

# CURE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

January – March 2026

We began 2026 with renewed energy and a continued commitment to activities aimed at empowering women, promoting human rights, and strengthening feminist solidarity. The first three months of the year were marked by educational programmes, partnerships, and initiatives that contribute to positive social change in Bosnia and Herzegovina and across the region.



# PROJECTS

## Together for Peace: A Feminist Perspective of Caring for Yourself and Community Around You

On 11 February in Potočari/Srebrenica, together with Women in Black from Belgrade, we organised a peace gathering dedicated to friendship, mutual support, solidarity, and the shared struggle for peace and justice.

The gathering began with a visit to the Potočari Memorial Centre and the laying of flowers at the memorial to the victims of the genocide, together with activists from Anima from Đulići, the ANPI Association of Antifascists, and Women in Black from Udine, Italy, who were on a solidarity visit to Srebrenica.

On this occasion, a publication dedicated to a speech by Munira Subašić was also presented. Published by Women in Black from Belgrade in December 2025, the publication highlights the significance of her address marking the 30th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide and stands as a powerful testimony to women's resistance, courage, care, and struggle for justice.

From 9 to 10 February, a meeting of the project team members of the Women's Peace Initiative was held in Bijeljina to discuss activities implemented so far, as well as the Initiative's plans and priorities for 2026.

From 13 to 15 March, a representative of the CURE Foundation participated in the seminar 'Learning Together, Building Peace Together', held in Sarajevo at the invitation of the Romani Girl Association – Romani Čej from Prnjavor. During the seminar, she spoke about peacebuilding and reconciliation, as well as support for women, with a particular focus on marginalised women, Roma women, and returnee women.



Potočari Memorial Centre, Srebrenica, 11 February 2026



Peace Gathering, Potočari/Srebrenica, 11 February 2026



Peace Gathering, Potočari/Srebrenica, 11 February 2026



Seminar 'Learning Together, Building Peace Together', Sarajevo, 15-13 March 2026

## Increasing the Resilience of the Feminist and LGBT\*IQ Community Towards the Antigender Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina

From 5 to 8 February, we organised a workshop in Sarajevo for women activists and defenders of the rights of women and LGBT\*IQ persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina entitled 'Growing Together and Building More Resilient Communities'.

The workshop was designed as a safe space for sharing experiences, collective learning and strengthening individual and collective capacities to act in challenging social contexts. Through an interactive programme, participants had the opportunity to explore the integration

of security into everyday activist work, feminist approaches to self-care and community care, the development of collective strategies to mitigate threats and strengthen solidarity, as well as the creation of personal safety plans.

A dedicated part of the workshop focused on an online campaign simulation, during which participants strengthened their communication skills and practised responding to provocative questions, with the aim of increasing resilience and promoting safer engagement in digital spaces.



Workshop for Women Activists and Defenders of the Rights of Women and LGBT\*IQ Persons, Sarajevo, 5–8 February 2026

## Strengthening the Feminist Community, Knowledge and Solidarity

During the first months of 2026, we continued investing in strengthening the feminist community, knowledge exchange, women's economic empowerment, and regional cooperation

with partner organisations. Through the Feminist HUB, educational activities, and regional collaboration, we created spaces for learning, dialogue, solidarity, and collective action.

### Feminist HUB: Learning and Knowledge Exchange

Within the Feminist HUB concept, we created a community space known as the Feminist Classroom, bringing together activists, feminists, and allies\* working in the fields of gender equality, gender justice, and the protection of the rights of women and LGBT\*IQ persons. Through this space, we exchange experiences, build networks of solidarity, and contribute to strengthening the women's movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Feminist HUB serves as a space for alternative education, critical reflection, activism, and the development of new initiatives. Guided by the belief that education is never value-neutral, we seek to use accumulated women's knowledge and experiences as a tool for recognising and challenging institutionalised sexism, homophobia, racism, and other forms of discrimination and violence.

The first Feminist HUB lecture was held on 26 February and was delivered by Zlatiborka Popov-Momčinović. Entitled 'The Women's Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina', the lecture symbolically marked the period leading up to 8 March, International Women's Day.

Through three thematic segments, participants discussed the importance of social movements, the historical development of the women's movement

in Bosnia and Herzegovina – from the Austro-Hungarian era, through the work of the Anti-Fascist Women's Front, to contemporary feminist initiatives – as well as the current state of the movement and the challenges it faces today. The discussion concluded with the recognition that the strength of any movement lies in connection, solidarity, and continuous dialogue.

The second lecture was delivered by Selma Alispahić, Teaching Assistant at the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Sarajevo. Entitled 'Diversity as Our Strength', the lecture opened a discussion on class, health, age, and sexual differences, as well as diverse identity perspectives and their role in women's empowerment. Particular attention was given to socially marginalised women, recognising different identities, needs, and experiences, and the importance of freedom of choice and embracing diversity. Through philosophical, sociological, and semantic analysis, participants explored how differences within the feminist movement can become a source of stronger solidarity and collective action.



Feminist HUB: Lecture 'The Women's Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina', Sarajevo, 26 February 2026



Feminist HUB: Lecture 'Diversity as CURE strength', Sarajevo, 26 March 2026



## Women's Economic Empowerment

In cooperation with LOLA BiH, we organised the workshop 'Women's Economic Empowerment through Economic Freedoms' in the Municipality of Novi Grad Sarajevo. The event brought together experts, women politicians, community leaders and unemployed women who exchanged experiences and engaged in discussions on the challenges and opportunities for improving the economic position of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The workshop was facilitated by Assistant Professor Faruk Hadžić, PhD, author of the publication Step by Step Towards Your Economic Freedom, whose model serves as the basis for the economic empowerment workshops implemented by the CURE Foundation across Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## Regional Cooperation and Feminist Solidarity

From 9 to 13 February, a representative of Foundation CURE participated in a regional meeting in Skopje organised by the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation. The meeting brought together representatives of 19 partner organisations from six Western Balkan countries within the framework of the Democracy and Resilience in the Western Balkans programme, supported by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).

The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange experiences and strategies for working in increasingly challenging

political contexts, ranging from combating gender-based violence and advocating for legal reforms to public mobilisation, alliance-building and media engagement. Particular attention was given to strategic communication and countering disinformation.

The meeting concluded with the identification of shared regional priorities, including combating violence against women, protecting women human rights defenders, challenging anti-democratic narratives and strengthening support for feminist civil society.



Regional Meeting of Partner Organisations, Skopje, 13–9 February 2026



Regional Meeting of Partner Organisations, Skopje, 13–9 February 2026

## 'Why Am I (Un)Safe?' Campaign

Throughout March, we implemented the 'Why Am I (Un)Safe?' campaign.

Marking 8 March, International Women's Day, Foundation CURE launched an online and offline campaign that reopened a question which should not remain unanswered: where do women feel safe? At home, at work, on the street, on public transport, or when accessing healthcare?

Displayed on billboards across Bosnia and Herzegovina, the campaign message drew attention to the everyday insecurity and systemic failures that shape women's lives, while calling for accountability and meaningful change.

For many women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, safety remains far from guaranteed. Research shows that almost

every second woman has experienced some form of violence after the age of 15, while many never report it due to fear, lack of trust in institutions, or social stigma.

For countless women, everyday life continues to be marked by feelings of insecurity and lack of protection. This is why we continue to speak out about a reality in which women's safety is not guaranteed. Although protected by law, it is too often absent in practice.

We call for institutional accountability and for the creation of a society in which women's safety is finally recognised as a fundamental human right rather than a privilege.



'Why Am I (Un)Safe?' Campaign, Sarajevo, March 2026

## Activist Legacy – Digital Youth Voices for Justice and Remembrance in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

In partnership with the Jelena Šantić Foundation from Belgrade, Foundation CURE is implementing the project 'Activist Legacy – Digital Youth Voices for Justice and Remembrance in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina'. The project aims to strengthen young people's awareness and capacities to engage with the past, challenge revisionism and the denial of war crimes, and promote peace activism across the region.

The project places particular emphasis on the role of women in peace processes and on empowering young people aged 20 to 30 through education on transitional justice, interethnic solidarity and gender perspectives in peacebuilding. Through five thematic modules, participants develop knowledge and skills in transitional justice, activism, digital advocacy, storytelling and visual communication.

Project activities include panel discussions, the 'Linking Change' School of Digital and Creative Activism, the development of original texts by young authors, an exhibition of women comic artists from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the regional Jelena Šantić Award. The award recognises individuals and organisations that contribute to peace activism and transitional justice. It symbolises the connection between art and activism while increasing the visibility of initiatives that foster peace and dialogue across the region.



# INITIATIVES AND PARTNERSHIPS

## Initiative to Establish the Human Rights House Sarajevo

As part of ongoing efforts to strengthen civil society and promote human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Foundation CURE, together with its partner organisations MyRight – Empowering People with Disabilities BiH, the Sarajevo Open Centre, and the Citizens' Association Why Not, launched an initiative to establish the Human Rights House Sarajevo.

The initiative aims to create a visible, safe and accessible space in Sarajevo that will serve as a place for dialogue, collaboration and exchange among diverse human rights actors. The planned space will host public events, educational programmes, workshops, cultural activities and other initiatives designed to strengthen the role of civil society and bring human rights issues closer to citizens.

As part of the initiative, two study visits were organised. Representatives of the Human Rights House Zagreb visited Sarajevo on 18–17 February, while representatives of the Human Rights House Sarajevo initiative visited Zagreb from 25–23 February. During the visit to Zagreb, meetings were held with the Deputy Ombudswoman and representatives of the Ombudswoman's Office, representatives of the City Office for Culture and Civil Society, members of the Gender Equality Commission and the

Human Rights Coordination of the Zagreb City Assembly, as well as the President of the Zagreb City Assembly at the Old City Hall.

In March, representatives of the Human Rights House Foundation from Oslo visited Sarajevo as part of the initiative, providing support through the exchange of experiences and good practices in the management and development of human rights houses. These visits further contributed to strengthening the initiative's capacities and defining the next steps in the process of establishing the Human Rights House Sarajevo.

Through this initiative, Foundation CURE and its partner organisations continue to work towards creating an inclusive and sustainable space that contributes to the promotion of democratic values, the protection of human rights and the active participation of citizens in social processes.



Study Visit of Representatives of the Human Rights House Sarajevo Initiative to Zagreb, 25–23 February 2026



Study Visit of Representatives of Human Rights House Zagreb, Sarajevo, 17 February 2026



Study Visit of Representatives of the Human Rights House Sarajevo Initiative to Zagreb, 25–23 February 2026



Visit of Representatives of the Human Rights House Foundation from Oslo as Part of the Human Rights House Sarajevo Initiative, Sarajevo, 5 March 2026

## Feminist Networking and Knowledge Exchange

From 20 to 26 January, we participated in the first Gen2 seminar in Novi Sad, Serbia, organised by the MANA collective. In the inspiring setting of the OPENS Centre, we met with representatives of seven other feminist organisations from across the region, united around a shared goal: developing a queer- and trans-inclusive methodology for working with girls on issues related to gender-based violence.

Through the exchange of experiences, knowledge and good practices, the seminar once again confirmed the importance of solidarity and collective learning in creating safer and more equitable spaces for all. Gatherings such as this continue to inspire us to build strong alliances and push the boundaries of inclusive and accountable work across the region throughout 2026.



Participation in the First Gen2 Seminar Organised by the MANA Collective, Novi Sad, 26–20 January 2026



## Protecting Women's Acquired Rights and Strengthening Gender Equality

On 12 and 13 February, a representative of Foundation CURE actively participated in a working and consultative meeting organised by the Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo.

The aim of the meeting was to exchange information on the results achieved in the previous period and to identify solutions for overcoming the challenges encountered by civil society organisations in their cooperation with institutional and non-institutional partners in advancing

gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Particular attention was given to the protection of women's acquired rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to strengthening mechanisms for their protection, the sustainability of civil society organisations, as well as the challenges posed by regressive movements that may negatively affect the standards achieved in the fields of human rights and gender equality.

Working and Consultative Meeting of the Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, 13–12 February 2026



### Three Decades After Dayton: Women and Social Change

On 18 February, a representative of Foundation CURE participated in the public discussion ‘Three Decades After Dayton: Women and Social Change’, organised by SPKD Prosvjeta – the ‘Miss Irbj’ Women’s Club.

The discussion focused on the history of the women’s movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the former Yugoslavia, international human rights instruments, the legal framework of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and institutional

mechanisms for the advancement of women’s rights.

Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of documenting feminist activism and recording women’s contributions to social change. On this occasion, we presented several Foundation CURE publications that share stories of women and their experiences of survival, resistance and everyday life in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Participation in the Discussion Forum ‘Three Decades After Dayton: Women and Social Change’, Sarajevo, 18 February 2026



## Youth for Democracy and Human Rights

To mark International Women's Day, in March we visited the Secondary School of Applied Arts in Sarajevo, where, as part of the course 'Education for Democracy and Human Rights', we engaged students in a discussion on democratic values, social responsibility and the position of women in contemporary society. Through an interactive exchange, we explored questions related to the challenges, barriers and inequalities

faced by women, as well as the importance of young people's active participation in building a more just and inclusive society. Encounters such as this continually demonstrate that students are eager to reflect on these important issues and are ready to approach them critically and responsibly in an open and inspiring environment.

## Art and Solidarity in Support of Women

On 7 March, we participated in the Palestinian Embassy Cultural Evening, held at the Bosniak Institute in Sarajevo to mark International Women's Day under the theme 'The Commitment of Palestinian and Bosnian Women Through Art and Solidarity', at the invitation of the Ambassador of the State of Palestine, Sylvia Abu Laban.

The Ambassador delivered an inspiring speech on the ways in which women often bear the burden of war to a greater extent than men, emphasising that International Women's Day is not only an occasion for commemoration, but also an opportunity to recognise, respect and affirm the role of women in society.



Palestinian Embassy Cultural Evening, Sarajevo, 7 March 2026

## Violence Against Women: Between Rights and Social Responsibility

On 10 March, the scientific conference 'Violence Against Women: Between Rights and Social Responsibility' was held at the Rectorate of the University of Sarajevo to mark International Women's Day. A representative of Foundation CURE actively participated alongside representatives of the academic community, judicial institutions, international organisations and civil society organisations. The conference highlighted that Bosnia

and Herzegovina has a well-developed legal framework for the protection of women, while the key challenge remains its consistent implementation, as well as the persistence of social tolerance towards various forms of violence. The programme was organised around four thematic panels, and the representative of Foundation CURE spoke about the connection between art, activism and memory culture in the struggle for women's human rights.

## Promotion of Lepa Mladenović's Book on Trauma and Sexual Violence

On 25 March in Sarajevo, in cooperation with the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Sarajevo, we organised the promotion of Lepa Mladenović's book *Emocije menjaju rad mozga: Feministički pristup neurobiologiji traume silovanja* (translated title: *Emotions Change the Way the Brain Works: A Feminist Approach to the Neurobiology of Rape Trauma*).

Through an empowering conversation with the author, a long-standing feminist and activist from Serbia, moderated by Professor Sanela Bašić, we opened an important discussion on sexual violence, trauma and the social mechanisms that contribute to its normalisation and silencing.

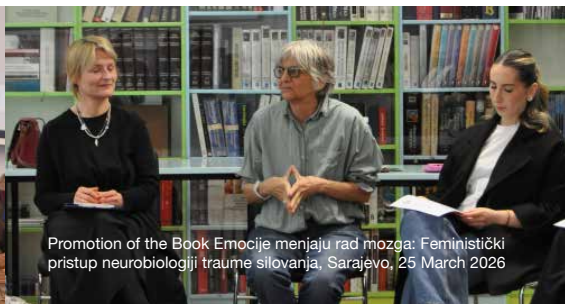
Particular emphasis was placed on the fact that sexual violence remains far more widespread than is publicly acknowledged and that, despite its prevalence, it is still too often surrounded by silence, shame and distrust of institutions.

We also discussed the ways in which sexual violence manifests within academic settings, where power hierarchies often enable its concealment, as well as in everyday life – in public spaces, family environments and other social contexts. Attention was also drawn to the impact of patriarchal norms that continue to shape social relations, contributing to the normalisation of control over women and their bodies and leaving long-lasting consequences on women's lives.

Participation in the Scientific Conference 'Violence Against Women: Between Rights and Social Responsibility', Sarajevo, 10 March 2026



Promotion of the Book *Emocije menjaju rad mozga: Feministički pristup neurobiologiji traume silovanja*, Sarajevo, 25 March 2026



## Women's Citizens for Constitutional Reform Initiative: A Gender Perspective on Constitutional Reform

As part of the activities of the Women's Citizens for Constitutional Reform Initiative, a session was held with students of the Faculty of Law at the University of Sarajevo within the course 'Gender and Law', taught by Professor Amila Ždralović, PhD.

The work of the Initiative was presented with a focus on constitutional reform from a gender perspective, gender-sensitive language, and the inclusion of citizens in decision-making processes. The discussion also introduced the guide 'Od Ž(ena) do A(mandmana) – Vodič kroz Ustav' (From Women to Constitutional Amendments: A Guide to the Constitution), which provides an accessible overview of constitutional reform and gender equality issues.

At the same time, public discourse continues to reflect the absence of constitutional amendments that would explicitly guarantee gender equality. In her article 'Gender Equality on Hold', journalist Rubina Čengić points to the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina has still not adopted such amendments, despite existing recommendations and warnings from international bodies.

In response to the continued absence of constitutional amendments explicitly guaranteeing gender equality, the Initiative submitted a letter to the Working Group of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 11 March 2026, calling for the inclusion of gender-sensitive language in constitutional and legislative reform processes and emphasising the crucial role of language in ensuring the visibility of women and advancing substantive gender equality.



Promotion of the Book *Emocije menjaju rad mozga: Feministički pristup neurobiologiji traume silovanja*, Sarajevo, 25 March 2026



# ENCOUNTERS, LEARNING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

## A Conversation on the Legacy of War, Memory and Trauma

On 17 February, we welcomed Sarah Škorić, a writer from Belgium. Born and raised in Belgium, Sarah has family roots in Dalmatia, Croatia, and has spent years researching history, memory culture and the consequences of war in the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

During the meeting, we discussed how war leaves lasting traces within families and communities, how memories are shaped, and how people cope with trauma and rebuild their lives in its aftermath. Particular attention was given to the experiences of younger generations, women and queer people in the context of war and post-war societies.

## Strengthening Internal Capacities Through Digital Security

On 29–28 January, we organised a digital security workshop for members of the Foundation CURE team. During the two-day training, we focused on data protection, digital privacy and online safety, with particular attention to the challenges faced by activists and civil society organisations.

The workshop was facilitated by Fernala Sejmen-Banjac, who shared practical knowledge and tools for identifying security risks, protecting communications and improving digital practices in

everyday work. Through interactive sessions and the exchange of experiences, we further strengthened the team's capacities for safer and more responsible engagement in the digital environment.

At a time when digital attacks, online harassment and the misuse of personal data are becoming increasingly common, continuous investment in digital security remains an important component of organisational resilience and the safety of activists.



# HIGHLIGHTS

## **International Women's Day March 2026 Women's Safety Is a Public Responsibility. A State That Does Not Intervene Condone Violence.**

On 8 March, Sarajevo marked International Women's Day with a powerful protest march under the slogan 'Women's Safety Is a Public Responsibility'. The organisation of the march was not a one-day event, but the result of months of intensive work, coordination and collective planning by activists united around a common goal – combating violence against women and demanding greater accountability from institutions.

A key focus was to position 8 March not as a symbolic date, but as a political and social moment of resistance and a call for change. During the march, it was emphasised that Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite having an established legal framework for the protection of women, including the legal recognition of femicide and certain protection measures, continues to face serious shortcomings in the consistent and timely implementation of these measures and legal provisions.

Attention was drawn to the fact that women continue to be exposed to the most severe forms of violence even after reporting it, highlighting systemic failures and insufficiently effective institutional responses. When institutions fail to act in a timely and responsible manner, protection remains merely formal, while accountability disappears within the system.

Particular emphasis was placed on the fact that every ignored report, every delayed protection measure and every transfer of responsibility between institutions further encourages violence and deepens women's sense of insecurity. It was also highlighted that gender-based violence encompasses not only physical violence, but also psychological abuse, threats, control, economic dependence and prolonged living in fear.

One of the key messages of the march was that equality cannot exist without safety, and that women's safety is neither a private matter nor an individual responsibility, but a public and institutional obligation of the state. Safety was presented as the foundation of freedom, dignity and equality, without which no other right can be fully realised.

Through banners, public speeches, a collective performance and a song recorded by participants, this year's Women's March stood as a powerful expression of solidarity, resistance and the demand for change.

The message that resonated throughout the event was clear: women's safety must be a priority for institutions, and every failure to act carries real and serious consequences. The Women's March remains a political demand for a life free from violence, because without safety there can be no freedom.



In the next three months, the regional Jelena Šantić Award will be presented to individuals and organisations from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia in recognition of their outstanding contribution to peace activism and transitional justice.

The award celebrates the intersection of art and activism and highlights those whose work contributes to building peace, dialogue and a culture of remembrance across the region.

**Thank you to everyone who supports the work of the CURE Foundation and contributes, together with us, to building a more equal and just society.**

#### DONORS

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation (KTK)  
Global Fund for Women (GFW)  
TRAG Fondacija  
Women's World Day of Prayer (WWDP) – German Committee  
Heart and Hand Fund

#### PARTNERSHIPS


Jelena Šantić Foundation, Serbia  
Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina



**Join a workshop.  
Come to the march.  
Share this story.  
Support the work of the CURE Foundation.**

Your presence, your voice, your support — they matter.

### **FOLLOW US AND JOIN US!**

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