

Since its independence, Georgia has been making unfortunate news in the sphere of ethnically based tension and conflict. Such is not only evidenced by the factual secession of two territories, but also by less clearly definable tensions between various ethnic groups within other regions like Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo-Kartli. Although hardly predictable, concern does exist about the possible outgrowth of some of these slumbering frictions into expressions of violence. Keeping in mind the tragic nature and blind ferocity of too many ethnic conflicts that have occurred in recent history, it becomes clear that any such tensions deserve attention and prevention. Even if the situation will not exacerbate strongly, the attempt to create a society in which people live in mutual tolerance and without pervading negative prejudices is a goal to strive for. One of the regions that might be defined as a “problem” area is Tsalka in the Kvemo-Kartli province.

Objectives

The aim of the “Dialogues of Peace in Tsalka Region” project is to carry out **peace education** activities in order to stimulate children from different ethnic community to interact, work and cooperate in groups and to achieve an improving atmosphere of understanding and confidence towards diversities. The intent is to contribute to the increase of community



awareness on the importance of the education and culture of peace and **dialogue** as a positive tool in conflict prevention, confidence building and successful integration of ethnic minority communities into the social life and basic educational services.

Beneficiaries

Direct target group: Children belonging to different ethnic groups.

Indirect target group: Education staff within the project; parents and families of the involved children; Civil Society groups within Tsalka region.

Activities

1. *Improving the skills of local educators on peace education activities for children.* A training providing the educators with the necessary tools for a positive social transformation is conducted on the following topics: Art Therapy and Art Training; Interactive Teaching; Human Rights for Children; Stereotypes and Prejudices; Differences, Minorities and Multicultural Societies; Tolerance and



Confidence-Building; Conflict Management and Non-Violence.

2. *Implementation of activities for children on peace education.* The peace education activities are conducted on the bases of the topics discussed during the training for educators and they include: get to know each other games, confidence building games, cooperative games, communicational games, creativity games, educational games, art workshops, drawing exhibitions.

3. *Organization of an intercultural event.* Within the region children from various ethnically oriented schools are brought together to work upon the preparation of one cultural event. The cultural event consists of activities like a drawing exhibition, traditional dances, theatrical sketches, traditional music and songs and the like. All those are performed by the various ethnic and cultural groups. The event represents an opportunity for people from different backgrounds to get a further understanding and respect for each other's traditions.

Sustainability

Through the participative approach the project intends to facilitate the creation of genuine interaction between the different ethnic groups, civil society groups and educational institutions (schools) of the Tsalka region. The ongoing cooperation between the local educators from the different ethnic communities allows them to continue to use those methodologies in their field of action/work and replicate the activities in the future. The intention is also to provide local actors with necessary capacities for similar types of activities in the future.