

THE GCERF CAROL BELLAMY LEADERSHIP AWARD 2023

AWARDEE REPORT: **MEDICA KOSOVA**

AT A GLANCE: MEDICA KOSOVA

Medica Kosova (MK) is a non-profit organisation, first established in August 1999 and registered as a local NGO in October 2003. The organisation's main goal is to improve mental health, physical health, and living conditions of women who had survived sexual and gender-based violence, particularly during and after war in the region. To achieve its aims, MK provides psychosocial counseling, legal assistance and income-generating programs in the agricultural sector. These programmes are targeted to women and girls who were victims of sexual and domestic violence, and in particular, survivors of wartime rape.



**MK has operated in
Kosovo since 1999**

PROJECT OVERVIEW

MK was awarded the CBLA for its project "Reducing vulnerability of families and youth from embracing violent extremism." The project would be implemented in the regions worst affected by wartime atrocities, and where youth has been found to be most vulnerable to violent extremism and radicalism.

The direct target groups of MK's interventions included the women survivors of war rape (aged 45-60), their sons (aged 20-25) and girls (aged 16-19). More generally, school-age youth would be engaged, too.

The project sought to build the resilience of these populations by way of the following means:

- Raising the awareness of girls about violent extremism and resilience-building methods.
- Training war-affected and socially vulnerable women to identify and prevent extremism within their families.
- Raising social awareness among youth and local populations about violent extremism and its consequences for peace and human security in Kosovo.



MK is unique in wishing to centre the role of women in PVE efforts in Kosovo, a focus they believe has long been ignored. MK has long worked with mothers seeking to prevent negative influences of such phenomena on their children. Indeed, the organisation considers that mothers and young people are key actors in working against violent extremism. It is for this reason that MK focusses its work on women and girls.



AWARENESS-RAISING SESSIONS

Over 50 women attended sessions focussed on the impact of VE on communities, identifying signs of radicalisation and the role of women in promoting peace and security.

The sessions were interactive, utilising multimedia presentations, group discussions, and real-life case studies to engage students. The sessions provided women with practical tools to counteract VE, and allowed them to build a network of actors focussed on the promotion of peace and security.



FUTURE STEPS

MK's future work will focus on sustaining the momentum generated by their CBLA project, to ensure that the positive changes engendered during this period are both maintained and further developed. Medica Kosova remains committed to continuing in its efforts to promote peace, security, and the empowerment of women and youth in the region.



EDUCATIONAL LECTURES FOR YOUNGSTERS AND SCHOOL CHILDREN

Approximately 50 school children and young people attended lectures that focussed on tackling different forms of VE, developing critical thinking skills, resisting negative peer pressure, cyberattacks, and sexist language.

The lectures were designed to be engaging and interactive. The aim was to create a safe space where young participants could freely express their thoughts and questions.

