

# CURE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

First Edition January – March 2025

Dear friends, partners and supporters,

We invite you to read the overview of our activities and achievements from the first three months of 2025. We are proud of our contribution to the community and our continued commitment to women's rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this issue, we present key projects, the most important events from the previous period, and the activities carried out.

Thank you for being part of our story. Your support is the foundation of our success – together, we continue building a more just and equal society.

CURE Foundation team





## Current Strategic Plan for the 2024–2026 Period

In light of the changes in the social climate affecting civil society organisations, particularly those working on human rights and freedoms, the CURE Foundation held a strategic meeting at the end of January 2025 with the aim of mapping out topics that have become particularly relevant over the past six months since the adoption of the current Strategic Plan.

In the second half of 2024, Bosnia and Herzegovina witnessed a rise in anti-gender activities, culminating at the end of January 2025. In this context, the CURE Foundation continues to mobilise and articulate a strong feminist response to the growing repression, defending equality that is becoming increasingly inaccessible to many – especially girls, women, and people of diverse sexual and gender identities.

At a time when already acquired and legally guaranteed rights and freedoms are increasingly being questioned and rolled back, the CURE Foundation remains committed to resisting policies and practices aimed at reversing social progress and undermining the achieved level of democratic values. We are unwavering in our

fight against discrimination on any personal grounds and for full equality in all areas of public and private life – including the right to education, equal pay for equal work, healthcare, sexual and reproductive health, and a life free from violence in any form.

This year we mark 20 years of work, activism, and collective action! To commemorate this milestone, one of the upcoming editions of our newsletter will highlight the most significant achievements that have shaped our journey so far.

In line with the Strategic Plan, throughout 2025 we plan to implement a series of activities and projects that will contribute to the realisation of our strategic goals.



# PROJECTS

## A Feminist Perspective of Caring for Yourself and the Community Around You

### About the Project

From 1st January to 31st December 2025, the CURE Foundation is implementing the project *A Feminist Perspective of Caring for Yourself and the Community Around You*, with the support of the Women's World Day of Prayer (WWDP) – German Committee. The project focuses on empowering women in processes of societal building in Bosnia and Herzegovina, peace initiatives, improving quality of life, and establishing more just and gender-equal relations within families and society.

Special emphasis is placed on marking the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement and the 25th anniversary of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, with a focus on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. Project activi-

ties promote the active involvement of women in conflict prevention and resolution, peace-building, and discussions on transitional justice, while particularly highlighting the importance of self-care as a political and social aspect of women's empowerment.

The project targets women and girls, human rights activists, members of women's organisations and networks, experts in trauma prevention and self-care, the academic community, and the general public. Its goal is to strengthen women's decision-making capacities, promote gender equality in peace processes, and improve the protection of the rights of women and girls in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and international commitments.



Ustikolina, 8th February 2025 – Publication Promotion and Discussion with Members of the Ustikolina Women's Association

## Implemented Activities (January – March 2025)

During the first three months of 2025, the following activities were carried out:

On 8th February 2025, in Ustikolina, in cooperation with the Ustikolina Women's Association, a **promotion of the publication Feminist Time Travel through Bosnia and Herzegovina** was organised. The event was attended by 18 women from the local community. In a safe space, participants openly shared their experiences regarding everyday challenges and the contributions women make to their communities. The life testimonies highlighted the importance of mutual support, solidarity, and intergenerational transmission of knowledge and experience.

On 7th March 2025, a **panel discussion was held at the Faculty of Law, University of Sarajevo**, to mark International Women's Day. The topic of the panel was The Beijing Declaration – 30 Years Later. A representative of the CURE Foundation spoke about personal reflections on thirty years

of activist engagement, with particular emphasis on women's peace activism.

On 14th March 2025, as part of a meeting with representatives of the **International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY)**, which brought together participants from the Council of Europe, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East, the Americas and Africa, the work of the CURE Foundation was presented, and 14 copies of the publication **Feminist Time Travel** were distributed. The discussion **focused on the importance of documenting feminist histories and the role of youth in global peace initiatives.**

At a time when women's rights are increasingly under threat, the CURE Foundation remains committed to the struggle for equality, solidarity, and a society grounded in justice. We continue to resist regressive processes while building communities rooted in care, respect, and mutual support.



Ustikolina, 8th February 2025 – Publication Promotion and Discussion with Members of the Ustikolina Women's Association



# Building Up Anti-Gender Resilience in Bosnia and Herzegovina

## About the Project

From 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, the CURE Foundation, with the support of the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation and UK International Development, implemented a project aimed at strengthening the resilience of local communities and civil society organisations against the increasingly prevalent anti-gender narratives and policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The focus of the project was on education, empowerment and networking of activists from all parts of the country with the aim of providing a strong,

informed and sustainable response to the growing threats to human rights and freedoms. Through public campaigns, panels, workshops and publications, the project sought to contribute to resilience-building by strengthening the capacities of the broader community – particularly of women human rights defenders – for effective resistance to regressive ideologies and harmful social policies, while also promoting the values of gender equality.

## Implemented Activities (January – March 2025)

To mark 8th March – International Women's Day – a public campaign was carried out under the strong slogan **No turning back**, highlighting the ongoing need for women's struggle for equality in political, economic and social life. The campaign messages were visible on billboards in Sarajevo, Istočno Sarajevo and Banja Luka, as well as across digital platforms and social media.

The publication **Resilience Handbook: Countering Anti-Gender Policies – Overview and Recommendations** has been released, containing seven authored articles, in addition to an introductory text and recommendations by the

editor. The handbook offers practical tools and guidance for action against anti-gender policies, intended primarily for human rights defenders, but also for the general public. The publication is available in both Bosnian and English, in printed format and as a free PDF on the CURE Foundation's website.

Through this project, the CURE Foundation remains a strong actor in providing a feminist response to the challenges of contemporary society, preserving the space of freedom, equality, and solidarity.



**no turning  
back**



**Resilience Handbook:  
Countering Anti-Gender Policies**  
Overview and Recommendations

# Community Response to Gender-Based Violence

## About the Project

Supported by the EuroCentralAsian Lesbian\* Community and the European Union, the project Community Response to Gender-Based Violence is being implemented from 23rd September 2024 to 22nd September 2025. The aim of the project is to strengthen the community's response to **gender-based violence by building the capacities of LGBTIQ+ women and non-binary persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina**. By enhancing their knowledge and skills, the project seeks to enable the effective provision of

information, protection, and support to survivors of violence who decide to report it. The focus is on empowering the community from within – through education and support – to make the response to gender-based violence more inclusive, accessible, and safer for all members of the LGBTIQ+ community, as well as for non-binary individuals.

## Implemented Activities (January – March 2025)

As part of the programme activities carried out during the first three months of 2025, the process of establishing a specialised group of LGBTIQ+ women and non-binary persons – activists who will act as **community helpers** – was initiated. Their role, as trusted individuals, is to provide direct assistance and support to members of the LGBTIQ+ community and non-binary persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in accessing institutional mechanisms for protection from violence. These activities are grounded in the legal frameworks on protection from domestic violence and are inspired by the **4P Helpers Network** model established by the Centre for Women's Rights in Zenica, with an added focus on the needs and rights of LGBTIQ+ women and non-binary persons.

During the first of two planned intensive training sessions, the new community helpers acquired key knowledge on how to provide emotional, informational, and procedural support to survivors of gender-based violence. The training was designed to address the specific challenges faced by members of the LGBTIQ+ community and non-binary individuals, and is based on the principles of knowledge, trust, safety, and equality.

# Exploring the Defragmentation of the Feminist Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina

## About the Project

Supported by the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, the project Exploring the Defragmentation of the Feminist Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina is being implemented from 1st January to 30th September 2025. The project creates space for dialogue on diverse identities and perspectives within the women's and feminist movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the aim of **defining shared values that unite actors in the fight for women's rights**. Through a series of discussions with feminist activists and movement representatives, the project explores and analyses themes that generate division as well as those that promote mutual understanding and solidarity – with the goal of transforming differences into strength.

A special focus is placed on **strengthening joint action among civil society organisations**, especially through a coordinated campaign for 8th March – International Women's Day – and expanding efforts in the field of women's economic empowerment in cooperation with experts. The project also highlights the importance of preserving women's history and cultural heritage through the 'herstory keepers' approach, encouraging intergenerational knowledge transfer and countering the rise of anti-gender narratives. This initiative aims to build a strong, connected, and resilient feminist movement ready to face the challenges of contemporary society.

## Implemented Activities (January – March 2025)

In the first quarter, the project focused on preparations for International Women's Day, marked on 8th March 2025. The CURE Foundation team actively participated in the work of the informal Organising Committee of the **March on 8th March** in Sarajevo, contributing through **involvement in various thematic groups and a number of media appearances related to the march**. In addition, the CURE Foundation ensured the participation of women's rights defenders from other cities across BiH and financially supported the technical organisation of

the event itself. As co-organisers, participants, and stewards on the streets of Sarajevo, members of the CURE Foundation team once again demonstrated their commitment to preserving the March on 8th March as one of the most important dates in the struggle for women's rights – both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and globally.



# Women's Network of Bosnia and Herzegovina

## About the Project

The project *Strengthening the Capacity of the Women's Network of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, supported by the Trag Foundation, is being implemented from 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2027. The goal of the project is to empower women's rights defenders from Bosnia and Herzegovina to become indispensable participants in all negotiations and processes concerning the quality of life of women in the country.

Through a series of strategic activities, the project will provide technical and educational support to women's organisations and activists with the aim of acquiring new knowledge and formulating positions on key international issues that directly affect the everyday lives of women in local com-

munities. A special focus will be placed on establishing new channels of communication with international women's rights defenders, expanding the network at both regional and global levels, and actively participating in the creation of plans and programmes with a long-term impact on equality and social justice.

One of the strategic goals of the project is to secure and improve both physical and digital spaces for the work of members of the Women's Network of BiH, in order to strengthen public visibility and enable a more powerful articulation of the feminist perspective on issues affecting women and girls in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## Implemented Activities (January – March 2025)

In February 2025, an internal call was announced for member organisations of the Women's Network of BiH in the context of marking International Women's Day – 8th March. The Coordination Board of the Women's Network of BiH approved and awarded six small grants, each in the amount of BAM 500, for the implementation of local activities aimed at strengthening women's rights and increasing the visibility of feminist initiatives.

In addition, one of the members of the Coordination Board of the Women's Network of BiH participated in a working-consultative meeting organised by the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH / Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH, together with representatives of non-governmental organisations. This contributed to strengthening the dialogue between civil society and institutions, with special emphasis on the role and contribution of the Women's Network of BiH in this process.

# Women in Politics

## About the Project

The *Women in Politics* project, implemented by the CURE Foundation from Sarajevo in partnership with the Budućnost Association from Modriča, with the support of IAMANEH Switzerland and financial support from the Government of Switzerland, is being carried out from 1st June 2024 to 31st May 2025. The project focuses on increasing the participation and representation of women in the political life of Bosnia and Herze-

govina, with a focus on the municipalities of Gračanica, Lukavac, Tuzla, Šamac, Modriča, Vukosavlje and Dobož. The project **has already contributed to greater political representation of women in nearly all target municipalities**, strengthening their visibility, mutual cooperation, and support within and across political parties

## Implemented Activities (January – March 2025)

In the first quarter of 2025, the project team **focused on preparations for a conference** that will bring together women political actors, institutional representatives, and civil society stakeholders to discuss the position of women in electoral processes, the legislative framework, media representation, and opportunities for advancing gender equality in political decision-making.

Additionally, a podcast series titled 'Women in Politics' was recorded, featuring five episodes in which guests from various communities shared their experiences, challenges, and contributions to political life in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Preparations are also underway for the continuation of project activities, including mentorship, advocacy initiatives, and strengthening networks of politically active women with the goal of improving their position ahead of the 2026 local elections.

## Institutional Support to the Work of the CURE Foundation

In 2025, we plan to intensify advocacy efforts aimed at implementing existing laws and adopting new ones that will ensure more comprehensive legal protection and support for survivors of gender-based violence – with particular emphasis on femicide, whose numbers in BiH are alarmingly increasing. From the beginning of 2024 to 7th July, seven cases of femicide were recorded, further motivating us to act swiftly and decisively.

To change social norms and behaviours that contribute to violence against women, we are planning to implement educational programmes and public campaigns that will promote holistic safety, self-care, and mutual support. The educational component will include integrated security workshops specifically focused on women's mental and physical health.

Through the organisation of workshops, public dialogues, and local engagements, we will promote women's contributions to peace initiatives and intergenerational knowledge-sharing. Special emphasis will be placed on women's political participation and their empowerment for active engagement in society.

To strengthen cooperation and joint action among feminist actors, we are planning a regional study visit that will enable the exchange of experiences and collaborative planning of advocacy activities among organisations and activists from across the region.

In addition, two key public activities have been implemented and planned as part of the institutional support:

**March on 8th March** – This year, we successfully organised the March on 8th March in Sarajevo, bringing together women from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The march was carried out in cooperation with an organising committee composed of representatives of various civil society organisations. Together, we once again demonstrated the strength of women's resistance, solidarity, and determination to continue the fight for women's rights.

**PitchWise Festival of Women's Art and Activism** – Intensive preparations are underway for the 20th anniversary edition of the PitchWise Festival, to be held in September 2025. The festival marks two decades of dedication to strengthening the feminist movement, creating safe spaces for art, resistance, and change, and connecting activists and artists from around the world.

Through these activities, we continue to build a society in which the feminist voice is strong, visible, and indispensable.





# PARTNERSHIPS

## The Women Citizens for Constitutional Reform Initiative

The CURE Foundation, together with the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, is implementing the project **Women Citizens for Constitutional Reform V**, which runs from 1st February to 30th September 2025. This initiative was launched back in 2013 with the aim of advocating for a Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina that ensures greater protection of human rights and freedoms – with a strong emphasis on the gender perspective.

As part of the project, women activists and civil society organisations from across Bosnia and Herzegovina are brought together to strengthen democratic processes and promote the inclusion of gender-sensitive language in the constitutional framework. Through public engagement, the initiative encourages women citizens to use their

knowledge, experience, and energy to contribute to constitutional reforms that reflect the principles of equality and non-discrimination.

One of the key steps in the current project cycle is the submission of a formal complaint to the Institution of the Human Rights Ombudsman of BiH, addressing the lack of gender-sensitive language and the absence of a gender dimension in the Constitution of BiH. With this action, the initiative sends a clear message about the need for a fairer and more inclusive society that respects the rights of all its women citizens.

We invite all interested individuals and organisations to support this initiative and contribute to long-term reforms that lead towards genuine equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## Movement-Led Approach – Gender Justice Movement in the Western Balkans

The CURE Foundation is implementing the project *Gender Justice Movement in the Western Balkans*, with the support of the Global Fund for Women, as part of their Movement-Led Approach – Gender Justice initiative. This initiative aims to strengthen the women's rights movement through flexible funding and accessible resources, with the goal of achieving long-term social change and meaningful impact.

The Global Fund for Women has established cooperation with feminist movements in the Western Balkan countries to support them in addressing the increasing presence of anti-gender narratives and practices. Through this collaboration, the CURE Foundation contributes to **identifying and tackling key challenges faced by feminist initiatives**, while reinforcing local efforts aimed at protecting human rights and building a more just and equal society.

# Activities and Engagement in the Past Period

## March on 8th March 2025: I Want to Make a Living from My Work

Once again this year, we marked 8th March in the streets – marching for women's rights and loudly demanding dignified work for all! In Sarajevo, together with an informal group of activists, we organised the March on 8th March under the slogan 'I Want to Make a Living from My Work'.

This year's March on 8th March was dedicated to women workers and their denied rights. The gathering began in front of the Trade Union Building, from where we marched to the Historical Museum, carrying banners with powerful messages that reflect the everyday reality of women in the workplace: 'This pretty – and still on minimum wage', 'A woman belongs in the revolution', 'Wages, not carnations', 'At my job, sexism is always on time'...

We marched for dignified work, workplace safety, and equal pay. We expressed solidarity with women who work overtime without compensation, who are underpaid, and who face sexual

harassment or discrimination at work. We especially highlighted the experiences of women who lose their jobs due to pregnancy or are forced to choose between a career and family.

The fight for women's labour rights is ongoing and historic – and we will not give up! In cooperation with journalists, activists, and supporters of the March on 8th March collective, we published a series of articles dedicated to women workers. The texts are available on our website: [www.fondacijacure.org](http://www.fondacijacure.org) under the 8th March section.

For more information about the collective's work and activities, follow us on social media: Instagram and Facebook – @8.martbh.

Together, we build resistance and a society in which every woman can live with dignity from her work!



March on 8th March in Sarajevo





## Representatives of the CURE Foundation Visited the Austrian Parliament!

As part of a study visit to Austria, held from 24th to 28th March 2025, representatives of the CURE Foundation had the opportunity to attend a session of the Austrian Parliament and meet with Andreas Minnich, a Member of the Parliament of the Republic of Austria. This visit offered a valuable opportunity to gain direct insight into the work of the legislative body and the processes of democratic decision-making in Austria.

While in Vienna, we also met with *Dr Edma Ajanović*, with whom we discussed the upcoming PitchWise Festival of Women's Art and Activism. We're already excited to announce a very special panel that we are preparing together!

In addition, we held meetings with representatives of the *WienWoche festival*, as well as our dear friends and collaborators – Zoe Gudović, Jelena Micić, and Nataša Mackuljak. *WienWoche* is a festival that creatively connects art and activism, and our discussions focused on possibilities for future cooperation and joint initiatives.

This visit was truly inspiring for the CURE Foundation, as it provided an opportunity for further networking, strengthening international feminist connections, and developing future collaboration at the intersection of art, politics, and activism.



Representatives of the CURE Foundation Visiting the Austrian Parliament



## Visit by Mozn Hassan – Egyptian Feminist in Sarajevo

On 6th March 2025, in Sarajevo, the CURE Foundation had the honour of hosting Mozn Hassan, a prominent Egyptian feminist and founder of the organisation Nazra for Feminist Studies, which has long been dedicated to documenting human rights violations and actively advocating for women's rights in Egypt.

Mozn Hassan is widely recognised for her engagement during the 2011 Egyptian revolution, where she supported women who were victims of sexual violence. Her tireless work in documenting these cases and advocating for justice contributed to amendments to the Egyptian constitution and legislation on sexual crimes.

For her contribution to the fight for human rights, Mozn Hassan has received several prestigious international awards, including the Charlotte Bunch Human Rights Award (2013) and the Right Livelihood Award (2016), also known as the “alternative Nobel Peace Prize”.

Unfortunately, due to accusations related to Egypt's foreign funding law, Mozn is currently subject to a travel ban and asset freeze, which forms part of a broader governmental crackdown on civil society.

Her visit to Sarajevo was an opportunity to exchange experiences and express solidarity with feminist movements in the region, while also serving as a reminder of the ongoing challenges faced by women activists around the world.



Visit of Mozn Hassan





## Performance 'I Want to Live' – 12th March 2025

To mark International Women's Day, on 12th March 2025 the performance *'I Want to Live'* was staged – an artistic and social expression conveying powerful messages about the dreams, strength, and potential of refugee women. This project, inspired by their life stories, seeks to highlight their talents, qualities, and aspirations through the portrayal of the traumas they have survived, reminding us that they are equal members of our communities.

The performance aims to dismantle prejudices rooted in ignorance and social indifference. Refugee women are often perceived as a threat, rather than as an opportunity to embrace diversity and foster solidarity. Instead of pity, this performance calls for understanding, respect, and the creation of opportunities for the exchange of experiences, knowledge, and skills.

The concept of the performance is based on collaboration between professional artists and refugee women. Through a joint creative process,

active participation of refugee women is enabled, creating space for their visibility, equal engagement in social life, and direct communication with the audience.

*'I Want to Live'* is part of a broader set of activities aimed at raising awareness about gender-based violence. It was carried out within the project *'Psychosocial Support and Individual Protection Assistance for Recognised Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Refugee-like Populations in BiH'*, implemented by the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Women's Initiative Foundation in cooperation with UNHCR.

# Participation of CURE Foundation Representatives in Events and Conferences (January – March 2025)

In the first quarter of 2025, representatives of the CURE Foundation actively participated in numerous significant local, regional, and international events, conferences, panels, and workshops focused on human rights, gender equality, education, and activism. Their presence contributed to strengthening feminist discourse, raising awareness of the issues faced by women and marginalised communities, and fostering collaboration with other civil society actors.

Below is a selection of key events:

- **30th–31st January** – participation in online conferences ‘Building a Safe Zone for Civil Society in BiH’ and ‘International Conference on Online Violence Against Women’, organised by B.a.B.e from Zagreb
- **31st January, Sarajevo** – participation in the event ‘STRADA Regional Event – Women in Manufacturing’, FabLab Sarajevo, EIT Manufacturing
- **3rd–7th February, Budva** – attendance at the ‘Regional Exchange and Networking Meeting’, organised by Kvinna till Kvinna
- **4th February, Mostar** – participation in the conference ‘Women Lead on the Path to Peace and Security in BiH’ (PBF UN, MLJPI BiH, IOM, UN Women)
- **11th February, Sarajevo** – participation in the programme marking the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, in cooperation with various organisations and institutions
- **17th February, Sarajevo** – attendance at the launch of the handbook ‘Securing the Rights of Children Born of War: Challenges, Legal Framework, and Institutional Support’ (Forgotten Children of War Association)
- **18th February, Sarajevo** – participation in the book launch ‘The Price of Impure Blood’ within the UNIGEM project (TPO Foundation)
- **19th February, Sarajevo** – attendance at the workshop ‘Can You See Me? Can You Hear Me? Can You Feel Me?’ (Tavan Association)
- **27th February, Sarajevo** – participation in the ‘International Conference on Gender and Peace’ (TPO, UNSA)
- **28th February, Sarajevo** – attendance at the book launch ‘Laurels for a Woman’s Head’ at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo, and participation in the periodic meeting ‘Beijing+30 and UNSCR 1325+25’, organised by the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH
- **4th March, Banja Luka** – active participation in the conference ‘Anti-Gender Actions – No Going Back’ (Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly)
- **5th March, Sarajevo** – attendance at the presentation of the study ‘Gender Equality and Women’s Entrepreneurship in BiH’ (Women for Women International and Empow’Her)
- **6th March, Sarajevo** – participation in the panel discussion ‘Women in the History of BiH: How to Continue Researching, Recording, and Remembering Them?’ at the Historical Museum of BiH
- **7th March, Sarajevo** – presentation by a CURE Foundation representative at the panel ‘Beijing Declaration – 30 Years Later’ at the Faculty of Law, UNSA, focusing on women’s peace activism
- **7th March, Sarajevo** – attendance at the launch of the ‘Orange Report’ (Sarajevo Open Centre), the opening of the exhibition ‘Let’s Play’, and participation in a performative workshop with FEMINISTIKA cards (Goethe-Institut and CRVENA)
- **11th March, Sarajevo** – participation in a roundtable at the Jewish Community ‘Erased from History: The First Workers’ Strike in BiH’, with a presentation on the development of the women’s movement (TPO)
- **12th March, Sarajevo** – attendance at a theatre performance at the Youth Theatre as part of the BHWI project
- **12th March, Foča** – participation in the activity ‘Roses Wither, Women Must Not’, including a speech on femicide and a presentation of the CURE Foundation’s work on peer violence prevention and the ‘4P Supporter’ model
- **14th March, Sarajevo** – attendance at the workshop ‘From Advocacy to Lobbying: Strategies for Intersectional Feminist Leadership in Non-Formal Education’ (OBESSU, SHL)
- **17th March, Sarajevo** – participation in the extraordinary CIVILKA session ‘How Can Civil Society Function When BiH’s Stability and Citizens’ Security Are at Risk?’ (CPCD)
- **19th March, Ilidža** – participation in the closing event of the UNIGEM project (TPO, UNSA)

Participation in these events represents the continued work of the CURE Foundation in strengthening dialogue with community representatives, educational institutions, decision-makers, and civil society organisations. Through active engagement, experience and knowledge-sharing, and the promotion of feminist values, the CURE Foundation continues to build bridges of solidarity, resistance, and joint struggle for the rights of women and marginalised groups.





\*Budva, Regional Meeting of Kvinna till Kvinna

\*UNSA, Faculty of Law, 7th March 2025 – Panel Discussion on the Occasion of International Women's Day

\*Selma Hadžihalilović from the CURE Foundation speaking at the 69th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women

\*Members of the UN Women ECA Civil Society Steering Committee at CSW69 in New York

\*Meeting with OBESSU (Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions)

\*WiP podcast with Joško Mandić

# HIGHLIGHT: CURE Foundation at the 69th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), New York

Selma Hadžihalilović, a team member of the CURE Foundation, participated in the 69th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), held in New York from 10th to 21st March 2025. She took part as a member of the UN ECA Civil Society Steering Committee Beijing +30 and as a representative of the EuroMed Feminist Initiative (EFI – ECOSOC accredited).

The UN ECA Civil Society Steering Committee Beijing +30 brings together twelve representatives of civil society organisations from Europe and Central Asia, who, since March 2024, have been leading a voluntary consultation process to analyse the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This process is supported by UN Women's Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia. So far, four major regional consultation meetings have been organised, involving over 450 representatives of civil society organisations, and three advocacy documents have been developed and submitted to UN member states.

During her time in New York, Selma Hadžihalilović participated in numerous side events and high-level meetings. She made a particularly notable contribution by speaking at the official UN Commission event entitled *'Interactive Dialogue – Freedom from Violence, Stigma and Stereotypes'*. On that occasion, she presented key recommendations from the Committee and conveyed the voices and experiences of women activists from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider Western Balkans region, particularly in the context of peacebuilding and combating gender-based violence.

## In her address, Selma stated:

'This year marks 30 years since the genocide in Srebrenica and the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, and I would like to share with you some of the lessons we have learned through our work on peacebuilding and eradicating violence

against women.

Did you know that not a single woman was present during the peace negotiations in Dayton? Had there been women at the table, I am convinced that many things would have been different over the past decades.

It is hard for me to speak of positive examples when I am deeply aware of the violence that women in Gaza and Ukraine are currently facing.

One lesson I have learned – and a message I must share with all of you – is that war, in fact, never truly ends. Its consequences are still present in my community, deeply embedded in the severe post-traumatic stress that affects our entire society. It is difficult to believe, but despite all our efforts towards peacebuilding – there is still no Ministry for Peace.

Women's rights defenders have been working tirelessly for years through various initiatives to truly understand what peace and justice mean.

Our work through the initiative Women's Court aims to redefine the concept of justice from a women's perspective – so that survivors become subjects of justice. The initiative Peace with a Women's Face highlights the suffering of women from all sides of the war.

We offer our strongest support to the forgotten children of war, whose courage in the pursuit of justice and identity transformation, as children born of war, is the foundation of every effort made towards peace.

However, we are aware that the rise of the anti-gender movement is directly linked to those who oppose peace and promote fascist and nationalist political ideologies.



A few days ago, I was having coffee with a friend – a genocide survivor from Srebrenica – who, through tears, asked how she should call her parents, who have returned to Srebrenica, and ask them if they are afraid. I did not know what to say.

Femicide is on the rise in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While many decision-makers are working hard and institutions are making efforts, our politicians still do not show full political commitment to zero tolerance for any form of violence and discrimination against women and girls.

At the same time, women's rights defenders have built an incredible grassroots network of community-based supporters to assist survivors of gender-based violence in accessing justice.

And finally – to women across the world living in situations of violence – you are not forgotten.

To those of you in positions of power and decision-making, sitting in this conference room – we urge you: include women in all stages of every peace negotiation process.

And to all of us – when it comes to women's rights – **there is no turning back.** The lives of all women matter.

Thank you.'



Selma Hadžihalilović from the CURE Foundation speaking at the 69th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women



## DONORS

Kvinna till Kvinna (KTK), UK International Development, Global Fund for Women (GFW), TRAG Foundation / OAK Foundation, Heart and Hand Fund, Sigrid Rausing Trust, Heinrich Böll Stiftung Sarajevo (HBS), Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Bosnia and Herzegovina (FES), ISCOS – Emilia Romagna, Women's World Day of Prayer (WWDP) – German Committee, the Government of Switzerland and IAMANEH Switzerland.

The CURE Foundation extends its heartfelt gratitude to all of you – friends and allies from Bosnia and Herzegovina and around the world – for your ongoing attention, support, and unwavering friendship. Your solidarity motivates, encourages, and empowers us to persist in the fight for equality, justice, and freedom.

Together, we are building a society in which the feminist voice is strong, present, and impossible to ignore.

Thank you for standing with us.

The CURE Foundation Team:  
Jadranka, Stela, Denija, Selma, Enida, Lana, Sanda and Jasmina



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