



# **EXCHANGE IT TOWARDS REGIONAL COOPERATION AND RECONCILIATION**

**THE TOOLKIT  
FOR ORGANIZING YOUTH EXCHANGE**

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\* “Exchange It – Towards Regional Cooperation and Reconciliation” is a toolkit for the realization of youth exchanges between organizations and institutions from Serbia and Kosovo\*.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

## FOREWORD

Studies conducted around Europe after the World War II have shown that long-term distrust, hatred and other negative relations between nations that had conflicts in the past can be ended only if new generations involve in the reconciliation process and build sustainable contacts in order to ensure safety, long-term peace and undisturbed development. Young people are opened and ready to learn, to evolve and bring positive changes into their societies if they are given a chance. Therefore, it is very important to enable them to travel, to meet their peers from other societies and exchange ideas and experiences with them and also to adopt new skills and knowledge together. In this context, organising youth exchanges in the western Balkan region makes a platform that encourages and contributes to processes of reconciliation between nations and societies, creates an atmosphere of cooperation,

understanding and acceptance and thereby makes an impact to positive social, economic and cultural development of the whole region.

Almost two decades after the conflict, Serbia and Kosovo are still working on building trust and cooperation that goes further than trade. Youth exchanges could accelerate this process and make it sustainable but they are very rare and one of the main reasons for that situation is lack of capacities of main stakeholders that should make them possible. Aiming to contribute to the practice of youth exchange between Serbia and Kosovo and enhance capacities of youth organisations, educational institutions and local self-governments, civil society organisations Libero and Kosovo Young Lawyers, supported by the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), initiated the project named “Exchange it – toward regional cooperation and reconciliation”.

## ABOUT THE TOOLKIT



“Exchange it” toolkit is one of the results of the project “Exchange it – toward regional cooperation and reconciliation”. It has been created in order to provide comprehensive step-by-step instructions regarding

organising intercultural exchange between young people. The content of this toolkit is the answer to the needs of the key stakeholders in Serbia and Kosovo interested in youth exchange. Namely, development of this publication was preceded by a research of capacities of relevant organisations and institutions in Serbia and Kosovo, as well as a seven-day training with representatives of the target groups. The research entailed analysis of self-evaluation forms filled in

by 102 organisations and institutions containing information on their financial, administrative, human and organisational resources and capacities for project management in context of organising and realisation of youth exchanges between Serbia and Kosovo. Results of the research as well as the analysis during the training indicate that the most common challenges that organisations and institutions face in terms of youth exchanges actually regard **unfamiliarity with the procedures, lack of knowledge on project management, methods of acquiring financial assets, insufficient experience in logistic implementation of international projects etc.** The subjects processed in the toolkit are focused on the aim of helping the receivers to face these challenges.

## WHAT PART OF THE TOOLKIT IS RELEVANT FOR YOUR ORGANISATION/INSTITUTION?



“Exchange it” toolkit contains all the elements that should help your organisation to successfully implement a youth exchange and thereby contribute to general

development of the region. Here you can find information, useful suggestions, proposals and other data presented in simple terms and through examples. Although it is focused on organising youth exchange between Serbia and Kosovo, this publication is equally useful for every other entity involved in intercultural youth exchange, regardless of the place they are based in.

Steps described in this toolkit will guide you from the very beginning of the youth exchange planning – from the problems you are trying to solve, through shaping the idea of action towards their solution and developing of that idea into a project proposal.

Further on, assuming that you have provided the assets for project implementation, this toolkit will introduce you to characteristics of a well-prepared implementation plan as well as possible issues that you might encounter during realisation of the youth exchange. Also, you can find advice on how to enhance the effects of your project, how to ensure sustainability of the results and to do administration-related activities such as: monitoring, budget management, success assessment, report preparation and planning of the further steps (follow up). Regardless of the type of your future project, it is necessary to act in accordance to the law and administration procedures that are in force. Institutions and organisations interested in applying for support from the Regional Youth Cooperation Office can learn about the current procedures of this donor here, which can be changed in the future.

## RYCO AND YOUTH EXCHANGE



Regional Youth Cooperation Office is an international organisation supporting processes of cooperation and reconciliation in the region through financing of youth exchange programmes.

This institutional mechanism was established by governments of Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia and it recognises youth exchange programmes as the ideal way of cooperation among young people. Therefore, RYCO supports all actions that enable exchange of experience, knowledge and cultures between peers around these societies. RYCO's headquarters are in Tirana and there are local offices in every capital city in the region: Podgorica, Sarajevo, Skopje, Prishtina and Belgrade. RYCO recognises young people as generators of progress and integration in the Western Balkans region and its major purpose is to help this process.

Topics and actions supported and incited by this mechanism through youth exchange projects in Western Balkans:

- Promotion of diversity and democratic values;
- Empowerment of sustainable regional youth cooperation;
- Encouragement of reconciliation process;
- Intercultural learning;
- Improvement of regional mobility;
- Promotion of atmosphere of cooperation understanding and tolerance;
- Active civil participation of young people in decision making processes;
- Social inclusion and promotion of employability of young people.

Procedure of application for support by Regional Youth Cooperation Office does not differ from other donors' procedures:

- Your project proposal must be submitted in a stipulated form that any donor provides within the call, as well as other useful documents such as instructions and answers to frequently asked questions.

- Project proposals with all apurtenant documents should be submitted via e-mail to the address provided in the application requirements (Note: please read the instructions carefully, since certain documents must be signed and scanned before sending).
- The donor must receive the application before the prescribed deadline.
- Selection of all received proposals is carried out in four elimination phases:
  - Administration check: it is checked if the application was received on time and whether it is complete (if the application was submitted in accordance to the instructions).
  - Qualification check: it is checked if the applicant and his partners meet the qualification requirements (e.g. if the call requires applicants to be youth organisations, local self-governments and faculties cannot apply neither as applicants nor as partners).
  - Scoring: it is carried out in accordance with prescribed criteria that are usually part of application instructions. All projects that score more than the stipulated minimum of points will be shortlisted.
  - Ranking: each grant has a limited budget that can support only a certain number of projects, therefore, other parameters will also be taken into account during ranking of applications (e.g. budget limitations, innovativeness of project proposals etc.)

After deciding on financing of certain projects, the donor informs all applicants about the results and sends them instructions about the following steps such as signing of a contract or submitting some additional documentation.

If you are interested in submitting an application for support to your project to this donor, you should check if there is an open call for grants at the following link: <https://www.rycowb.org>.

## YOUTH EXCHANGES AS A MODEL OF YOUTH WORK



Youth exchange is a model of youth work that provides effective cultural exchange among young people, introduction to other national traditions, learning new competences, knowledge and skills and incensing of social inclusion. Youth exchange gives a chance to young people from two or more countries to meet, exchange experiences, get to know each other and learn from one another using different methods of informal education. The most important dimension of a youth exchange is the intercultural environment that contributes to breaking of stereotypes and prejudice, building of young people's attitudes on phenomena in the society and adoption of values based on openness, tolerance and accepting differences. Participants in the exchange are all coming from their local contexts and they are coming back to their communities enriched by an international and intercultural experience, new knowledge, contacts, ideas and a motivation to work on changes in their own environment.

## IT ALL BEGINS WITH AN IDEA



**This entire chapter is dedicated to project planning through the example of youth exchange organising but the presented methodology is in fact applicable to any other kind of activity.** The planning process is simple and intuitive. Anyone

makes plans to a certain extent on a daily bases. You are probably not even aware that for planning of weekly grocery shopping or organising of a celebration you use elements of a project proposal project proposal, in fact you are answering questions such as: **WHY, WHT, HOW, HOW MUCH.** On top of that, at the end of the activity (grocery shopping or a party), you are either satisfied with the result or not, so unconsciously you set some criteria according to which you evaluate the level of your success, which is also an integral part of a project proposal – evaluation plan. Of course, although the planning process is essentially simple and generally known, preparation of a well-written project proposal requires some other skills and knowledge. The first step towards this goal (knowledge) you can find in the following pages, while other (skills) are usually acquired through practical work.

It all begins with an idea – the idea to change something in your environment. This is usually some negative phenomenon or condition related to the core activity of your organisation/institution (for example: peer violence, pollution in the environment, jeopardized human rights of a certain minority group etc). It is up to you to decide how to shape the idea into an action. If you decide to organise a youth exchange, it is necessary to think

Youth exchanges have a structured program and a major topic: from searching for solution to some local problems that are common for all participants, through learning and acquiring new skills that are important for building of democracy or respecting of human rights, to developing activities and initiatives in order to facilitate and support processes of reconciliation and cooperation between societies. **The structure and the content of a youth exchange program depend on the chosen topic, participants, location and primarily on the organiser. In this toolkit we will use an example of a international training for youth activists.**

When you think about designing of a youth exchange, the most important issue to consider might be planning of sufficient amount of free time within your program. The effects of the youth exchange are most prominent in periods after lessons, study visits or workshops. That is the time to make new friends, create new actions together, critically analyse all that the participants have heard, seen and encountered during the day.

very carefully if that is the best possible approach. **Can a youth exchange really contribute to the change that you want to bring or are there some other, more practical solutions?**

Before we start describing the steps that will shape your ideas into a project proposal, it is important to point out the reason why it is important to also include the final users into planning (in this case: young people). You have probably heard or read the phrase “do not talk about us without us” used by union groups, movements of people with disabilities and many others. It is used so often with a good reason: it is difficult, maybe even impossible to make an efficient and sustainable plan without participation in all preparatory and implementation phases of the people that are directly impacted by that plan. They can the most accurately recognize their needs. On the other hand, **including of final users into the process of planning and implementation not only ensures long-term effects of your project, but also provides new knowledge and experience to these young people and contributes to their self-affirmation.**

The planning methodology exposed in this toolkit is not the only one that can transform your ideas into an action plan, however, it is very efficient and often used because of its simplicity and a logical succession of steps. **NB: each donor has an individual application form and it is possible that you will find somewhat different terminology or structure of a plan in regards to the one that we recommend, but if you have a clear idea of what you intend to achieve with the project, you should have no difficulties regarding filling in of various application forms.**

## The problem tree (problem analysis)



**As it was already pointed out, everything starts with the idea of change but first you need to understand this idea and answer the question WHY you want to do something.** In other words, you need to define the problem

that you want to deal with by organizing a youth exchange. This is the first, but also the most difficult step, because we were taught to think about what we would like to do, without looking deeper into the reasons. By formulating and analyzing the answer to the question WHY, not only will you develop a line of reasoning that you can use to explain to your partners and also to potential donors the importance of your project as a response to some needs identified in the society, but also set the basis for creation of a complete project proposal, as you will see below.

Let's say that the problem to mitigation or solution of which you want to contribute through youth exchange is that **youth organizations in the Western Balkans have insufficient capacity to deal effectively with issues of discrimination, intolerance and reconciliation processes.** In order to explain the methodology more comprehensively, for purposes of this problem analysis we will use the analogy of a tree. Every tree has a trunk, roots that provide it with food and enable it to grow and develop and, finally, it has a treetop, which is the first thing we notice when we look at a tree from a distance. Similarly, every problem has its roots that feed it i.e. its causes, and also a treetop i.e. its consequences - events, phenomena and states that indicate the existence of the problem. If we cut the treetop, new branches will grow again after some time and the tree will continue to live and so will the problem if we deal with its consequences - it will not be visible for some time, but it will reappear. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the causes that led to the problem very carefully because **only by acting on the causes (roots) you can make a lasting positive change.**

So, after focusing to the main problem, it is necessary to analyse the reasons why it exists - to identify and specify its causes. Feel free to imagine and to include as many people as possible in this process. Keep in mind that the causes also have their roots so you can go a few steps deeper in the analysis, as shown in the picture below. When you list everything you can remember that may contribute to your general problem, make sure everything is connected into a logical combination. After that, you should consider the top of your problem tree and, using the same principle, list all the consequences of the problem. Note: The example shown in the figure below represents a simplified analysis and it does not include all possible causes but it should provide you with enough information to develop the problem analysis for your project ideas according to the same principle.

After creating a problem tree, it is time to take a look at your capacities and to be realistic when you are assessing the groups of causes that you can impact and the ones that you cannot i.e. the way that your project idea (in particular: youth exchange organising) fits into the whole picture. This is important because it is a basis for the following step, which is formulation of the action. We must underline once more how important it is to undergo this whole process as a group and not individually: the more different experiences, skills and perspectives you put into the problem analysis, the more comprehensive and precise it will be <sup>1</sup>.

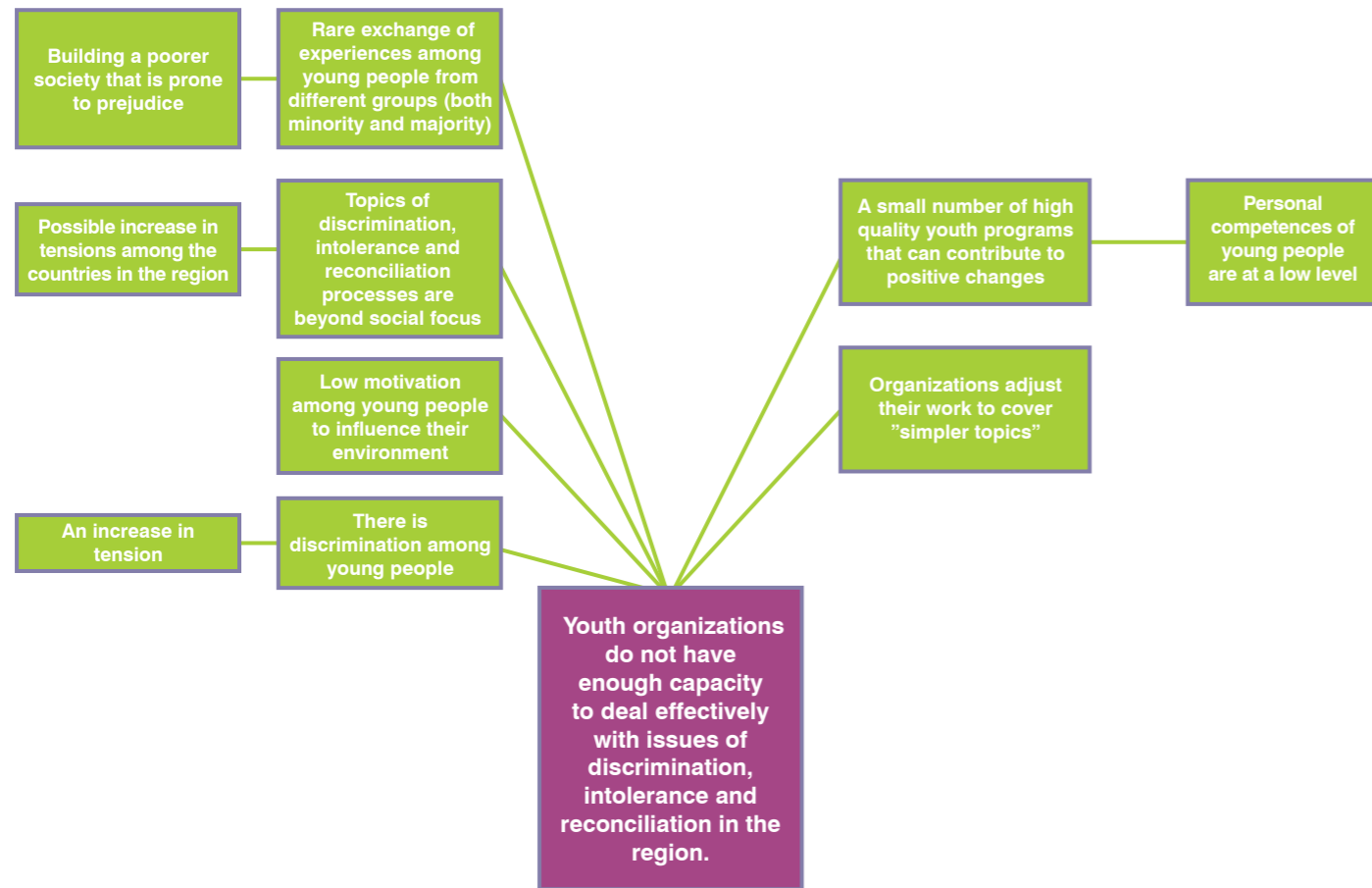
Looking at the example, we can conclude that, for example, the work on changing the official policies would be difficult and time-consuming and that we cannot have much influence to that cause. Therefore, we will “cut” that branch completely and disregard it during the rest of the process. We can follow the same procedure with other similar branches.

Now that you answered the question WHY it is necessary to implement your idea (youth exchange) the next step is defining of an answer to the question: WHAT do you want to succeed.

<sup>1</sup> It is important to bear in mind that each of the listed causes and consequences can be placed into the centre of analysis and be a subject of a problem tree and a new project planning process. It is sometimes useful to apply this approach if, if the first analysis shows that all or almost all causes are out of your reach and influence area or that your primary idea cannot contribute to solving the problem. It is then necessary to switch the focal point and to choose another problem that you can impact.



## The problem tree



## The tree of objectives

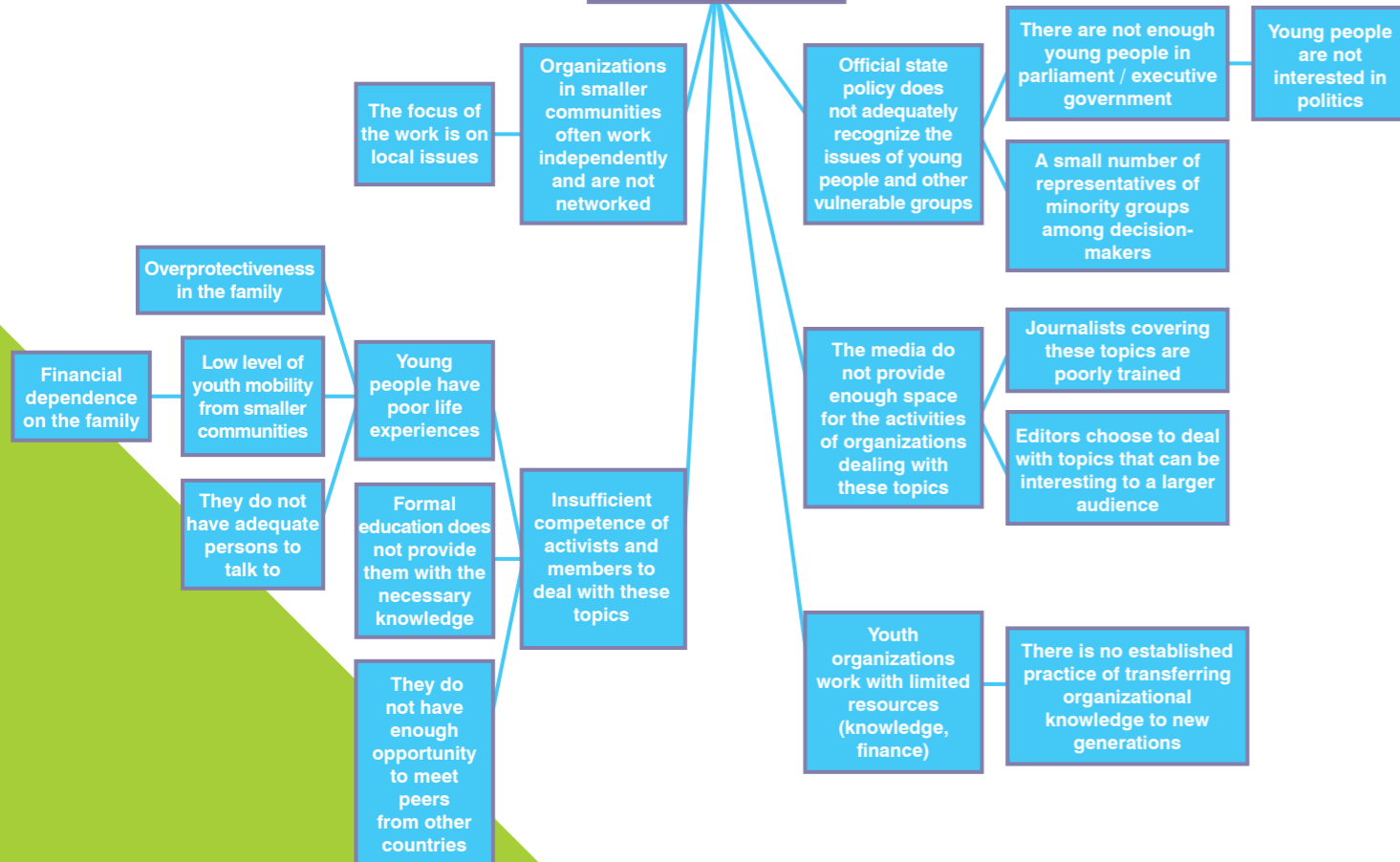


**Transformation of your problem tree to a tree of objectives comes down to re-formulating all negative conditions that you have already listed into positive statements** and possibly modifying them if you feel that direct translation from negative to positive statement does not have sense. Problems are transformed into goals and causes of problems become specific objectives, while consequences of problems transform into results of the project or the expected effects. Now look at your new tree and, if necessary, make some more changes in formulation of specific objectives, goals and results so that they fit into your idea or make more sense, reject the ones that do not sound logical or in accordance with your idea and possibly add some new ones. The final look of your tree of objectives should keep the causal relationships ("if A than B"): if you implement all envisaged steps (objectives), they will lead you to the goal and your project will produce some results i.e. changes in the society.

If we apply this transformation to our example and take a look at the problem that we wanted to solve (**youth organisations in Western Balkans do not have sufficient capacities to deal successfully with issues such as discrimination, intolerance, and reconciliation process**), the goal would be defined as: **to build capacities of youth organisations for processing issues of discrimination, intolerance, and reconciliation process in the region**. The figure below represents our plan (the tree of objectives).

After this phase, you will have a draft project proposal:

- You have defined the problem that you want to resolve with your project;
- You have explained why this problem exists (causes) and how it manifests (consequences);
- You have defined what you want you want to achieve by implementing your project (goal);
- You have presented the steps to be taken (objectives) towards your goal and the effects that implementation of the project will produce (results).



## Activities



So far, you have answered questions about WHY you want to initiate the action and WHAT exactly you plan to achieve but **in order to have a complete picture, it is also necessary to answer the question: HOW are you going to achieve that**

– which activities will you organise and implement in order to achieve every objective defined in the previous step. **The more comprehensively you plan these activities, the easier will it be for you to identify the resources that you need for their implementation and also to develop a budget for**

**the project.** It is also important during this phase to think about the time that you will need to realize the whole project as well as about the time necessary for each individual activity. The table below contains the time schedule for main activities in our example. It does not go into detail in order to get a simple overview. However, preparatory activities (A1) could include gathering of the project team, a call for application, hiring a team of trainers, material preparation, visual identity design, promotion material printing, selection of applicants, project team meetings etc. All these activities should also be listed within the table. Columns represent time (in this case: months).

Description of activity / Time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A1 – preparatory activities for youth exchange	x	x	x									
A2 – Organisation of training for youth activists				x								
A3 – Preparation and publishing of the toolkit					x	x	x					
A4 – Realisation of mini trainings for youth in local societies							x	x	x	x		
A5 – Forming of an online resource centre								x	x	x	x	x



## Budget



**Planning and developing a budget is the phase when you are answering the question: HOW MUCH will your project cost.**

All necessary resources including human and material can be expressed in money. A budget should provide clear

information on the items that you need the assets for, on costs of each item, the amount of the money that you already have and how much more do you need to put the whole financial construction together. There is an example of budget given below, which has been developed based on these

steps. It is important to know that the table may look slightly different in the application form, depending on the donor – it may have some additional columns or differently organised rows. However, this should not be an issue for you because you already have all necessary information and all you have to do is fill them in the form.

The table below is not complete. It is an example that represents the principle according to which you should form a budget for your projects. All costs are expressed in gross amounts so you have to take into account all taxes and fees stipulated by the law that is in force.

Description of costs	Unit	Amount	Price per unit	Total	Provided	Necessary
Coordinator	Month	12	500	6000	3000	3000
Technical support / administration	Month	12	400	4800	0	4800
...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Trainers (2 persons)	Day	6	200	1200	200	1000
Lease of the training space	Day	6	60	360	0	360
...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Travel costs (car)	Kilometre	3000	0.15	450	450	0
...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Press conference	Day	1	500	500	0	500
...	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>Total</b>				<b>36500</b>	6500	<b>30000</b>

## Evaluation plan



The last important step in developing of your idea is sketching a plan for assessment of your project's success. It is necessary to figure out the method that you should use to meter your results. This phase is important not only because

it enables you and your partners to monitor and correct activities as they come once you begin the project implementation, but also because you are thereby giving future donors a monitoring tool in advance. The success may be metered by various quantitative and qualitative indicators, depending on the activity that you have planned and the results that you expect. In this particular example, some of the indicators may include the following:

Quantitative:

- Number of applicants for youth exchange;
- Number of organisations that applicants come from;
- Number of posts in media;
- Number of followers of project activities (in social media);
- etc.

Qualitative:

- Profiles of organisations that the applicants come from (experience, activities, size);
- Content of posts in media (positive, negative, neutral);
- Satisfaction of participants in the training / youth exchange (evaluation by filling in a form);
- etc.

## PREPARATION FOR APPLICATION



Your idea has now developed all basic elements: problem description and analysis, definition of the goal and tasks, and the framework of the evaluation plan, which is more than enough information for you to begin your search for partners and possible donors in order to apply for a grant.

In order to find adequate partners, it is important that you have a clear vision of profiles of your future youth exchange participants. If we keep analysing the example given in this toolkit, the ideal participants would be young people, 20 to 30 years old, who are active in youth organisations or organisations working for young people in Western Balkans territory, who already have some experience in passing the information and knowledge to others. Also, it is important that the candidates for the exchange are opened to differences and ready to exchange knowledge and experiences with their peers from other societies and that they are interested in the topic of your youth exchange program (human rights, fighting discrimination, reconciliation processes in the region). You should also think about the exact societies you want your participants to be from so that the exchange makes the most sense and gives the best results. **For example, it is not quite reasonable to organise a youth exchange with the topic of reconciliation process if your participants come from Croatia and Kosovo since these two societies do not have unresolved issues in recent past.** You can conclude that the eligible partners should be organisations in the region that work with youth and for youth and implement programmes that regard the above-mentioned topics and have capacities to use potentials for a change that will be there after the project realisation. They should also be based in societies that have been in a conflict recently. If you are organising an exchange for young people in the region, providing them new experiences, teaching them new skills and motivating them to engage more and to work on changes in their communities, you want to also enable them to apply all the knowledge they obtained from that exchange. Otherwise, your project will not have a significant impact on the problem that your idea is based upon. **Therefore, it is important that you choose partners who could use and multiply the effects when the exchange is over: involve new participants in their programmes and create new actions with them.** Obviously, you and your partners must promote the same values through your work.

Further on, we listed several addresses where you can search for partners for your project:

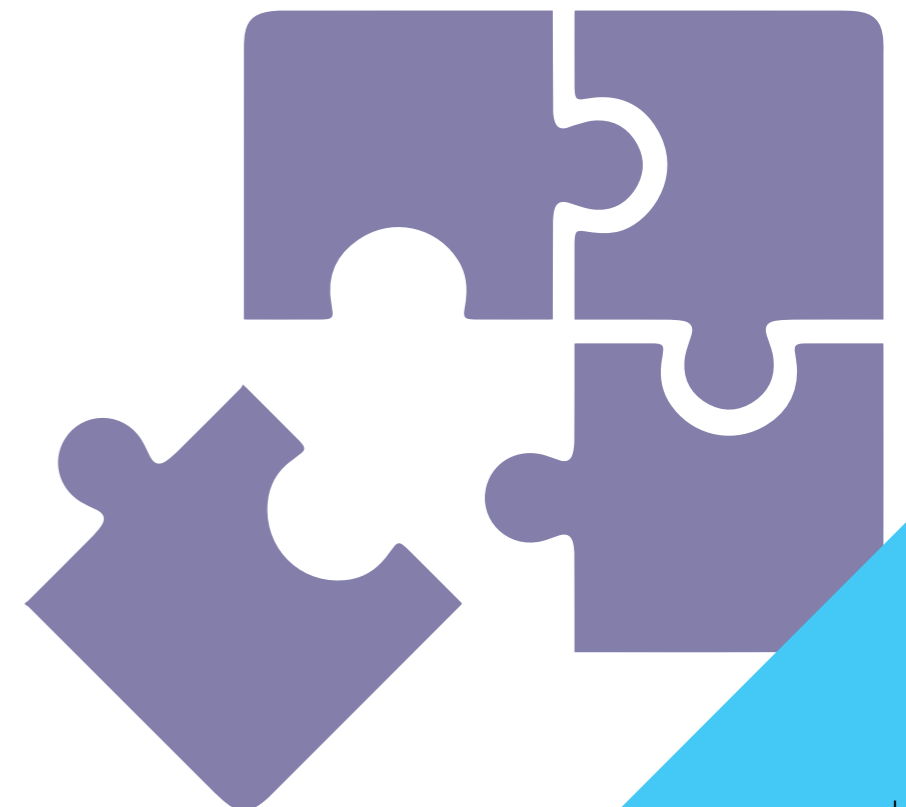
1. Salto, Otlas – a platform for searching partner organisations ([www.salto-youth.net/tools/otlas-partner-finding](http://www.salto-youth.net/tools/otlas-partner-finding))
2. Erasmus + - database of projects implemented under Erasmus+ Programme (<http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects>) that enables you to search through profiles of organisations that participated in this programme: (<https://ec.europa.eu/education/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/search.html>)
3. Eurodesk – the website with a wide network of youth experts and local partners in 35 countries that facilitates contacting potential partners (<https://eurodesk.eu>)
4. The base of organisations and institutions accredited for realisation of volunteering projects under Erasmus+ Programme ([https://europa.eu/youth/volunteering/evs-organisation\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/volunteering/evs-organisation_en))

Make contacts with potential partners, present them your idea and the framework of your project, organise e.g. an online conference with them and make arrangements regarding the following steps. The first one should be providing the financial assets for the planned youth exchange.

After setting the framework of the youth exchange, defining the profile of participants and finding partners for implementation of your idea, you will have all elements necessary for searching of potential sources of financing i.e. donors that will support the project financially. Further in this document we listed some potential ways of providing assets for your youth exchange.

1. International and regional donors – there is a number of institutions, organisations and foundations that are active in the region and support youth exchanges. One of them is the previously mentioned RYCO but you can also search for information about other possibilities that are available through various European Union programmes (e.g. Erasmus+, Europe for Citizens, European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe). Also, you should explore the types of programmes supported by foreign embassies or some other foundations.
2. Domestic donors – you can look for support from relevant ministries and other government institutions, even local self-governments that can recognise their interests in realisation of international events such as youth exchanges on their territory.
3. Sponsors – you can contact various companies and ask them to sponsor your event, either through their corporate social responsibility programs, by direct financing of your event, or by providing you with their services/products in exchange for promotion.

4. Other sources – methods of fundraising may include selling of some services or products provided by your organisation or its members, contacting individuals who are able and willing to support some action that is beneficial for community. You can also organise a fundraising event such as a concert, charity dinner or a play. Finally, you can look for support to your idea online, via some of the platforms that provide this kind of services – Kickstarter, Indiegogo, FundAnything etc.
5. Work on your fundraising plan in cooperation with your partners, make a list of potential donor and divide tasks among each other. Maybe you can provide the whole budget from only one donor, however, in practice organisations usually have more than one source of financing for their projects if they find this option more convenient. Whichever strategy you choose, bear in mind that it will take several months from the moment you begin fundraising to the beginning of project implementation (after you provided all necessary assets).





## Preparation for project proposal



By now, you already have a shaped project idea, partners for its implementation and we will assume that you have already decided to apply for financing by some international donor.

You explored the rules, priorities, requirements and procedures that the donor has set for the particular call and you believe that your idea including its budget, topic and methodology is adequate. It is time to analyse your plan once more and define the details in cooperation with your partners if you have not done that already in previous phases:

- Make a precise agreement regarding participants of youth exchange, decide which communication channels will you use to invite them to apply for participation in the project and finally, set at least minimal criteria for selection of applicants and also decide about the final number of participants;
- Re-check your goal, specific objectives and results, improve or re-define them if necessary;
- Agree the location of exchange – in this phase it is recommendable to at least agree upon the city because the final budget of the project largely depends on this information;
- Elaborate the activities, check once more if their implementation leads to achieving of the objectives and the final goal of the project, estimate if it is necessary to make some changes to the time schedule; in this phase, it is necessary to assign roles and responsibilities regarding activities among you and your partners;
- Make a detailed evaluation plan and define procedures of its implementation;
- Analyse the budget that you have already drafted in cooperation with your partners and assess if it is sufficient for realisation of the project; complement it or change it if necessary;

- Decide about the methods of promotion for the project and its results i.e. of providing their visibility; Also discuss with your partners about the steps that you should take in order to ensure sustainability of these results;
- Analyse the risks – if there are certain risks that can impact implementation of planned activities, you should prepare general strategy for reaction in case they occur (for example, in case that the number of applied participants is smaller than planned, an adequate reaction may be an extension of the application deadline and intensifying the efforts to motivate potential applicants);
- Go through the application form for your project in cooperation with your partners and define all other details that you may have missed so far (e.g. the donor may require submitting a detailed agenda of the youth exchange in advance or you might have to explain how the methodology you chose matches the priorities set in the call requirements; application may require detailed information on the target group, or you may be required to include gender dimension or to assess the impact of your activities to the environment);
- Finally, if the donor announced the scoring method for projects, you should go through this document with your partners because it contains important information about the parts of the application that you should pay special attention to in order to increase your chances of winning the grant.

After analysing and determining of all details, you should agree on the way of filling in the form. Although the idea was yours and you (your organisation/institution) are the lead applicant, it is recommended that all partners participate in filling in of the application form because this contributes to both quality of the final presentation of the project and strengthening of partnerships. Maybe you can use some online tools (for example: Google Documents) so that the entire project team can follow the progress in real time, complement the text, ask questions or make comments during this process.

## Logical Framework



Some donors require a logical framework to be a part of the application form. This is a simplified overview of the most important elements of the project presented as a table. At first glance, the logical framework seems complicated and many applicants postpone it until the very end of filling-in the application form, while it should be the first step of it. The logical framework can help you evaluate the logical settings of your idea and check whether all planned activities really lead to achieving the goal. If you remember working on the tree of problems and its

transformation into the tree of objectives, it is clear that you have been developing the logical framework since the very beginning of project preparation process. **It is important to underline that actual application forms vary significantly and that you can find many different compositions of logical framework forms or terms used within it.**

The most common form of logical framework table is presented in the figure below. We filled it in so that it corresponds to the example analysed within this toolkit and you can also find an explanation for each field and the questions you should answer in order to fill-in each field.

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE PROJECT				
	Intervention logic	Indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Overall objective	Youth organisations have built capacities to deal with issues of discrimination, intolerance and reconciliation processes in the region	1. Number of youth organisations involved in the newly formed support network (minimum 20 organisations from all societies included in the project). 2. Degree of changing capacities to work on these topics of organisations involved into the support network	1. Acts of incorporation and accession documents 2. Results of evaluation (self-evaluation) 2.1 Desk research – publicly available information (media, social networks, ...)	Official public policies in the region support youth programmes and recognize their importance (or at least does not try to eliminate them).
Specific objectives	Z1. Mechanisms have been created to support youth organisations in the region that deal with these particular topics	Z1.1 Existence of an informal network Z1.2 Number of youth organisations involved in the network (minimum 20) Z2.1 Newly created sources of information and knowledge available to youth organisations Z2.2 Relevance and usefulness for youth organisations of content of these information and knowledge Z2.3 Number of youth organisations that use the content created for them (minimum 50 organisations from all societies included in the project)	Z1.1 and Z1.2 Act of incorporation, mailing list, FB group, project team reports Z2.1 Online resource centre, Toolkit Z2.2 Evaluation of content (online questionnaire, direct interviews with users) Z2.3 Base of organisations registered on the website of the online resource centre, website statistics Z3.1 List of participants, photos of the training Z3.2 Training evaluation results, trainers' reports, project team reports	Youth organisations in the region are interested in cooperation regarding these topics and improvement of their work.  Youth organisations in the region are willing to support their activists in building of their capacities and to give them space and chance to work on these topics.
	Z2. Organisations are given access to knowledge regarding these topics and dissemination has been facilitated	Z3.1 Number and structure of all training participants (minimum 30 participants from 20 organisations in the region) Z3.2 Training achievement verification (knowledge obtained, applicability of the knowledge)		
	Z3. Activists and members of youth organisations have built competences for dealing with these topics			
Results	R1: The model for education of youth activists regarding these topics have been established - Z2 R2: Activists (minimum 30) from 20 organisations in the region have obtained new knowledge, experiences and contacts - Z3 R3: An informal network of activists and organisations has been created in the region in order to work on topics such as discrimination, intolerance and reconciliation processes - Z1 R4: Conditions have been made for synergy of work of all youth organisations regarding these topics - Z1 R5: 100 young people in the region has been motivated to work on these topics and they have obtained new competences - Z1, Z2 R6: Youth organisations involved into the project improved their visibility in their local communities - Z1, Z2, Z3 R7: Tools and means have been created to help organisations in the region to improve the quality of their work on these topics - Z2	R1.1 All activities implemented under the project R2.1 Number of organisations and number of participants in the training R2.2 The amount of new knowledge obtained from the programme R3.1 Existence of an informal network R4.1 Number of new initiatives within the network (in cooperation between two or more organisations) R5.1 Number of young people participating in mini trainings R5.2 Satisfaction of young people/ participants, level of change in motivation R6.1 Media visibility in local community as a result of project activities R7.1 Existence of a toolkit R7.2 Existence of a functional portal R7.3 Usefulness of the portal and the toolkit for organisations	R1.1 Final report, periodical reports, photos and other documentation as evidence of project activities R2.1 List of participants R2.2 Evaluation questionnaires, trainers' reports R3.1 Act of incorporation, FB group, mailing list R4.1 Reports by the project team and organisations in the network, direct contacts R5.1 List of participants, photos R5.2 Evaluation questionnaires for mini trainings R6.1 Content and quantity of media material before and after activities (press clipping) R7.1 Toolkit R7.2 Online resource centre R7.3 Reactions and comments of portal and toolkit users, direct contacts, statistics	Political situation in the region is stable (no circumstances that could have negative impact on mobility of young people).
	A1: Preparatory activities for youth exchange (call for application, engagement of trainers, designing of the detailed programme and other logistic activities) - R1 A2: Organising training for youth activists - R2, R3, R4 A3: Preparation and publishing of the toolkit regarding topics processed during the training - R4, R7 A4: realisation of mini trainings for young people in local communities in cooperation with participants of the training and their organisations - R5, R6 A5: Forming of an online resource centre for youth work regarding human rights, fighting against discrimination and reconciliation processes in the region - R4, R7	<b>Resources:</b> Project team – human resources, trainers, the space for youth exchange, transport, accommodation and food, technical resources (printer, video projector, computers), designing and printing services, IT services, consumables, translation services	<b>Measuring of action progress:</b> Reports by the project team, press clipping, mailing list, Online resource centre, Toolkit, ... <b>Budget:</b> Human resources: 12 000 (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5) Transport: 8 000 (A2, A4) Training: 6 500 (A2) Printing and promotion: 7 000 (A1, A3) Consumables and other: 3 000 (A1, A2, A4) <b>TOTAL:</b> 36 500 Provided: 6 500, to be provided: 30 000	All assets for project implementation have been provided.  Young people in local communities show interest in obtaining new knowledge and skills through informal education.



The following table shows in which order you should fill-in the logical framework table:

	Intervention logic	Objectively verifiable indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Overall objective	1.	10.	11.	9.
Specific objectives	2.	12.	13.	8.
Results	3.	14.	15.	7.
Activities	4.	5.	16.	6.

- Overall objective – defines the state that you want to achieve by implementing your project; this field demonstrates the validity of your project.
  - Specific objectives – defines the steps to be taken towards the goal.
  - Results – it is important to list the results of your project; they contribute to achieving of the goal.
  - Activities – list major groups of activities that lead to results and the way they are connected (which activity is connected to which result).
  - Inputs – they should be observed as “raw materials” or “fuel” for your activities so that they can produce the stipulated results; that includes all necessary resources to be used during the project implementation such as human resources, services, material resources, technical resources etc.
- After entering these five elements into the table, you should do one more check of logical connections between them: if the listed inputs are sufficient for realisation of activities, if activities can produce the listed results and objectives and if all of that makes achieving of the goal possible.
- It is now time for defining assumptions. They represent the situations or conditions that are necessary for the success, but are pretty much out of your control. Begin defining assumptions from the bottom up in order to check the logic of the sequence once more. You should thereby answer the following questions:
- What are the preconditions for initiating the action i.e. what conditions must exist (that are outside of your control) in order for you to realise your planned activities and ensure particular results?
  - What are the external factors that must be taken into account so that producing of tangible results could lead to achievement of the objectives?
  - What are the external factors and assumptions that must outweigh so that implementation of your project could lead to the goal?
  - What significant events, requirements or decisions are necessary to make the achieved goal into a permanent condition?
- Re-check the logical connection between all elements in the table, this time including the listed assumptions and preconditions.
- Finally, for each item in the first column you should define the indicators that will be used for objective verification of achievement through activities, objectives and results. You should also define sources and means of verification for each indicator.
- List the indicators that can be used for verification of achievement and set the target value for each of them if possible;
  - List all sources of information for each indicator and their sources of verification (what will your verification will be based on?);
  - Make a list of indicators that clearly show that the objectives are achieved and define the relevant range of values according to which the achievements can be measured;
  - List the sources of information that will be the base for your verification and the method of information gathering;
  - List the measures (direct or indirect) that you will use to verify the results and define the target values; it is necessary to identify one or more indicators for each result and to enumerate them appropriately;
  - List all means of verification and sources of information for each indicator;
  - Define the sources of information according to which you can determine the progress of your project (realisation of activities); also, you need to enter the rough amount of your budget into this field i.e. to enter total amount and cumulative budget lines (see the figure)

## Finalising project proposal

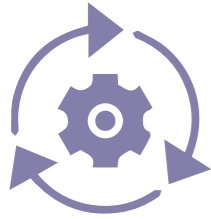
If you went through all previous steps successfully, filling in of the application form should not be difficult of take too much time, especially because you have partners who will give their contribution to the process.

It may be necessary to pay a bit more attention to the budget table. You should make sure that the budget proposal that you made enables implementation of all planned activities and that all items listed within the budget also exist in the description of the project. You should read the requirements of the donor once more as well as the instructions for application: make sure that all listed costs are eligible and that total sum for human resources (fees, administration) does not exceed the limits set in the instructions. It is very important to be realistic and precise during estimation of your costs: if they are too high, you lower your chances of grant approval; on the other hand, if they are too low, you will get into serious trouble during implementation (provided that you have won the grant) – you will not be able to keep up with all activities that you listed in your proposal. Therefore, you should try to break down your costs to as many components as possible and thereby reduce chances of making a mistake to minimum. Some donors will require that you submit a narrative description of the budget along with other documentation, which will make the previous step easier for you.

**Before submitting of the final application and your project proposal, you should make sure that you prepared all required documentation,** such as: narrative description of the project, budget, agenda of the planned event (youth exchange), CVs of key members of the project team, logical framework, statements on partnership signed by all organisations included in the project, translations of Articles of Incorporation, evidence of financial capacities of organisations (excerpts from annual financial reports) etc.

Now you only need to put all your documentation into an envelope and send it to donor’s address.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUTH EXCHANGE



The results have been released and your youth exchange programme has either been approved or denied the support. In case of the latter, do not think about this situation as a failure but accept it as a valuable lesson. You have two reasons for that. The first one is that you obtained important experience during project preparation that will be useful to you in your future plans and you also met new partners that you can cooperate with on similar projects in the future. The second one is that, through the evaluation by the committee that was analysing your project proposal, you will be given information that can help you improve your plan and apply for another grant – whether by changing it completely or only by improving some segments that were scored poorly.

Once you finally provided the assets for implementation of your idea, you will have a lot of work to do. But that is essentially what you wanted, right?

The first task you will need to fulfil is to inform your partners about the good news and right after that you should schedule the first working meeting – either online or live, depending on your budget. Your organisation/institution and all your partners have assigned one or more people to the project team. This group of people should organise and realise all activities that you have planned. **It is recommendable that one person takes over the coordination of the entire team:** to remind everyone of appointments, organise meetings, take care of implementation time schedule of all segments of the project and fulfil other tasks that will improve the efficiency of the project team.

The first meeting should be dedicated to making an agreement on several important issues: communication channels (e.g. a Skype group), assigning roles and responsibilities in terms of implementation of project activities, important dates and deadlines, financial issues and methods of payments, meeting dynamics, the follow-up etc.

Further in this document, we will sum up all issues that you should take care of in order to organise a youth exchange.

## Youth exchange participants



You have already established the profiles of your youth exchange participants. It is now time to create an invitation and an application form and to find the way to contact your potential participants.

The invitation for participation in the youth exchange should contain general information on the event: its location, goal of the training, and profiles of participants. This document may also include general agenda and the deadline for submitting applications as well as the conditions that you will provide to the participants (the costs that your organisation will cover, the type of accommodation that you will provide etc). Take care not to disclose too many agenda details in this step and leave some room for making changes of the program afterwards, if you find them necessary.

The application form is also a part of the invitation. Here are some of the questions you should ask your candidates:

- What organisation and city are you from?
- How old are you and do you have any previous work experience related to issues that are the topic of this youth exchange?
- Why are you applying to this exchange (what motivated you, what do you expect to gain from this event) and how do you think that you can contribute to the process?
- Do you have any specific requirements (e.g. do you use a wheelchair, are you allergic to some food, do you need a visa to travel to the location where the training is held etc)?

On the one hand, the application form should provide enough information to make it easier for you to select adequate applicants for the training. On the other hand, it should not contain too many questions because it may discourage potential candidates.

The invitation should be distributed to all addresses through which you can reach your target group: mailing lists, groups and social media posts, forums that consider adequate topics and other web pages, organisations and institutions that you and your partners cooperate with, and even personal contacts.

The whole project team should work on selection of participants. You should choose participants based on the list of criteria that you have previously set but you should also be opened to make some exceptions: for example, you can choose a person that does not fit in your age criteria if you believe that their experience can contribute to the group and to the topic that you intend to work on. Pay attention to the fact that the group should be balanced as much

as possible – it should have approximately equal number of male and female participants, they should come from different towns and organisations etc. You do not want participants who are “overqualified” for your training since they can be dissatisfied with what they can gain from your event. Also, you should be careful with selecting participants with no previous experience. Think about the ways that they can fit into the program of the training. Finally, since the working language of every international event is usually English, you should make sure that your future participants are fluent enough so that they can follow the program and contribute equally. You can decide to have short (online) interviews with some of the candidates in order to evaluate their fluency in English. Make a short list, whereby you should consider the fact that some candidates might give up in the meantime and that you should also have a list of “replacements”.

Assuming that you have already defined all the details regarding the location of the training, the next step implies sending more detailed information to the participants that you have selected including:

- Description of the venue where the participants will spend several days;
- Information for those who will come a day earlier or leave a day later due to transport organisation (whether you can organise accommodation for them for these additional days and under which conditions);
- Instructions for arriving to the location of the training (from the airport, bus or train station) if you have not already arranged local transportation for them;
- Reminder for participants to save all receipts so you can cover some or all of their expenses;
- Map of the neighbourhood of the training location to make orientation easier for the participants;
- Useful information such as: time zone, local currency and the exchange rate for euros or dollars, emergency phone numbers (police, ambulance), approximate prices of some general services such as restaurants or taxi, regular phrases in local language etc;
- General policies of the organiser e.g. that you do not support consumption of alcohol during the exchange;
- List of items that they need to bring e.g. presentation of their organisation;
- Procedures for visa approval if necessary, etc.

Finally, do not forget to also add contact details of your team members – phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

## EXAMPLE OF THE CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

**WHAT?** Training programme for youth activists from the Western Balkans societies

**WHEN?** 18 – 29 July 2020

**WHERE?** Macedonia

**DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION:** 10 June 2020

### INVITATION FOR PARTICIPANTS FOR THE SUMMER SCHOOL AGAINST DISCRIMINATION “MAKE A MOVE”

**Training Programme: 18 – 29 July 2018**

*We invite you to apply for the “MAKE A MOVE” summer school organized by the partnership of (the names of the organizations that are organizing the exchange) ... This project is supported by the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO).*

*If you are active in a youth organization and you are interested in learning something new and improving your skills in working with your peers on issues of combating discrimination and intolerance, or you want to start a project that works on the processes of reconciliation in the region and dealing with the past, and you are looking for partners, then take a few minutes to read this call and learn more about how you can take part in this training.*

#### **Why have we started this project**

Although Western Balkan societies now maintain regular bilateral relations, there is trade and cultural exchange, there is a cooperation in many regional projects and people are moving freely, there is also the existence of numerous prejudices against members of other nations is noticeable. The Balkans is a highly multicultural and multinational environment, and these prejudices often lead to discrimination, misunderstanding and intolerance, which significantly influences individuals and societies to engage with the past times, rather than planning a common future.

Young people, untouched by personal recollection of past conflicts, should be the bearers of change and contribute to the social, economic and cultural development of the entire region. It is therefore important to work with them in order to combat discrimination and prejudice, to help them recognize the negative phenomena in society and to provide them with support so they could influence the changing of their environment towards the direction of tolerance and acceptance of diversity.

The idea of this project is to educate young people from the Western Balkan countries how the incidence of discrimination and intolerance affects the creation of the system of values and how, unfortunately, they dominate social and political life in the countries in the region. **The call we are sending to you is not a call for “just another training”, but an attempt to provide the necessary space for discussing and examining the reality that we are facing today and in which prejudices and stereotypes dictate a discriminatory atmosphere that deprives some people of freedom and human rights, and often leads to violence and injustice.**

“MAKE A MOVE” Summer School is a continuation of the long-standing cooperation of our organizations in the efforts to create a synergetic effect of the work of youth

organizations from the Western Balkans in the fight against discrimination. The goals we would like to accomplish with this project are:

- to strengthen the capacities of youth organizations from the Western Balkans that are dealing with issues of discrimination, intolerance and reconciliation in the region;
- to strengthen the competencies of activists of these organizations for the field work;
- to evaluate the current practice of youth organizations in the region;
- to support the creation of formal and informal networks of organizations (and individuals) dealing with these issues in the Western Balkans.

#### **The essence of summer school is to:**

TO PROVIDE the space and the conditions for all participants and participants to discuss and exchange views on the current situation in our societies.

TO EXPLAIN the background of the current problems facing our communities, with the lack of freedom and support to be the ones who we are.

TO REASSESS deep-rooted prejudices and discriminatory behavior.

TO EMPOWER participants to develop skills for active participation in the creation of societies without discrimination and intolerance.

TO MOTIVATE participants to change their environment and encourage the creation of a new system of values.

#### **How we are going to achieve that?**

The process of working will involve the use of different methods and techniques of experiential learning: role plays, debates, case studies, simulations and classical lectures, in order to set a good basis for the understanding of the

program. We will work on the analysis of the film, but there is also a plan to visit local organizations and institutions that work on the same topics as the “Make a move” summer school. We will try to leave enough space for our participants to learn from each other and exchange experiences and discuss the problems they face in their work and to seek solutions together. We are planning to include guest lecturers with extensive experience and expertise in the area of human rights and the fight against discrimination. We have also designed an evening program, which should enable the strengthening of the cohesion and the feeling of closeness in the group. The key value of this event is a multinational and multicultural group - that is You!

#### **Are you the right person for this event?**

We expect that the participants of our summer school are already active in a youth organization in the region and are motivated to learn about the main topics of training, to contribute to the learning process and to be ready to share the acquired knowledge with members of their organizations and other young people. Also, good knowledge of the English language is mandatory for participation in this event. If you are interested for applying, please fill out the application form below and send it to [info@office.org](mailto:info@office.org) by June 10, 2020. You will be notified about the results of the selection by June 20, 2020, and short interviews via the Skype will be held with all the candidates from the shortlist.

**Once again, we invite you to apply for this event and take the opportunity to gain new experiences, acquire knowledge that will help in your and your organization’s work, create new contacts and partnerships, and contribute to the changes that we all strive together**



## EXAMPLE OF APPLICATION FORM

### MAKE A MOVE Training Programme: 18. – 29. July 2020

#### APPLICATION FOR PARTICIPATION

##### 1. Personal information

Name:	Surname:	Gender:
Date of birth:	Profession:	

##### 2. Contact

Phone number:	Skype:
E-mail address:	

##### 3. Visa

Do you need a visa to enter?  
(If your answer is YES, please fill in the fields at the end of this form.)

Yes	No
-----	----

##### 4. Information about the organization / institution

Name: (In local language and in English)	
Phone number:	
E-mail address:	
Web page:	
Your role in the organization / position:	
Contact person	

Brief description of the organization (Goals, activities, members...) - up to 200 words

--

##### 5. Motivation and interest in taking part in a summer school

What is your motivation to participate in this event?

--

What is your experience in the practical use of knowledge that you have adopted at the previous, similar, international events?

--

Please tell us how do you think you will be able to contribute to the summer school (Special skills, knowledge, materials, contacts...)?

--

Have you ever participated in the organization and/or realization of activities and projects that had a subject related to the fight against discrimination or dealing with the past? Please describe briefly your experiences and what were the results of those events.

--

Explain to us how you plan to share experiences from the "Make a move" summer school with other people in your organization and local community?

--

##### 6. Other information

Do you have any special dietary requirements (vegetarian, vegan, allergy...)?

--

Are there any other information that we should be aware of (disability / chronic illness, etc.)?

--

*I confirm that the information provided in this application are true and that I will be available for all planned activities from 18 to 29 July 2020, and that I agree to participate in a short Skype interview during the selection process.*

Name:	Date:
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##### 7. Information required for issuing a visa (From your passport\*):

NAME:	SURNAME:	GENDER:
DATE OF BIRTH:	PLACE OF BIRTH:	PASSPORT NUMBER:
PLACE OF ISSUE:	DATE OF ISSUE:	DATE OF EXPIRY:
PLACE OF RESIDENCE AND ADDRESS:		PROFESSION/VOCATION:

CLOSEST EMBASSY/CONSULATE
---------------------------

Note:  
\* If your application is accepted, you will have to send us a scanned copy of the passport.

THANK YOU!

## Time and location of the youth exchange



**Choice of the venue for your event can influence design and dynamics of the program but not the logistic requirements.** Off

course, you need to act primarily in accordance with the budget that is available to you but there are also several other parameters that you should take into account.

**If you want your participants to spend more time together or you intend to implement the program that requires their undivided attention, you will choose a location away from the city rush,** e.g. some mountain resort. In that case, you need to also think about organising free time activities for your participants. You must offer them some activities during the evening: movie projections (which can be related to the topic of your event), a karaoke party, interesting lectures or a quiz. Also, you will have to pay more attention to organisation of transport for the group.

On the other hand, **if the venue is near the city centre,** participants will most probably choose to spend their free time walking and exploring the environment, shopping and night life. **This location will make organisation easier to some extent,** since you will not have to organise evening program or transport for the group. However, this choice would also have its negative aspects, especially in terms of weaker effects of interaction between participants.

**The space that you, your team and the group will work and spend several days in is probably the most important factor that you should consider during selection of the location.** It should be big enough to provide conditions for undisturbed work, adaptable (so that you can rearrange add or remove unnecessary tables and chairs), it should provide

conditions for working in smaller groups and finally – it should be insulated from other guests or personnel of the hotel, resort or other location that you have chosen for the event. It would also be nice to choose a location near to a garden or a park so you can hold some workshops out in the open, if the weather conditions are adequate. Working outside usually has a positive effect on the group dynamic, however, it also brings a whole lot of new stimuli in the environment so the attention of participants may be divided. **If you choose this kind of environment for some of your workshops, you should choose the workshops with a content that does not require full concentration of the group.**

**Availability of the location in terms of architectural features is also very important.** We do not want to discriminate potential participants if they are, for example, in a wheelchair. Check if the space that you have chosen for accommodation and work meets at least minimum requirements in terms of accessibility: if there are wheelchair accessible entrances in the building and the working space, if disabled persons can unhindered and independently use rooms, toilets etc.

**Finally, the season that you choose for the event is not irrelevant at all.** Not only it has consequences in terms of changes in logistics, but it can also have an impact on selection of the venue. When determining the date of the event, you should think of the period that would be the most convenient for your target group (in which period they can easily organise transportation, when they are free from exams etc.), as well as for you (e.g. in which period is it the most convenient to make reservations for accommodation of larger groups, to which extent the weather conditions can influence the program dynamics etc.)

## Logistics



Organising youth exchange is not a simple or a small-scale job and it requires certain organisational skills.

**It is necessary to procure all materials for work** in accordance with the agenda that you have

created (paper, notebooks, highlighters, flip charts etc.) and also organise printing and multiplication of educational materials and/or branded folders, t-shirts, posters etc. Further, you need to **provide adequate meals for the group during the exchange,** especially if some participants are vegetarian or allergic to some type of food. You should also think about when and where you will have your coffee breaks. Also, make sure to provide all necessary technical equipment such as projectors, screens, computers, scanners and printers – **provide a “mobile office” and be prepared for any situation.**

Planning of logistics related to transport of participants can sometimes be a very requiring task. Some of them may travel by a plane, some by a train, some may arrive one day earlier and some may come just a half an hour before the opening of the event. **In order to have everything under control, you must ask participants about their traveling arrangements in advance,** and then you should organise a reception for them at the station or the airport as well as the transport for them to the location of the event if your capacities allow you to do that. Find out about their returning ticket reservations and make sure to organise your program and resources so that you avoid any complications in this segment.

Youth exchanges usually last for five or more days and, as much as your program is interested and well-designed, **consider the fact that your team and your group will need some changes in dynamics as well as a small break at some point.** We recommend that you choose a day in the middle of the program when you will work only in the morning and dedicate the afternoon to an organised tour around the city or a visit to some other organisation/institution that is active in the field related to your youth exchange topics. You can also simply give everyone a free afternoon.

It is not practical that the whole team takes care of every detail. **Make a general agreement on all the things that need to be done and then split tasks and responsibilities among each other.** The team coordinator should make sure that everyone has all necessary information and conditions to do their part of the job.

### Come to the training venue earlier

**Although your youth exchange lasts, for example five days, you should gather your project team at least one or two days earlier.** This is not only important in the context of technical preparation for the arrival of the group, but it is also an important phase of building and enhancing of the team. Do not neglect the fact that any disagreement, misunderstanding or unresolved issues inside the project team will inevitably be noticeable in program implementation and vice versa – if the atmosphere in the team is good, it will transfer to the group. Therefore, you should use this time to get to know each other better and to come closer. Certainly, you should expect to work a lot: you should check if you have all valid information about the time and the manner of arrival for each participant, organise the working environment, test all technical equipment, go through the program once more and possibly make some final changes etc.



## Program



Let's assume that the entire program will be created by you and your project team, although you can also outsource this task. We will not focus on what a detailed agenda for an international training should look like, but we will give you a few guidelines.

On the first day of the training, you should take into account that the most of participants have probably spent several hours traveling, that they came into a new environment and that they do not know anyone there. Therefore, **the agenda for the first day should be free from redundant and heavy content.** Think of a short introduction, explain the essentials to the group such as technical details regarding the accommodation and meals, introduce them to the program for the following days and leave enough time for all of them to introduce themselves (you can use some of the games created for these purposes) so that they can generally get to know each other and the project team.

As much as you and your associates are competent for the topic of your youth exchange, the group will sometimes need a change of tempo and approach, in order to keep their concentration and dynamics. Therefore, **you should design the program in such manner that it contains different techniques and methods:** work in plenum and individually or in small groups, organise lectures and work on a film with the relevant topic, introduce the group to role play games or explore some topic using simulation methods, develop a case study and a guided fantasia; organise a "world café" or make some room in your agenda for the "open space" method; use various methods of creative expression such as drawing, storytelling and dancing. **You can make a change in tempo by switching pairs of trainers or engaging one or more guest lecturers** because different people have different energies and ways of working with a group. **It is the most important that you make a balance – having an over-dynamic program is almost as bad as having a monotonous one.**

You must also be flexible – do not strictly stick to the plan if it is obvious that this is not good for the group. Be ready to change the approach or to dedicate to some subject more time than you have initially planned. Prepare a back-up plan. Talk regularly to your participants about their impressions regarding the applied methods of work, if they are satisfied with the content or if maybe they have some suggestions for improvement – **dedicate about fifteen minutes of time at the end of each day to evaluation**, in plenum or in smaller groups.

**Although the daily program usually lasts eighth to nine hours including all breaks, your working day will last much longer;** there is almost no break for you, however, you have to be in a good mood around the day, to listen to complaints about the food and to be opened towards everyone and communicative all the time. Being a part of the project team during the youth

exchange is a very requiring job. The project team must meet every day. There will always be unpredicted situations that you have to resolve, you will work on changes in the program based on the daily evaluations, you will check if everything is under control, organise the evening program, a field trip to the city for the following day or, in a best-case scenario, you will at least exchange information and conclusions.

One of the most important features of every youth exchange is intercultural learning. **You have a group of creative young people that came from different communities, with different experiences, skills and knowledge and you should try and use that kind of potential.** Although participants use their free time to learn from each other and to get to know each other better, you should still make some time in the agenda for some structured exchange. Participants can introduce their organisations, their culture, folklore, music specific for their region or some lesser-known facts about the societies that they come from. They can also do all of that together. If there are participants in the group that come from different societies and organisations, you should develop a creative way of introduction so that everyone has enough time but presentations are not too long or repetitive.

Another significant feature of youth exchanges is the fact that they provide ideal conditions for networking between youth organisations that they belong to. The energy of all people involved in the youth exchange is good, they are motivated for initiating new actions and applying knowledge and skills they acquired during the training and they are surrounded by their peers and like-minded people, which altogether makes perfect conditions for initiating new partnerships.

**Try to dedicate some time at the end of one workshop to encouraging participants to exchange ideas and think of activities they could implement together in the near future.**

**The last day of the training must contain a part dedicated to evaluation of the entire event.** Give everyone a chance to express their impressions in front of the group but also always prepare online or printed evaluation forms that provide anonymity. Ask the group about conditions of work and accommodation, find out if you are a good organiser, check once more if they were satisfied with the content of the training and the teaching method, ask them to make suggestions that you can use to improve your future projects.

At the end, you need to thank all participants and say good bye to them but also organise their transport to the stations and airports where you welcomed them only a week ago. **Let an evaluation of your youth exchange be the last activity of your project team, while your impressions are still fresh.** Use the opportunity to congratulate to each other for a job well done and to make arrangements regarding the following steps. After all, you will need to prepare a report anyway.

## EVALUATION



**Evaluation is a complicated name for a simple goal: how to prevent yourself from making the same mistake over again.** By evaluation of the project you will facilitate your work and work of other people in the

future, you will help your organisation to develop new strategies and methods and after all – the evaluation report is also required by the entities who provided financial support for your action. It is not only passing the questionnaires to participants at the end of a youth exchange. It is designed in advance and performed during the project and after it ends. Participants of the exchange are not the only ones who can evaluate your success and their opinion is not the only factor that should be taken into account. We have already explained that in the section considering planning of the action.

Evaluation should include different people and you should seriously consider their opinions. Talking with your team members about project implementation can help you see some practices that you should change in your work. You should consult with your organisation – check if your colleagues are satisfied with your way of leading the project. Try to get opinions from some stakeholders that have not participated in the project directly but are familiar with its implementation because the view "from the outside" is much more objective<sup>2</sup>.

Observe results of similar projects. Are there some elements that can be compared to your action? Why were other projects more or less successful than yours? Compare your goal indicator values

for tasks and activities with these that you have achieved and think about what you could/should do differently? For example, if you received less applications for the youth exchange than anticipated and you did not have time to extend the application deadline, is it possible that you had used the wrong communication channels in order to reach your target group? Or maybe the invitation was not comprehensive enough or confusing? **Bear in mind that many people think about evaluation process as of listing all the mistakes and omissions. However, sincerity also implies pointing out of good things and success.** Also try not to focus on the elements that you have no impact on but analyse the elements that you can change instead.

**As we have already seen, opinions of your participants are not the only relevant factor for evaluation of your success or information about improvement possibilities. It is, however, very important.** Questions that you will ask them depend on information that you need to get in order to draw conclusions about various aspects of the exchange. Here we will give you an example of an evaluation form.



<sup>2</sup> If your budget allows that, it is useful to also hire an external evaluator in order to get as objective evaluation as possible.



### Evaluation questionnaire for participants - Project "Youth against discrimination" 2018.

1. What did you like the most during this youth exchange?	Not at all	To some extent	Mostly yes	Entirely
I had so much fun				
This was a waste of time and energy				
I want to continue thinking about this topic				
I learned something new about the people around me				
I was under impression that other people were interested in my attitude and opinion				
Participants were tolerant to each other				
I was bored often				
I wish we had more free time				
Generally, workshops were well-designed				
Lecturers and trainers were competent for the subject				
The venue was well chosen				
Food was great				
I am motivated to work on this topic when I come back home				
My expectations were met entirely				
I would recommend this type of exchange to my colleagues				
2. What did you like the least about this event? What kind of problems did you encounter?				
3. What surprised you during the training and why?				
4. Did you learn anything new? What was that?				
5. List three workshops that you liked the most and explain why.				
6. List three workshops that you liked the least and explain why.				
7. Please make some suggestions for future events.				
8. Do you have any additional comment or message for organisers:				

## CONTINGENCY AND RISK MANAGEMENT



Risk is defined as the event that could impact achieving of the goal. Based on this definition, we can conclude that risk is a value-neutral category. Deviation from the plan due to some unplanned circumstances may have both positive and negative consequences on the goal that we wanted to reach <sup>3</sup>. At this time, we will focus only on negative consequences. A skilled planning also includes risk analysis and defining of steps to be taken in order to mitigate and overcome their effects. It is impossible to foresee all that can go wrong but you can prepare a plan B for at least some situations.

**Go through all aspects of your youth exchange, from the logistic details to the agenda and think about the situations that can lead to incomplete realisation of your plan. Good preparation does not only include having a medical emergency set, although it certainly is an important item.**

What if you have planned your program to have many outside activities but these particular days turned out to be rainy? Will you prepare a back-up plan that includes activities adjusted to an inside workspace or will you reorganise the entire agenda so that you can realise all your plans and achieve the same results but in somewhat different order?

What if all activities are not adequate for some participants (for example, some participants have strong emotional reactions to some activities or you have planned an exercise that implies physical activity

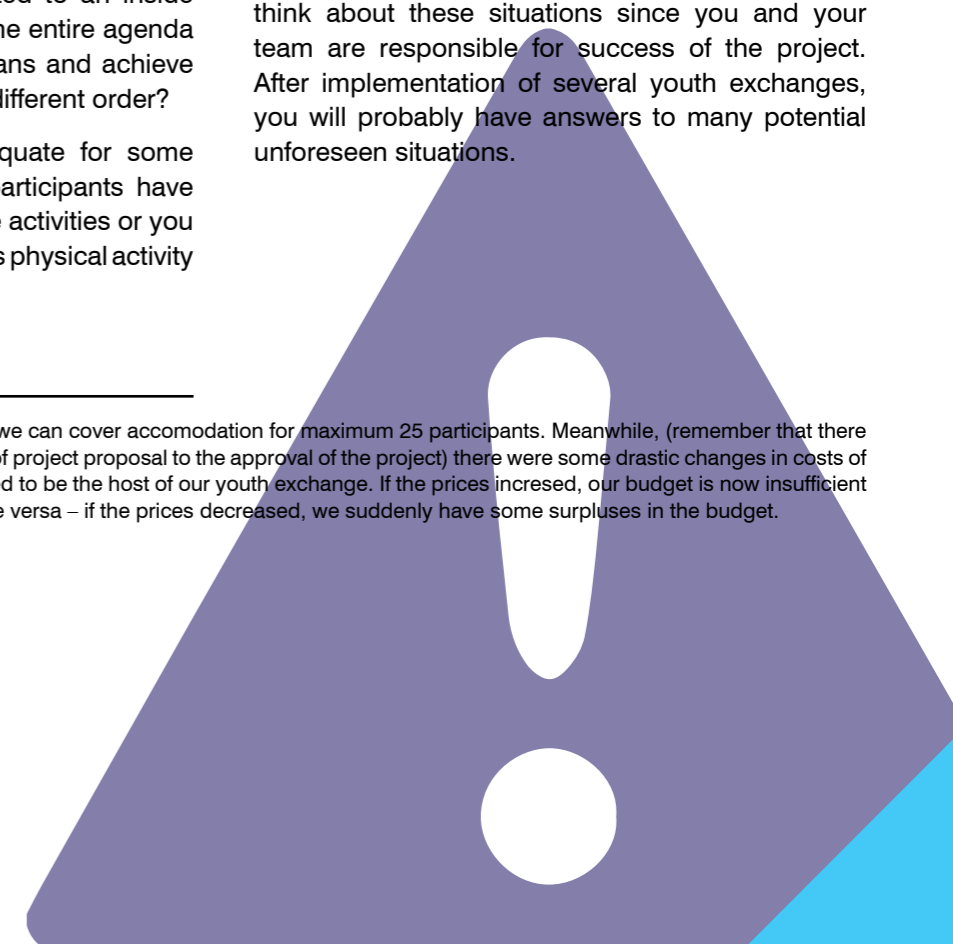
but you also have a participant in a wheelchair)? Will you change the approach and modify the content in such manner that it does not lose its point or will you skip that activity completely?

If participants are always late for the first workshop in the morning, will you (in cooperation with the entire group) agree to postpone them for one hour or maybe to shorten the breaks in order to make up for the lost time?

There are often individuals who distract the work in the group, either by getting into conflicts or by creating a negative atmosphere in some other way. Will you try to talk to them privately and find out the reason why they act like that and thereby try to find a way to integrate them back in the group or will you exclude them from your program?

We mentioned only a few examples of situations that you can encounter during realisation of a youth exchange but the list can also include unexpected problems related to transport, passports and visas, belated delivery of printed materials, financial issues etc. Please bear in mind that it is impossible to foresee everything. It is, however, very useful to think about these situations since you and your team are responsible for success of the project. After implementation of several youth exchanges, you will probably have answers to many potential unforeseen situations.

<sup>3</sup> For example, our budget is limited so that we can cover accomodation for maximum 25 participants. Meanwhile, (remember that there can be several months between submitting of project proposal to the approval of the project) there were some drastic changes in costs of accomodation in the location that we planned to be the host of our youth exchange. If the prices increased, our budget is now insufficient for accomodation of 25 participants and vice versa – if the prices decreased, we suddenly have some surpluses in the budget.



## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT



Taking care of when, how much and in which way you spend the assets from the project budget is a very responsible job, especially if you take into account the fact that it considers all stakeholders included in the youth exchange:

- Participants;
- Project team;
- Donors;
- Organisation that applied for the project and its partners;
- Companies that provide you services (accommodation, transport, equipment, food etc);
- Individuals that you have hired (experts, volunteers, managers etc);
- and finally: you!

**Your main objective as a financial manager is to make sure that all agreed and contracted obligations towards the above-listed stakeholders are fulfilled.** Having this in mind, the job can be divided in four groups:

- Precise identification of expenses (collecting bills and invoices);
- Payments (through a bank account or in cash);
- Budget control (monitoring of balance between the effected costs and provided assets);
- Financial reports (to the donor, your organisation and partners).

Each donor has individual rules that apply to payments and evidence of payments so your first task should be to study those rules carefully in order to avoid potential mistakes. Here we will give you a few general instructions regarding good practice in financial management.

In order to be able to perform all other tasks, it is essential that you collect all evidence of costs during project implementation and effect necessary payments.

**Each valid receipt (invoice) must include the following items: date of service, name and address of the service provider, description of the service, total amount that has been paid and finally the signature of the person who issued the receipt;** a receipt should usually also contain a **stamp**, however, there are some exceptions in practice from this last rule (for example: transportation tickets). When you put your receipts into the archive, you should also make an appurtenant note for each of them which contains an information on the purpose of payment and which item in the budget it refers to. This would make it easier for you to prepare a report later and also to monitor the balance in the budget.

You can also use a table (like the one given below) that will facilitate monitoring of all costs.

Name of the Budget line 1 (e.g. Human resources)		EUR	Amount in the local currency (RSD)	There is an evidence of payment (Yes/No)	Payment effected (Yes/No)
Date	Description of expenses				
1.	20/10/18 Coordinator	100,00	11800,00	No	No
2.	23/10/18 Local manager	50,00	5900,00	Yes	Yes
...	...	...	...	...	...
Total for Budget line 1		1050,00	123900,00		
Name of the Budget line 2 (e.g. transport expenses)					
1.	15/9/18 Local transport (taxi services)	12,00	1416,00	No	Yes
2.	...	...	...	...	...
3.	...	...	...	...	...
Total for Budget line 2		...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	...

**It is recommended that you effect as many payments as you can via a bank account i.e. that you avoid using of cash** because it simplifies your job both in terms of monitoring of budget realisation and in terms of reporting of costs to the donor and to tax offices according to the law.

**However, it is not always possible to avoid paying in cash, especially when you organise a youth exchange.** It is certainly expected that you will cover travel costs in cash when you are involved in international projects. The exchange will be attended by twenty, thirty or fifty people and each of them, including the project team members, will pay their traveling expenses from their own assets. You should reimburse these amounts up to some agreed amount (it is usually 100%, up to a certain maximum amount, which was previously defined in the invitation for applicants). Some participants travel across several borders by different means of transportation e.g. a bus, a train and a taxi and most of them will buy round-trip tickets, because this option is more cost-effective. This means that you may have several receipts for one person that

regard their traveling expenses and they may be expressed in various currencies but you will not be able to keep any of the round-trip tickets as an evidence of reimbursement for your archive <sup>4</sup>. How will you overcome this problem?

### Preparation for reimbursement of travel expenses:

1. Send precise instructions to participants including your conditions of reimbursing of their travel expenses. You should do this in the phase when they are still planning their traveling arrangements.
2. Prepare reimbursement claim forms and empty envelopes. Forms should contain general information on the person claiming the reimbursement (name, city, organisation) and the dates of arrival and departure. The central section should be reserved for a table containing details about expenses. For example:

<sup>4</sup> Travel costs also include visas.

Mean of transportation	From:	To:	Price in local currency	Price in EUR

### Reimbursement of travel expenses:

1. It is recommendable that you give each participant a reimbursement claim form including the envelope and explain the procedure that they should follow at the very beginning of the youth exchange. They should fill in the table, sign it and put it into the envelope with all their tickets and receipts.
2. When you collect all envelopes, you should open them one by one. Compare the receipts with items in the table, scan all receipts (tickets), count the total sum and, if necessary, convert it to the currency that you will pay in. Prepare a quittance the participant will sign as an evidence of receiving the stated amount money from you and try to provide the exact amount of money for each individual reimbursement.

3. When you have completed previous steps, you need to pay off all participants and to collect signed quittance. Do not forget to return original tickets to participants!

Pair each scanned ticket with the correspondent reimbursement claim and the signed quittance in your archive.

**Essentially, financial management requires a meticulous and transparent way of balancing of costs so that they fit within the limits of the approved budget lines and that their structure corresponds to the budget and to project requirements.** Consult your accountant or someone who has more experience in financial management about the procedures for cash withdrawal or payments via the bank account because it is of utmost importance that everything is done in accordance with the law.

## REPORTING AND ADMINISTRATION



**Reporting and administration are essential part of every project and business and they have not been invented to make your life miserable, but to help you.** Many people will find this job boring and unimaginative but it is very important for you, your

current and future colleagues and partners, users of your programs, donors and all the people that are influenced by your work at some point.

Keeping your project administration up-to-date – keeping records, collecting signatures, making various lists, sorting of information and documentation, archiving receipts, contracts, media reports, letters, correspondence etc, exchanging of information formally or informally, oral or in writing - enables you to monitor all activities and to react quickly if necessary. Precision and efficiency are very important especially when you work with multiple partners from abroad. Try to avoid ambiguous information and vagueness.

You are obligated to prepare a final report that should contain information on complete project implementation for the donor. The form and the content of reporting is usually explained in application requirements. **The report contains a narrative and a financial section** but you can also add some other relevant documentation to it such as evaluation results, report by the team of trainers, press clipping. If you kept your administration and finances meticulously, final report preparation will not be complicated. Be honest when answering the required questions and do not be afraid to have a critical opinion if necessary. Write down why you think that the applied method did not have the expected results and what you have learned from that experience.

**The narrative report is usually followed by the application form whereby you are required to compare your initial plan and current realisation and explain deviations if there is any:**

- Have you realised all planned activities at the planned time or were there any changes?
- What did you achieve by each activity and does that fit into the frameworks you had initially set?

- If you had previously set the indicators of success – have you metered them and what are their values?
- Were there any unforeseen circumstances (risks) and how did you react? Did that influence the final results and achieving of the goal and to what extent?
- How did you engage participants in activities, which methods did you apply and what were the effects?
- Which steps did you take in order to increase visibility of your project and what were the results?
- Do you have plans for continuation of the project and what do you expect to achieve?
- How did beneficiaries (participants of the youth exchange) reacted and what were their impressions after completed activities?
- What are your impressions about communication and cooperation with partners?
- Etc.

Preparation of the financial report is somewhat easier. It is necessary that you fill in a form with amounts paid for certain services or activities as they were planned in the budget and then also fill in the realised expenses. At the end, you should explain differences between amounts in these two columns, if any. **Off course, you have to submit all evidence of budget realisation:** bank statements, receipts, quittances, contracts etc.

The report that you have prepared for the donor is also very useful to you and your co-workers. This information can help you plan and implement the follow-up or explain associates and partners what exactly do you do. The report can also serve as an inspiration for new ideas or as a source of information for strategic planning. You may also learn from it about the ways to avoid some mistakes in the future or to make fundraising for future actions easier.

**Beside the report prepared for the donor, you can prepare another, less detailed report for your youth exchange participants.** This report is not mandatory but it is considered to be very useful since it provides participants valuable information and also enforces the connection between you and them – this is especially important if you have planned to continue cooperation with them.

## FOLLOW UP AND SUSTAINABILITY

You have prepared and submitted all reports but this still does not mean that your job is done. **There are many things that you can do in order to enhance the effects of your project and additionally help yourself and your organisation.** You have spent five or ten days working with a group of enthusiastic and capable young people, who acquired new knowledge and skills, you have motivated them to engage additionally in working on the issues related to the topic of your youth exchange: now you should make use of these results. Begin as soon as possible, while the participants are still freshly motivated.

**The first step is to make the results and the products of your youth exchange visible.** You have many photos of the event, a short video, the report etc. This content should be published via internet presentations of all organisations and institutions who were engaged in the project. You should also share it on social media and make sure that each participant of your training can find and see these posts.

**The second step includes inviting of youth exchange participants to give their ideas about how this material can be used best for purposes of the general goal of the project - encourage their creativity.** For example, someone may suggest initiating of a regional online campaign using photos and video material from the training or write a series of articles/blog posts in order to pass on their experiences from youth exchange and thereby contribute to fighting prejudice in their communities.

**Include your organisation and your partners in this brainstorming session.** Go back to the project goal, analyse what you achieved by its implementation and try to agree on the future actions that would enhance the achieved effects.

**After you have made all information publicly available and collected ideas of all stakeholders, it is time for action.** Help participants to shape their ideas into the form of project proposals, help them with fundraising, offer them to use capacities and credibility of your organisation. Create a brochure that sums up realisation, conclusions and results of your project and points out the set direction for the changes in society. Print it and send it to all relevant stakeholders – local governments and media, other non-government organisations involved in similar topics and also governmental and regional institutions. Promote blogs of your participants, organise a press conference at the opening of your online photo exhibition. Apply to new projects that will add to results and products of your youth exchange.

All of this may sound like a lot of quite complicated work to you and it actually is. **It is not easy to maintain the enthusiasm that you have created during your project implementation, but it is useful to at least try.** Maybe some of participants will activate in your organisation, or you will draw attention of some expert in the field to your work, it will be easier for you to find the assets for the following activities, you will have participants for a new youth exchange, and you will meet new partners and associates. **Anyway, you will secure sustainability of your project results and multiplication of its effects.**



## CONCLUSION



You have come to an end of this journey through suggestions, notes and ideas on how to create, organise and implement a youth exchange. The end of one will be the beginning of another, much more interesting journey into the world of international projects, when you apply in practice all that you read here.

All information contained in this toolkit was not necessarily meant to represent the only approach or they may not be entirely applicable to your project, organisation or institution. However, it is a collection of knowledge and experience acquired during many years of working on youth exchanges. You should take from this toolkit what you need, complement it, amend it and try something new. After all, we hope that it inspired you and motivated you to work with young people through intercultural exchange.

Before you finish reading, please remember the key messages once more:

- Your project proposal should answer the following questions: WHY do you think that it is necessary? WHAT do you want to achieve? HOW will you do that? HOW MUCH assets do you need for its implementation?
- Include your end users in planning process and implementation.

- The more effort you put into a detailed analysis of activities, the less effort will you need for calculating the budget.
- Do not transfer all responsibility for preparation of the project to one person – share tasks within the team.
- Approach the youth exchange location selection process seriously as well as choosing the time of project implementation because these decisions may have both positive and negative effects on your work.
- Put some effort into logistics – materials, technical equipment, transport, daily schedules, food, free time, reimbursement of costs etc.
- Pay attention to possible specific conditions for organising youth exchange between particular societies (e.g. between Serbia and Kosovo): do participants need visas or other documentation, are there any complicated procedures regarding circulation of the money, etc.
- Always bear in mind the goal that was the reason to initiate the youth exchange project at the first place; check regularly if your activities lead to this goal and change them accordingly if you see that your plan does not have the expected results.
- Think about the ways to use the potential created by your project – give your participants opportunity to keep working together after the official end of the project.

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