age, Backlash".

Following the screening of the film, a discussion was held for almost 250 participants.

