

October/November/December 2023

Fourth edition in 2023

Welcome to the new CURE Foundation Newsletter highlighting events and news from our community during the period October - December 2023 Enjoy reading and let's stay in touch!

Advocacy for Women's Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Since 2021, the CURE Foundation has been implementing the Advocacy for Women's Rights project in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The idea of the project emerged from our experience working during the COVID-19 pandemic, creating content that would enable women's rights advocates and activists to learn and hear various experiences, as well as to delegate topics related to the position of women and girls in Bosnia and Herzegovina. All our digital advocacy efforts were conducted live and broadcasted on our social media platforms (Facebook and YouTube). The broadcasting format allowed direct interaction with the audience through live comments and questions, to which our guests could directly respond. In 2023, a total of six digital advocacy events were conducted with a change in format from live broadcasting to a traditional podcast. The CURE Foundation will continue to create digital content in the future, which we hope will be interesting and innovative. Stay tuned!

Wishing to continue supporting advocacy processes for the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, we held an advocacy workshop on gender-based violence prevention with a focus on the role of

non-governmental organizations in Mostar. attended by 37 participants. During the workshop, we discussed activities and plans within the local community and the wider region of Mostar, as well as the need for collective action to prevent all forms of violence against women and girls. What is particularly pleasing is that organizations providing direct support to women who have survived violence participated in the workshop, some of which had not previously participated in our advocacy events. We are delighted that we organized our advocacy workshop in synergy with other significant initiatives to improve the status of women, such as the Women Citizens for Constitutional Reform Initiative.

"Feminist advocacy activities for economic empowerment and socio-economic support measures for most marginalized groups of women" form a separate part of this project. The goal of the project is the development of adequate strategies and the adoption of institutional measures for the economic empowerment of marginalized groups of women, with a special emphasis on women who have survived domestic violence in the FBiH.

Capacity Developmentof the CURE Foundation

It's about a long-term project that supports the capacity development of members of the CURE Foundation, as well as the implementation of stress prevention and burnout prevention programs. One such program aims to enhance

the visibility of our work and provide support to strengthen the capacities of individuals and organizations within the women's movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Economic Empowerment

The Commission for Gender Equality of the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina organized a thematic session on November 29, 2023, on the topic of "Care and Caregiving Economy". Professor Melika Husić-Mehmedović from the Economic Institute presented the "Baseline Study on Care and Caregiving Economy in Bosnia and Herzegovina". We had the opportunity to present the work of the CURE Foundation, the Women's Network of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and topics such as the care economy, the feminization of poverty, single-parent households, alimentary funds, as well as economic violence that is not commonly discussed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also addressed these topics with representatives of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We presented materials such as "Who Controls Your Wallet" and "Guide to Women's Economic Empowerment". This year, the CURE Foundation finalized "Economically Empowered", an advocacy platform for five cantons of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Una-Sana Canton, Posavina Canton, Canton 10, West Herzegovina Canton, and Central Bosnia Canton). About the advocacy platform from the perspective of the reviewers:

"Only economically independent woman is empowered and free. Lately, we have witnessed tragic cases of domestic violence resulting in fatalities, while political parties have done nothing but offer brief attention and a few sighs. What is even more destructive, women within political parties do not address or react to the insults and almost violent rhetoric of their party leaders, sending a message to the public that it is acceptable. Furthermore, political parties with a nationalist orientation promote women as homemakers and subordinate, discussing traditional values as if it were not the twenty-first century. I believe advocacy should start from there!"

Svetlana Cenić, Ph.D. in Economics, activist, and columnist.

"The Advocacy Platform is a step forward aimed at highlighting the importance of economic empowerment of women, especially those from marginalized groups and victims of gender-based violence, in order to prevent them from being exposed to various forms of violence. The Platform focuses on the responsibilities of the entities obligated to act, which is why a Plan has been drafted for five cantons. If the Advocacy Platform is used in the implementation of these obligations, we can expect tangible results. Therefore, I call upon all entities covered by the Advocacy Platform to use this document as a tool in their daily work."

dr. Jasminka Džumhur



Movement-Led Approach

As part of the Movement-Led Approach (MLA) project initiated by the Global Fund for Women (GFW), a Regional Gender Justice Movement Convening was organized in Herceg Novi, Montenegro, from October 16th to 20th, 2023. The convening brought together 44 representatives of the MLA Grant Allocation Committees, organizations supported under the MLA program from eight Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia, and Serbia), as well as MLA program

consultants for the Western Balkans and representatives of GFW. This regional meeting provided an opportunity for movement representatives from Balkan countries to network, connect, learn about the MLA program, and discuss the results of the Context Analysis of the Gender Justice Movement in the Western Balkans. Experiential lessons related to GFW grant allocation practices were shared, and discussions were held on how to measure the impact we achieve in the communities where we work.

Capacity Building of the Women's Network of BiH

In 2023, the focus of the Women's Network of Bosnia and Herzegovina was on strengthening the capacities of its members through work on strategic planning and intergenerational knowledge transfer. Self-care was another aspect we worked on, especially in the context of addressing activist burnout and lack of motivation to continue working on improving women's rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During this period, within the Women's Network of Bosnia and Herzegovina, we addressed many challenging issues such as the lack of solidarity, the absence of collective action, and the shrinking space for women's organizations in our society in general.

Our annual advocacy conference was entirely dedicated to the issue of violence against women and girls in Bosnia and Herzegovina, focusing on its most severe form - femicide. In

addition to members of the Women's Network of Bosnia and Herzegovina, representatives of organizations who have actively worked on amending criminal laws in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the past period, organized protests in their local communities, and representatives of the legislative authorities from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina attended the conference. We are particularly proud that our friends from the Women's Network of Croatia attended the conference via video link, sharing the experiences of women's organizations from our neighbouring country regarding femicide.

Our website www.zenskamreza.ba continues to provide the latest news related to the quality of life of women and girls in Bosnia and Herzegovina, serving as a resource for those seeking more information.



Association Center for Integrative Inclusion of Roma and Romani Women OTAHARIN Bijeljina, the Association of Romani Women Bolja budućnost from the City of Tuzla, the Jadar Women's Association, and the Foundation for the

The CURE Foundation, in collaboration with the

Advancement of Education and Culture Izvor nade Ilidža/Sarajevo, organized a Peace Camp from November 9th to 12th, 2023, at Hotel Zlača in Busovača.

At the Peace Camp, we addressed topics such as stereotypes and peace activism through the game "Who Am I?", communication and communication skills, dynamics of relationships among young people, stages of collaboration processes, identities, and attitudes towards conflict. A workshop on online activism and cyber space titled "Safe on the Internet" was also held. Through these workshops, we aimed to encourage young people to learn, remember, and think critically to adapt to all the challenges they face in their daily lives.

Together with Otaharin, we conducted a workshop with children and young people on the topic of International Day of Peace, where children had the opportunity to watch a thematic film and creatively make posters on this topic, leading to an interactive discussion. Furthermore, Children's Week was celebrated in October in Bijeljina. The goals of Children's Week have always been guided by love for children and a desire to provide them with a safe environment,

Bijeljina / Living Library, Ilidža / Workshop and Rose Planting, Kalesija

stimulate their creativity, support their learning and development, and teach them about unity and friendship.

Together with the Association of Romani Women Bolja budućnost from the City of Tuzla, a workshop and street action were held with young activists who are making efforts to build peace. Discussions were held on peace activism, stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination. These activities were carried out jointly with young people to experience the support of their community.

In collaboration with the Foundation Izvor nade from Ilidža, an activity titled "Living Libraries" was organized dedicated to the theme "All You Need is Desire". Peace is a state of complete well-being. It's the opportunity to enjoy human rights. It's about developing oneself as a person, nurturing one's interests, and fulfilling one's dreams. This is precisely what we aimed to convey to students through the first meeting of the "Living Library".

In collaboration with the Youth Association "TRIK" from Kalesija, workshops were held for young people on how to support and better understand each other, and how to learn to live in peace. They also organized a joint action of planting autumn roses in memory of the victims of femicide.

For a Life Without Violence -United against Violence against Women



Meeting "United against Violence", Ilidža

During the three-month project, a series of activities were conducted with the aim of addressing the increase in violence against women and femicide in Bosnia and Herzegovina and creating a framework for future action. The project began with the participation of women from Bosnia and Herzegovina at the XVIII Festival of Women's Art and Activism PitchWise. The festival attracted significant interest from participants, especially citizens of Sarajevo, highlighting the importance of such events in promoting art, women's rights, and combating violence. Following the festival, a three-day meeting titled "United against Violence" was held, bringing together relevant participants to present their initiatives, proposals, and previous work with victims of violence, which is particularly important considering the recent increase in violence against women and femicide in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The main theme of the meeting focused on the legislative framework, with around 35 representatives from legislative bodies, institutions, civil society organizations, international institutions, journalists, and professors from faculties agreeing on recommendations for future action. The recommendations emphasized the importance of ensuring transparency in working on proposals and initiatives for amending laws, including the Criminal Code of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, as well as the active involvement of relevant actors from the governmental, non-governmental, and academic sectors.

During the project, successful implementation of digital promotion was achieved through recording and broadcasting three podcasts on responding to violence, connecting for the future, and past efforts. These podcasts represent a recognizable digital endorsement of the CURE Foundation. https://fondacijacure.org/video/

Furthermore, a document (policy paper) titled "Girl Power Raises Its Voices" was developed. consolidating data on murdered women, while the awareness-raising campaign included billboards and a documentary film about the PitchWise festival. Street actions were organized on November 11, 2023, in Sarajevo and in 10 other cities in collaboration with the Women's Network of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which garnered significant media attention, as well as a street action in front of the SCC in Sarajevo on November 25, 2023, emphasizing the increased rate of violence against women, femicide, and institutional irresponsibility. Overall, the project achieved its objectives through event organization, education, media presence, and providing concrete recommendations for action, encouraging not only raising awareness but also concrete steps towards addressing the issue of violence against women in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Women Citizens for Constitutional Reform Initiative advocates for a Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina that ensures greater protection of human rights and freedoms, with a specific emphasis on a gender perspective. The Initiative has been launched by activists and organizations from across Bosnia and Herzegovina, aiming to inspire all citizens to utilize their knowledge, energy, and willingness to collaborate, contributing to the achievement of the Initiative's goals.

In the previous period, we supported the "Nijedna više" (None More) protests, continued advocacy activities, and held a meeting with Rejhan Dervišević (member of the Gender Equality Commission of the House of Representatives of the Parliament of BiH) and Biljana Petković (member of the National Assembly of RS). We participated in the CURE podcast "Digital Advocacy - 10 Years of Initiative," and the column "Do Women Have Their Place in the Constitution?" was published in Nezavisne novine. We also organized an online conference "Gender Equality in the Constitution of BiH - Obstacles and Opportunities" and provided

the conclusions to all representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH.

In synergy with the Advocacy for Women's Rights project conducted by the CURE Foundation, an advocacy workshop on the role of local non-governmental organizations in preventing violence against women was organized in Mostar. Representatives of the Initiative of Citizens of Mostar, who are members of the Women Citizens for Constitutional Reform Initiative and the Women's Network of Bosnia and Herzegovina, selflessly provided support for the realization of this workshop.

This workshop marked the end of activities within the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

Additionally, in 2023, the Women Citizens for Constitutional Reform Initiative welcomed two new full-fledged member organizations: the Banja Luka Center for Human Rights and the Initiative of Citizens of Mostar.

Peace with a Woman's Face

The CURE Foundation is one of thirteen women's activist organizations that are members of the Peace with a Woman's Face Initiative, led by the Lara Foundation from Bijeljina and the Horizonti Association from Tuzla. As part of this initiative, on December 8, 2023, the CURE Foundation organized a street action to commemorate the

Day of Remembrance for Women Victims of War. By marking December 8th, attention is drawn to the unjust treatment of women who are victims of war, who do not have an adequate place in collective memory, without monuments or a day dedicated to remembering and honoring them.

16 Days of Activism

The CURE Foundation marked the beginning of the global campaign "16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence" with a street action titled "Girl Power raises Its Voice against Wars, Femicide, and Violence!" on November 25, 2023, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls. With this action, we drew attention to the victims of femicide (the killing of women) and to the violence against women that occurs every second on the planet, often resulting in murder.

Members of the Women's Network BiH joined the street action, as did individuals who wanted to send a message that we, as peace activists, do

not cease to focus on the importance and urgency of stopping all armed conflicts, as well as all violent practices that culminate in femicide. This year, we faced devastating cases of femicide, further highlighting the urgency and necessity of finding systemic solutions to stop gender-based violence.

It's time for everyone to finally stand up against wars, femicides, and violence! It's time for world leaders to step up to protect the lives, rights, and freedoms of people! It's time for Bosnia and Herzegovina to adopt evidence-based measures to protect women and girls!





Internship and Volunteering

We highlight some notable events that further strengthen our mission and unity: The Book Club has officially started! Enthusiastic volunteers have gathered to explore the world of literature together and share their experiences. Meetings will be held once a month, providing us with the opportunity for deep discussions, idea exchange, and discovering new authors.

During meetings, our volunteers discuss their perspectives in a very creative way, making this experience unique. Moreover, their innovative ideas have already begun shaping the future activities of the CURE Foundation. We proudly highlight their dedication to creating new projects that will support our goals and have a positive impact on the community. The CURE Foundation has around 20 active volunteers who contribute to the work and growth of the foundation. Regular meetings and communication via Viber group happen almost daily, and we are here to support all their initiatives and proposals.



EuroMed Feminist Initiative

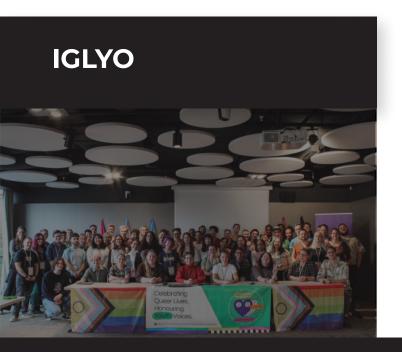
The CURE Foundation is a member of the EuroMed Feminist Initiative (EFI), an advocacy network that encompasses women's rights organizations from both shores of the Mediterranean. EFI advocates for gender equality and women's rights as inseparable from the building of democracy and citizenship, political

solutions to all conflicts, and the right of people to self-determination. At the beginning of November, we had a meeting of the members of this initiative where we reached an agreement on adopting a strategic plan for future actions. A member of the CURE Foundation currently holds the position of chairperson of the network's board.

ERA - LGBTI Equal Rights Association for Western Balkans and Turkey

ERA - Alliance for Equal Rights of LGBTI Persons in the Western Balkans and Turkey is a regional network dedicated to advancing the rights of LGBTI individuals (lesbians, gays, bisexual persons, transgender persons, and persons with gender-specific identities) in the Western Balkans and Turkey. The organization's main objectives

include combating discrimination, violence, and human rights violations against LGBTI individuals, as well as promoting an inclusive society where all individuals have equal rights and opportunities, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression.



A member of the CURE Foundation attended the annual conference held in Podgorica from October 19th to 23rd, 2023.

IGLYO (International LGBTQI+ Youth and Student Organization) is a global network and advocacy organization focused on promoting the rights and well-being of LGBTQI+ youth and students. IGLYO's mission is to empower LGBTQI+ young people and student activists by providing them with a platform for collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and advocacy for positive change.

CURE - DIGITAL PRODUCTION



Digital advocacy broadcasted on our social media profiles is slowly becoming a trademark of the Cure Foundation. Whether it's a live event or a podcast, we are thrilled to have the opportunity to introduce the wider public to the remarkable women of Bosnia and Herzegovina who are pushing (invisible) boundaries and working

directly to improve the lives of women and girls in their local communities. We are constantly working to enhance our internal capacities and innovate in the digital segment of feminist activism.

CURE - ONLINE CAMPAIGNS STOP VIOLENCE - STOP FEMICIDE

As a contribution to the global campaign 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, members of the CURE Foundation and volunteers created an online campaign that ran

from November 25th to December 10th, 2023. Our friends from Međugorje, Tuzla, Skelani, Konjević Polje, Cazin, Mostar, Bijeljina, and Lukavac also joined the campaign.



On October 11, 2023, in Sarajevo, as well as in ten other cities across Bosnia and Herzegovina, protests against femicide were organized. These protests saw the unified stance of women's organizations from across Bosnia and Herzegovina being presented to the public

Protests are being held because 48% of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina have experienced sexual and gender-based violence. Because in 84% of cases, violence in family and intimate relationships is never reported. Because around 70% of investigations into cases reported to the relevant prosecutors are terminated. Because, due to lenient penal policies, many of them, their children, and their closest ones are exposed to constant and brutal violence. A hell that ends in beating to death - live. Because we are tired of watching the number of victims increase month by month, while violence against women and girls in general is perceived either as a private problem or as something for which they are "solely responsible", because they have a "sharp

tongue", because their "neckline is too open", because they "act smart", because they "chose the wrong man", and "it's their fault"! They are not to blame! The BLAME lies, first and foremost, in the deeply rooted system of inequality in society – the widely nurtured patriarchal consciousness that considers women and all "others" as lower-value human beings, objects to be possessed, subjects to be oppressed and pushed to the lowest socio-economic level – the first targets of excessive abuse of power and use of force. At home, on the streets, in the workplace, in public spaces. They feel nowhere safe. GUILTY are the institutions and policies that allow this. GUILTY is the public that permits it. Therefore, we DEMAND an urgent and effective response from responsible institutions at all levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and a fundamental change in all social spheres where such beliefs, forms of consciousness, and practices are encouraged, covered up, or tacitly approved. Every subsequent femicide case is the RESPONSIBILITY of the entire society. And that's why we've stated: NOT ONE MORE!



CURE - ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Events where we provided support and participated in processes

Members of the CURE Foundation held workshops on gender-based violence in schools as part of the Movement 1325 organized by the Association Forgotten Children of War.

Futurfem: The future of women's football in Bosnia and Herzegovina!

Activists from the CURE Foundation provided support to the conference organized by Sportex Agency. The goal of this conference was to transform the football culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina, ensuring that women's football receives the necessary attention, support, and

resources. The conference served as a source of inspiration for young girls dreaming of sporting success.

Additionally, the importance of gender equality in sports and social responsibility within the football community was emphasized. A member of the CURE Foundation also spoke on one of the panels. About 40 individuals actively involved in sports in Bosnia and Herzegovina attended the conference.

CURE - Other Support and Collaboration Activities

HBS Conference in Skopje

In the period from October 4th to 6th, 2023, a representative of the CURE Foundation participated in a conference organized by HBS in Skopje, which focused on combating the anti-gender movement.

Event with Eve Ensler in Niš

On November 20, 2023, members of the CURE Foundation team had the opportunity to attend a discussion with V Ensler (formerly known as Eve Ensler) at the Art55 gallery in Niš. V is a feminist author of the dramatic work "The Vagina Monologues," which has been read and performed in 140 countries worldwide. She is also the founder of the global V-Day campaign and "One Billion Rising" movement against violence against women. Rada Borić and Tatjana Nikolić moderated the discussion on the origins of social movements, the power of women's unity, and the influence of art on change.

At the very beginning, V spoke about when and why she decided to change her name, and she talked about the disconnect with her body that lasted her entire life and how two shocking events helped her connect with reality, to physically start experiencing herself as a human being.

V also talked about her recently published novel "The Apology" (2019).

The dedication of this book reads: "To every woman still awaiting an apology."

With these words, V introduced us to a book that is indescribably powerful and moving, poignant and revolutionary, significant for the entire social order and consciousness, as much as for each individual woman and man. "The Apology" is, therefore, a novel in the form of a letter. And that letter is an apology. In this novel, V talks about her own traumatic experience that absolutely determined and sealed her life. She was sexually and psychologically abused by her father as a five-year-old girl, and throughout her teenage years and youth. Since her father was long dead, V had to think of an apology herself. And that in the form of an apology letter written by her father, in the first person, addressing her from the grave, from limbo.

https://lgbti.ba/izvinjenje-eve-ensler-pismo-svakoj-zeni-koja-jos-uvijek-ceka-ispriku/

Training on Inclusive Oversight of the Security Sector

A member of the CURE Foundation attended the first module of the training on inclusive oversight of the security sector organized by the Center for Security Studies in Sarajevo. The training, con-

sisting of four modules, provides knowledge and experiences on democratic oversight and the involvement of the civil sector in security policies and programs.

Regional Conference "United Against Violence - Enough!"

At the invitation of Minister of Justice Albulena Haxhiu, organized by the Office of the President of the Republic of Kosovo and the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kosovo in Pristina, a member of the CURE Foundation participated in the conference and spoke on the panel: "The Role of Civil Society in Advocacy and Policy Making in the Field of Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence".

FemFest Lukavac - The first festival

Our support to our dear friends from the Association Srce i duša from Prokosovići was the reason why we attended their first regional festival of women's activism, entrepreneurship, and ecology. We were panelists, sang together, learned to cook halva, and visited local excursion

sites. We are very proud to have somehow inspired women's organizations in small local communities to start their own local women's festivals with the aim of motivating women to actively engage in all social currents.

30 years of the Autonomous Women's Center in Belgrade

Our friends from Belgrade celebrated 30 years of fruitful work - and of course - we joined the celebration! Connecting and cross-border cooperation in eliminating all forms of violence

and discrimination against women and girls is only possible if we all truly focus our efforts in that direction.

Western Balkans Fund

A meeting of partner organizations of the Western Balkans Fund was held in Durrës, Albania, attended by a member of the team from the CURE Foundation. The meeting was an exceptional opportunity to strengthen regional partnerships and continue to work on enhancing the capacity of the civil sector in the Western Balkans.



During the past three months, the CURE Foundation participated in over 20 activities organized by other organizations, where we had the opportunity to network and connect with over 300 individuals active in the field of women's rights in Bosnia and the region. We took part in various events, workshops, conferences, roundtable discussions, including: participation and promotion of research on violence at the Faculty of Political Sciences, celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Alternative Center for Girls in Kruševac, celebrating 20 years of work by UŽ Jadar in Konjević Polje, promoting a play and exhibition for the opening and closing of the 16 Days of Activism campaign organized by UN Women, presentation of the Map of Rights and Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly and their caregivers in Canton Sarajevo organized by UN Women and the Swedish Embassy, a public event commemorating eighty years since the first session of the Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, presentation of the publication "Alternative Report of Civil Society Organizations on the Implementation of the CEDAW Convention" organized by the Helsinki Citizens' Parliament Banja Luka, training on inclusive oversight of the security sector organized by NIHOS, the Women's Approach to Justice in the Western Balkans meeting organized by the COE, marking World Romani Language Day organized by the Association of Romani Women "Bolja budućnost" Tuzla in cooperation with the Roma Women's Network "Uspjeh" a "Financial Management" training as part of USAID training, a roundtable by the World Bank on the Gender Equality Strategy, a conference on security challenges in FBiH organized by the House of Representatives of the Parliament of FBiH, the "Voice in Advocating Change and Combating Disinformation in the Media" conference, a conference presenting the results of research on the prevalence of sexual extortion in society organized by the Helsinki Citizens' Parliament Banja Luka, and other activities.

FOLLOW US AND JOIN US!

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

Global Fund for Women (GFW); Fondacija TRAG/Fondacija OAK; Sigrid Rausing Trust; Women's World Day of Prayer (WWDP) -German Committee; Western Balkans Fund; Kvinna till Kvinna (KTK)/Helsinki Committee For Human Rights; Heart and Hurt Fund; Heinrich Böll Stiftung;

Please write to us at info@fondacijacure.org if you would like to be added to the CURE mailing list or if you would like more information about our actions and initiatives.