



U.S. Embassy Economic Support Fund (ESF)

Program type: Democracy commission

Implementing organization: Ipsia BiH

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Project title: Youth Beyond Plastic

Elevator pitch: This project promotes plastic differentiation inside the Bihac municipality, in order to raise people's awareness and stimulate their participation in favor of the surrounding environment. The aim is to make young students active inside their community, through a more diffused environmental protection and a common sense of sustainable behaviors.

Problem statement: The administrative structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina sometimes shows some difficulties in the field of waste management: waste differentiation and recycling are developing in many parts of the country, while in other areas they are quite non-existent. This mainly happens because anti-pollution laws and the green behavior of the population are not well developed, and public administration needs to be more careful to people's necessities and health. Regarding plastic and waste differentiation, the municipality of Bihac offers its citizens few opportunities of contribution. There are some "green islands" for collection around the city, but they are inadequate in number and position. Citizens do not usually engage in green behaviors, such as plastic differentiation, because of laziness and difficulty in reaching those "green islands". Plus, they are not well informed about waste differentiation and environmental school education should be boosted, in order to raise people's awareness. In particular, new generations need to understand the importance of a green attitude and young people must develop a feeling of attachment to their community and territory, in order to protect and transform them without destroying the natural balance of the environment.

Project goals and objectives: The main goal is to promote a new culture of sustainability through waste collection and recycling. The objectives include the development of specific personal and disciplinary skills for students and citizens, to make them aware of the environmental and social problems of the area they live in. The aim is to raise people's awareness, to make them respect, protect and improve the surrounding environment and its natural resources, which represent a common good and a universal right for the population. The municipal entity responsible for waste management (JKP Komrad) will help in the process of spreading specific knowledge and skills through designed workshops and trainings. Learning targets include: the acquisition of basic knowledge on waste production; the acquisition of the concept of waste as a resource; the stimulation of creativity through reuse and recycling of waste materials; the acquisition of basic knowledge on differentiated collection, reuse, recovery and recycling; the development of a common sense of citizenship and good green practices; the development of an individual sense of contribution in favor of the community and the collective well-being. All these goals and objectives aim at spreading basic

environmental knowledge in schools and students' families, as new generations are the grounding on which we can build a strong social and ecological awareness. Young people represent the target group within which sustainable concepts can be implemented and they will pursue the fight in favor of the environment, through active participation and involvement.

Description of project activities:

A.1 Coordination activities: All the main actors inside the municipality of Bihac, such as Ipsia BiH, three elementary schools (ES), the "Una" National park (NP) and JKP "Komrad", will sign agreements and documents in order to set the grounding of the entire project.

A.2 Opening event: it will be held at the end of August 2018 through web and online channels, such as Ipsia BiH's FB and Instagram page, the Una NP's website and the municipality's website. It will reach the entire community and especially 75 students from 3 ES. The project will be presented through a live session, including a general presentation and a live Q&A between Ipsia's staff and the audience.

A.3 Participation to the Ekobis fair: Every year in September, the city of Bihac hosts the international green/environmental fair called "Ekobis". About 10 people between elementary students, teachers and Ipsia volunteers will participate with a promotional stand, in order to promote the project, sensitize people and collect participations of those who want to be involved in future projects.

A.4 Specific training for plastic collection: An expert on waste management and differentiation from JKP Komrad will dedicate 1 day to the training of teachers (total of 10 people) and 1 to the training of students (total of 75 people). They will acquire some basic knowledge concerning plastic collection and differentiation and they will be able to actively implement it. In fact, collection points for plastic waste will be installed in 3 ES (a public call will be organized to recruit schools) and teachers and students will know how to make them work and how to sustain this activity also after the ending of the project.

A.5 Opening of collection points in elementary schools: The collection points for plastic waste will be open in October 2018. Each one of the three schools will engage in this activity and they will set a dedicated space inside their buildings to store plastic waste. Every month, JKP Komrad will collect the amount of plastic from them and it will be taken to a recycling facility, where it will be pressed and treated to be transformed.

A.6 Ecology workshops (1st part): 2 ecology workshops will be held in each of the 3 ES (total of 6 workshops, 75 students). Students will learn about ecology, recycling, upcycling and waste reuse through group activities, learning games and audio-video material. They will deepen the knowledge needed to pursue the collection of plastic and to be active members of the society through non-formal education tools. They will be able to share these contents with their families and the rest of the community. A video will document all the activities carried out by students.

A.7 Ecology workshops (2nd part): 2 ecology workshops will be held in each of the 3 ES (total of 6 workshops, 75 students). The second part of these workshops will focus on the development of upcycling techniques, through which students will learn how to reuse and repurpose waste and discarded materials by creating new objects and useful tools. They will be able to share the contents with their families and the rest of the community. A video will document all the activities carried out by students.

A.8 JKP Komrad and Una National Park tour: Students and their teachers will visit the waste management facility of JKP Komrad. An expert will guide them inside the firm and will show them how the process of plastic differentiation and recycling works. This personal and active experience will motivate them to act and fight against waste dumping and in favor of the environment. Subsequently, they will be taken to Una National Park, where they will experience the natural beauty of their land and the opportunities of sustainable tourism.

A.9 Spring ecological camp: An online public call will gather 25 young people aged 15-18. They will participate on a voluntary basis to a 3-day spring camp in the Una NP. The first day of camping will involve an expert from BiH's WWF: he will introduce the park, its flora and fauna, some knowledge on environmental protection and sustainable tourism. On day 2, participants will attend workshops about recycling/upcycling and they will express their creativity by giving new life to old objects and waste. On day 3, they will engage in a bike cleaning action inside the NP, in order to learn how to be active members of the community and how to behave in and for nature. The collected waste will be taken in charge and treated by JKP Komrad.

A.10 March for the Environment: A march for the environment will be organized and promoted through Ipsia's web channels and outdoor advertisement with elementary students. Everyone will be able to participate and people will march for the development of a stronger environmental protection in the area, the implementation of a more organized waste collection and management and they will be an example of good green practice for everyone else around the municipality. (22nd April earth day)

A.11 Final Event: A final event will be open to everyone and students will show the results they accomplished. They will promote the fundamental message of recycling, upcycling and reuse. Young people from the ecological spring camp will promote cleaning actions as a good green practice that can be done by everyone; future activities will be presented during this final event and a list of people willing to participate will be made, in order to keep them updated with news and possibilities of contribution. In the end, elementary students will receive an award for their participation and their efforts, in order to make them feel proud and to give them the incentive to continue the struggle in favor of the environment.

Activity locations: Bihac.

Project beneficiaries: Direct beneficiaries: 25 students from 3 elementary schools: total of 75 students, 10 teachers from the involved elementary schools, 25 people aged 15-18 in the ecological spring camp, plus 5 volunteers: total of 30 people

Indirect beneficiaries: Students' and teachers' families, The entire community in the city of Bihac and in the municipality.

Project schedule and timeline: Project duration: 8 months

A.1: August 2018. **A.2:** August 2018. **A.3:** September 2018. **A.4:** two days, September 2018. **A.5:** October 2018. **A.6:** two workshops, December 2018. **A.7:** two workshops, March 2019. **A.8:** March 2019.

A.9: April 2019. **A.10:** 22nd April 2019 (Earth Day). **A.11:** 27th April 2019

Some specific days have been chosen because of their meaningfulness regarding the environment, while in other cases months have been chosen according to schools' obligations or municipal events.

Key personnel:

- Azra Handukic, legal representative for Ipsia BiH since 2014. Master degree in financial economics.
- Haris Hadzihajdarevic, associated admin. legal expert for Una National Park. Bachelor of laws.
- Zrinka Delic, Coordinator for projects of WWF Adria.
- Suad Begic, JKP Komrad's supervisor of waste management and differentiation.

Anticipated outcomes of the project: The main expected outcome is to set some collection points for plastic differentiation inside the buildings of the 3 ES, to increase students' awareness and to make it easier for them to differentiate. Environmental education will be implemented there through ecology workshops and older students will be reached through a spring ecological camp. They will acquire the basics to implement good green practices, they will be able to become active members of their community and to act



in favor of the environment. Young people are actually the grounding by which green practices and sustainable/responsible behaviors can be promoted, as they will develop an individual sense of common good and of respect for nature, and they will share it with the community. A positive message of natural protection and social action will flow and grow exponentially. To measure the success of the project, surveys and data analyses about plastic collection and knowledge acquired by students will be carried out during the whole period and they will be shared during the planned promotional events. At the end of the project, Komrad will compare the amount of collected plastic with the ones of previous years and data will be shared to show the project's impact.

Project sustainability: As young students will acquire the knowledge to share a positive environmental and social message, sustainability is based on communication and on their ability to practice this knowledge. They will be promoters of good green practices and they will support the prosecution of this project: people of the community will have the chance to join the plastic differentiation program on a voluntary basis, they will be given the basic information to collect and differentiate and they will also acquire some economic knowledge to transform this practice into a source of income. Workshops and exhibitions will continue for young students, as for many promotional events. JKP Komrad will partner with schools to collect plastic and the Una NP will welcome other ecological camps. With some matured experience, young people will be able to profit of these activities, by finding new opportunities of income in the green sector or by earning money from recycling and upcycling.

Background of implementing organization: IPSIA BiH is an NGO founded in 1997. It mainly works in the fields of international cooperation, socio-economic development of local communities and environmental awareness. Its pivotal values include solidarity among people and culture of peace. Fields of intervention are: volunteering, conflicts, migrations, refugees, human rights, environment, agriculture and food security, social entrepreneurship, education to global citizenship. IPSIA BiH's actions are directed to young people, to whom forms of civil commitment and voluntary work are proposed. Over the years, projects have been implemented to support the reconstruction of the country, to boost decentralized cooperation, youth animation, volunteering and responsible tourism.