

# CURE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

First Edition

January – April 2024

Dear friends, collaborators, and supporters,

We invite you to read our overview of activities and achievements over the past few months. From panel discussions and educational workshops to significant meetings, we are proud to have actively contributed to the community and advocated for women's rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This newsletter highlights our new projects such as the "Feminist Time Travel," an exploration of the feminist movement, and activities that strengthen the network and support women's rights. We have also focused on combating gender-based violence through two new projects aimed at youth.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Your support is crucial to our success, and together, we can achieve much more.

Sincerely, The Foundation CURE Team



# New Strategic Plan for the Period 2024-2028

This plan is the result of dedicated work and collaboration, focusing on several key areas that we consider priorities for achieving our mission. Our goal is to further empower women, advance their rights, and create sustainable societal changes through this plan. The strategic plan encompasses the following objectives:

- Strengthening women's voices and rights through robust advocacy campaigns and legal reforms
- Promoting holistic security and intersectionality in action
- Empowering women through education, peace activism, and political participation
- Building capacity and supporting sustainable impact through collaboration and data-driven research.

**We plan to achieve our strategic goals through the implementation of the following projects in 2024:**

## Research on the Fragmentation of the Feminist Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In 2024, Foundation CURE began a new collaboration cycle with the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation through the project “Research on the Fragmentation of the Feminist Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina.” This project aims to open discussions about the diverse perspectives and identities within the women's and feminist movement in our country and define the common values that unite us.

Through a series of conversations with movement stakeholders, we are exploring topics that divide women's rights activists and formulating the shared values that bring us together. Our goal is to create a space for feminist activists to better understand the roots of the lack of solidarity and empathy within the movement and to find ways to turn our differences into strengths.

As part of the project, on March 5, 2024, we organized a meeting with organizations from other cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina that hold International Women's Day marches. We exchanged information and suggestions for a press release and began preparations for a photo and video campaign, which we successfully carried out.

Additionally, on March 27, 2024, we held a meeting with activists from the wider Sarajevo region to discuss important topics for the International Women's Day march in Sarajevo.

This project will help us recognize the issues that unite us and find elements of common action for the betterment of all.



## Feminist Time Travel

Foundation CURE has initiated and is implementing a new project called "Feminist Time Travel." This project runs from January 1 to December 31, 2024, and offers women a completely new concept of self-care.

Through this project, women will have the opportunity to share their personal stories from the past and discuss the protection mechanisms they used to maintain their mental and physical health. In collaboration with psychologists, we will work on addressing past issues, including retraumatization caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

Special attention will be given to young women in Bosnia and Herzegovina who suffer from transgenerational PTSD, which is often overlooked. This project will offer mechanisms for protecting the mental and physical health of women and work on accepting trauma through psychological processes.

We look forward to providing support and strength to women, helping them overcome challenges and build a better future.

## Stronger Together

Through institutional support during the implementation of this project, we are committed to enhancing the safety and equality of all women. Our goal is to create an environment where comprehensive care, informed advocacy, and sustainable community changes become a reality.

In addition to addressing key issues, we prioritize self-care and the well-being of activists, ensuring they receive the support needed to achieve lasting social change. Through this project, we work on empowering the community, promoting equality, and creating a safer environment for everyone.



## Strengthening the Capacities of the Women's Network of BiH

The project "Strengthening the Capacities of the Women's Network of BiH" runs from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, and aims to enhance the capacities of women's rights defenders from Bosnia and Herzegovina, making them indispensable participants in all negotiations related to the quality of life in our country. Women's rights defenders play a crucial role in providing social support, often offering services that the state cannot.

However, we are frequently absent when important topics are discussed and do not have the opportunity to present our cases. Due to the reduced space for women's activism and the lack of funds for women's organizations, women's rights defenders often do not have the chance to participate in important processes such as the UN 2030 Agenda and UNSDGs.

Through this project, we will provide technical support to women's organizations and women's rights defenders to acquire new knowledge and define perspectives on international issues that directly affect the lives of women in our local context. We hope to establish new communication channels with international women's rights defenders, expand our network regionally and internationally, and actively participate in developing plans and programs with lasting impacts.

One of the project's goals is to ensure space—both physical and digital—for women's rights defenders, members of the Women's Network of BiH, to increase our

public visibility and present our perspective on issues affecting women and girls in our country. As part of the activities related to strengthening the Women's Network of BiH, a meeting titled "Sarajevo Feminist-Activist Story" was held on January 30, 2024, with 20 activists from Sarajevo and the broader region. The meeting aimed to open space for discussion and coordination of joint events in the wider Sarajevo area, concerning the feminist-activist perspective on women's rights, violence against women, femicide, and environmental issues.

Additionally, in February 2024, an internal call was issued for member organizations' activities during the month celebrating International Women's Day—March 8. The Coordination Committee of the Women's Network of BiH awarded five small grants of 500 KM each.

Members of the Women's Network of BiH had the opportunity to visit and exchange ideas with the Women to Women Foundation from Malta from March 24 to 27, 2024. During the visit to Malta, we realized that the country faces serious challenges related to femicide, and the Women to Women Foundation is actively working on strengthening local capacities for effective violence prevention. We believe that directly connecting and strengthening ties between us and the women from Malta will elevate the level of regional networking in advocating for the prevention of all forms of violence against women.



## Safe Space for Youth



In February 2024, Foundation CURE launched the project "Safe Space for Youth," supported by the Regional Program on Local Democracy in the Western Balkans 2 (ReLoaD2).

The project's goal is to empower high school students in the municipality of Novo Sarajevo by encouraging their active participation and creating a safe environment. Through activities such as workshops, online campaigns, and film screenings, young people will gain fundamental knowledge about peer violence, cyberbullying, and other forms of violence and discrimination.

In the first two months of the project's implementation, key meetings were held with representatives from UNDP, the Municipality of Novo Sarajevo, and local schools. Workshops began in April, and surveys completed by students confirmed an alarming state of violence among youth.

In the upcoming period, workshops are planned at the Economics School and the School for Wood Design and Environment.

# EmpowerHER: Empowering Young Women to Combat Gender-Based Violence



Training of Trainers, Igman, March 22 – 24, 2024

Foundation CURE, in collaboration with UNICEF Bosnia and Herzegovina, is implementing the “EmpowerHER” project. This six-month program, running from February to August 2024, is designed to educate and empower young women to recognize and combat gender-based violence and to share their knowledge through workshops in their communities. The project is especially significant in rural areas of BiH, where gender-based violence is often a taboo topic.

From March 22 to 24, 2024, a Training of Trainers (ToT) was held with 13 participants from Sarajevo, Mostar, Zenica, Tuzla, and Prnjavor. Through an interactive approach, the participants covered key topics such as biases, stereotypes, discrimination, types of violence, gender and sex, and digital security. After the training, two online meetings were held to provide additional support in conducting workshops.

The first independent workshops were held in Tuzla and Prnjavor on April 19, 2024, with 16 participants, and in Zenica on April 30, 2024, with 17 participants. Upcoming workshops are planned in Mostar, Zenica, and Sarajevo.

During the ToT training, participants created messages for an online campaign. The first message was published on April 24 on Foundation CURE's social media, reaching 690 users and 749 impressions.

This project aims to promote the values of equality, non-discrimination, and the right to a safe life, with a particular focus on empowering young women as leaders in the fight against gender-based violence. Through these activities, we believe we will achieve a long-term positive impact on the community, promoting tolerance, understanding, and respect for human rights.



## Women Citizens for Constitutional Reform Initiative

Foundation CURE, in collaboration with the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, is implementing the project "Women Citizens for Constitutional Reform Initiative V." This initiative, started in 2013, aims to promote a constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina that ensures greater protection of human rights and freedoms, with a special focus on the gender perspective.

The project runs from February 1 to December 31, 2024, and brings together activists and organizations from across BiH. Their goal is to

encourage all citizens to use their knowledge, energy, and willingness to cooperate in achieving the initiative's objectives.

One of the key steps of this initiative is submitting a complaint to the Institution of the Ombudsman for Human Rights of Bosnia and Herzegovina due to the lack of gender-sensitive language and the inclusion of gender components in the BiH Constitution.

## Gender Justice Movement in the Western Balkans

Foundation CURE, in partnership with the Global Fund for Women, is implementing the project "Gender Justice Movement in the Western Balkans." This project is supported by the Global Fund for Women through their Gender Justice Initiative, which focuses on supporting women's rights movements through flexible funding and resources to maximize impact and drive significant change.

The Global Fund for Women has initiated collaboration with the gender justice movement in the Western Balkans to support local feminist movements in addressing the challenges posed by anti-gender movements and creating lasting, meaningful social changes. The partnership with Foundation CURE allows the Global Fund for Women to more effectively address regional issues and strengthen local feminist movements.

## CURE - ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE PAST PERIOD

### Visit from the "Women with Books" Association from Mostar



On January 16 of this year, Enisa Bukvić and Lidija Sejdinović, representatives of the "Women with Books" Association from Mostar, visited us. We discussed collaboration and preparations for the second annual "Women with Books" festival, which will be held in Mostar with the aim of promoting literature and the arts among women.

### Meeting with the French Embassy Representative

Anaïs Girard, Cooperation Attaché at the French Embassy in Sarajevo, visited Foundation CURE. We discussed potential collaboration and support for our activities focused on gender equality and women's rights.

### World Bank Presentation

On March 15, 2024, a representative from Foundation CURE participated in a World Bank presentation on the Country Economic Memorandum and took part in a panel discussion on energy transition.

### Meeting with Representatives of the Tuzla Community Foundation

On February 28, 2024, we hosted representatives from the Tuzla Community Foundation at our office. We discussed our projects and explored opportunities for future collaboration, emphasizing the importance of local and regional connectivity in achieving our shared goals.





Radni sastanak na Trebeviću / Susret sa mladima iz Švedske

## Working Meeting at Trebević

On February 22 and 23, representatives of Foundation CURE participated in a working meeting at Trebević, organized by the Swedish feminist foundation Kvinna till Kvinna and the Media Center Sarajevo. We discussed the rise in femicide, the narrowing space for journalistic and activist work, and strategies for a joint response to negative social phenomena.

## Training on Protecting Women Journalists from Online Threats

On March 27, a training organized by BH Novinari was held in Mostar, focusing on protecting the safety of women journalists from online threats. The training covered legal and institutional frameworks for combating online violence, gender-based violence, and other forms of cybercrime.

## Visit from Swedish Students

In January, we hosted Swedish students from Global College as part of an exchange organized by the Institute for Youth Development KULT. We discussed topics including women's economic empowerment, maternity leave policies, reasons for youth emigration, and the rise of right-wing movements in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



## Visit to the JADAR Women's Association in Konjević Polje

At the beginning of the year, we participated in an event organized by the JADAR Women's Association in Konjević Polje, preparing ćetenija and bringing together over a hundred women from across the former Yugoslavia to preserve this traditional Bosnian delicacy from being forgotten.

## Commemoration in Bijeljina

On January 20, we attended a commemoration and the unveiling of a memorial dedicated to migrants who went missing or perished at our natural borders. This poignant event at a small city cemetery in Bijeljina reminded us of the importance of solidarity and compassion during difficult times.

## Meeting with UN Women

In early February, we had the opportunity to meet with UN Women representatives in BiH: Jo-Anne Bishop, Edita Miftari, and Mersiha Zulčić. We exchanged experiences and ideas and discussed potential collaboration on projects such as International Women's Day activities, the PitchWise Festival of Women's Art and Activism, and activities within the Global Campaign of 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

Konjević Polje, Joint Cooking / Bijeljina, Remembering Migrants / Sarajevo, Meeting with UN Women





## Public Presentation of the Film and Book "The Women's Court – The Foča Case"

We attended this significant event organized by Women in Black and the Autonomous Women's Center, with support from feminist groups from BiH (Horizonti, Tuzla and Foundation CURE, Sarajevo), Montenegro (Center for Women's and Peace Education – Anima, Kotor), Croatia (Center for Women War Victims, Zagreb), and artistic-activist collectives from Belgrade and Novi Sad. Following the film screening, a discussion was held with survivors and activists.

## Educational Program on Sexual Violence in Wars

In February 2024, we participated in the Educational Program titled "A Feminist Approach to the Issue of Sexual Violence in the Yugoslav Wars: For a Culture of Remembrance and Responsibility." Organized in collaboration with Women in Black and the Autonomous Women's Center, the program covered critical topics related to systemic sexual violence experienced by women at the end of the 20th century. Aiming to raise awareness and empower survivors, the program emphasized the importance of a culture of remembrance and responsibility for preventing future crimes.

## Presentation at the Youth Forum of Naša Stranka

On February 13, 2024, at the invitation of the Youth Forum of Naša Stranka, a representative of Foundation CURE presented our work. The focus was on the issue of femicide in Bosnia and Herzegovina and our activities aimed at protecting women's rights and promoting social equality.

Belgrade, Screening of "The Women's Court – The Foča Case" / Radmilovci, Educational Workshop



## Protests in Belgrade

On February 24, 2024, we participated in protests in Belgrade to mark the anniversary of the beginning of the aggression against Ukraine and the war in Gaza. Our presence supported solidarity and called for peace in all conflicts.

## Strategic Planning in Konjic

From March 6 to 7, 2024, we attended the Strategic Planning of the Initiative for Monitoring European Integration of BiH in Konjic, where we worked on developing strategies to improve the European integration of our country.

## Donation for Girls from SOS Children's Village

We handed over a donation to the representatives of INFO Skripta, intended to support girls leaving the SOS Children's Village as they start their independent lives.

## Panel Discussion in Zenica

We attended a panel discussion in Zenica at the invitation of the association Naša djeca. The entire event focused on combating violence against women.

Protests in Belgrade / Donation for Girls from SOS Children's Village, Sarajevo, March 2024





## Lecture at the Faculty of Medicine in Sarajevo

On March 9, 2024, at the invitation of Emina Šehić from InciSioN BiH, we gave a lecture at the event "You are a Woman, Violence is Not Your Story" in the amphitheater of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Sarajevo. We presented our work and the importance of empowering women, emphasizing how personal contributions can change the situation in Bosnian society.

## Participation in the B&H WBF Chairmanship Event

We participated in the B&H WBF Chairmanship in Office event at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sarajevo, where we discussed important regional topics.

## Press Conference and the "Women's Caravan for Justice and Reconciliation" Project

On March 27, 2024, in Sarajevo, we attended a press conference where the initiative "Women's Caravan for Justice and Reconciliation" was presented. The project aims to increase the visibility and involvement of women in processes of dealing with the past and promoting criminal justice.

## Daffodil Day in Sarajevo

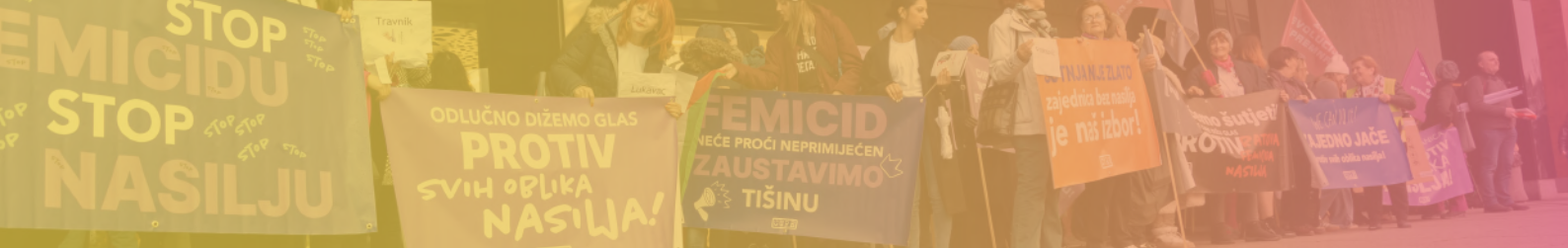
On March 30, 2024, we joined the "Daffodil Day" event organized by the Association "Renesansa" in front of the Cathedral in Sarajevo, supporting the fight against breast cancer.

## Visit from a Chinese Student

We hosted Fushuo Wang, a student from China. During his visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Fushuo had the opportunity to meet several organizations, talk with citizens, and share his impressions of the beauty of our country and the lack of optimism.

## Other Events and Activities

We participated in consultative meetings of the Ministry for Human Rights of BiH, training on the use of social media to promote the work of CSOs, the regional conference "We Are All Heroines," and the UN Women event on the care economy.



Sarajevo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Sarajevo, Faculty of Medicine



Sarajevo, Press Conference



## HIGHLIGHTS:



# March for International Women's Day in Sarajevo



In 2024, the CURE Foundation organized a march for International Women's Day in Sarajevo. At this march, activists, feminists, and all allies stood together in resistance against discrimination, violence, wars, and poverty.

**"I, an activist and feminist, stand on the line of resistance. Resistance against the oppression of patriarchy, hatred, discrimination, violence, and wars. I stand against the patriarchal system with my entire being and body,"** declared the activists of the CURE Foundation.



The march emphasized the importance of collective action and solidarity, highlighting that a culture of remembrance and responsibility is crucial for building a more just society.





# Public Statement by the Women's Network of BiH: WHEN THOSE WHO PROTECT THE LAW BEGIN TO KILL WOMEN – WHAT ARE WE TO THE STATE?!"

The Women's Network of BiH expressed outrage following the murder of a woman on February 7, 2024, in Tuzla, committed by a police officer using official firearm. In their public response, the Women's Network of BiH emphasizes that this tragic event is yet another indication of insecurity and irresponsible behavior by institutions towards women.

It has been six months since the murder of N.Z. in Gračanica, and the responsible institutions have still not publicly presented the measures taken to prevent further murders of women. The Women's Network of BiH demands an urgent and thorough review of laws and practices related to firearm control, especially among state officials, and a strict enforcement of the laws on weapons and ammunition.

Highlighting the need for safer public spaces and stricter control over armaments, the Women's Network of BiH calls on authorities at all levels to take appropriate measures to ensure a safe environment for all citizens. They also demand the development of local security policies and the inclusion of the civil sector in monitoring security agencies.

*For more information, please visit <https://zenskamreza.ba> or contact them at [info@zenskamreza.ba](mailto:info@zenskamreza.ba).*

## FOLLOW US AND JOIN US!

[www.fondacijacure.org](http://www.fondacijacure.org)



## 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, UNICEF, EU, UNDP, Novo Sarajevo Municipality

**Please contact us at [info@fondacijacure.org](mailto:info@fondacijacure.org) if you would like to be added to the CURE mailing list or if you need more information about our actions and initiatives.**

