



EU TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS
IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

CHANGE MAKERS



Civil Society Success Stories

FROM CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

Highlighting stories that show **incredible resilience** and **positive impact** in our communities.



Funded by
the European Union





Voices of Justice: Rights, Dignity & Inclusion



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FROM CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

Supporting Parents of Children with Hearing Loss – 2024–2025

Biyonik Kulaklı Çocuklar Derneği

CHALLENGE

Families of children with cochlear implants or hearing loss faced deep uncertainty. Especially in rural areas, parents lacked access to speech therapists, audiologists, and basic guidance, leaving them feeling helpless and alone in supporting their children's development.

CHANGE

The project provided weekly online training with qualified experts, giving families practical tools and emotional support. It created a national support network, ensuring children's access to development was no longer limited by geography or income.



FROM CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

Advancing the Rights of LGBTI+ in Türkiye –
2023–2026

Rainbow Association Against Discrimination

CHALLENGE

LGBTI+ organisations in Türkiye were facing systemic threats. Classified as “high-risk,” they were subject to constant audits, funding cuts, and public smear campaigns, endangering their survival. Many struggled to survive amid increasing political pressure and shrinking civic space.

CHANGE

With support from a core funding partnership between ILGA Europe and Rainbow Association Against Discrimination, the project helped cover key operational costs and ensure organisational resilience. It allowed LGBTI+ organisations to continue defending human rights, advocating for equality, and building long-term sustainability amid a hostile environment.



FROM CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

Women's Labour Rights and Anti-Discrimination – 2020–2022 Kosovo Women's Network (KWN)

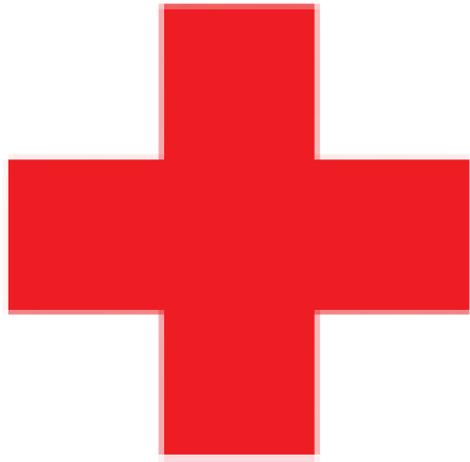
CHALLENGE

Despite strong equality laws on paper, workplace discrimination and gender-based inequality were widespread across Kosovo. Few women reported violations, institutions lacked training, and advocacy efforts were fragmented.

CHANGE

Through a powerful regional effort, 183 CSOs were mobilised, nearly 200 legal cases supported, and 71 joint advocacy initiatives led, resulting in 17 policy reforms and bringing women's labour rights to the forefront of national agendas.

This shift in both institutional practices and public awareness was made possible through the collaboration of the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation (Serbia office), Reactor – Research in Action (North Macedonia), the Gender Alliance for Development Centre (Albania), Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka (Bosnia and Herzegovina), and the Women's Rights Centre (Montenegro)."



RED CROSS OF MONTENEGRO

FROM CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

Innovative Community Care Centres – 2023–2025

Red Cross Montenegro

CHALLENGE

Montenegro is facing a sharp rise in long-term care needs, especially among older adults living in poverty. The system remains fragmented, with limited access to home and palliative care. As a result, informal caregivers, particularly those supporting people with dementia, are overstretched and unsupported. Older people suffer from social isolation, poor health outcomes, and a lack of coordinated community care.

CHANGE

With support from the European Union, two pilot Community Care Centres were launched to bridge health and social services for over 300 older adults. A multidisciplinary team provides guidance on medical and social rights, while Healthy Ageing workshops offer connection and education. Informal caregivers now receive specialised training and respite support, giving them the strength to care and space to rest. The centres offer a new model for ageing with dignity and shared care in Montenegro.



FROM CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

Kadınım Haklarımla Varım – 2024
Buldan Eğitim ve Dayanışma Vakfı

CHALLENGE

In rural Buldan, women had no access to information about their legal rights. Without financial independence or civic engagement, they remained vulnerable to discrimination and social exclusion

CHANGE

An interactive programme trained over 120 women to better understand their rights and reached half a million more through outreach. Participants gained legal literacy and confidence to assert their rights. The programme expanded regionally, inspiring new collaborations for gender equality across rural Türkiye



FROM CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

Strengthening Social Services for Vulnerable Groups – 2021–2023

Save the Children Kosova

CHALLENGE

When the COVID-19 crisis hit Kosovo, it exposed deep cracks in the social welfare system. Licensed service providers couldn't meet rising needs—especially among children, families, and at-risk communities—due to a lack of funding, coordination, and a sustainable policy framework.

CHANGE

With EU support, 47 licensed providers in Kosovo were empowered to deliver accessible, quality social services to over 10,000 people, including women, children, the elderly, and those at risk of violence or social exclusion. A national online portal was launched, Kosovo's new Law on Social and Family Services was developed, and long-term cooperation between NGOs and state institutions was strengthened, laying the groundwork for better, more resilient social protection.

FROM CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

ENGELSİZ ENGELLİ TOPLUM (TENGE)

Project- 2009-2010

National Disability Advocacy Network

CHALLENGE

People with disabilities often struggle to find housing adapted to their needs. No public model existed to develop inclusive, affordable communities.

CHANGE

TENGEL Project designed and implemented a model for barrier-free housing. Over 1,200+ people benefited, and local governments integrated inclusive transport and employment services. The initiative became a national example for inclusive urban development.

FROM CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

Emekli Profili Anketi – 2022 Türkiye Emekliler Derneği

CHALLENGE

Despite Türkiye's ageing population, little data existed about retirees' real-life needs, challenges, and economic conditions. This gap made it difficult to develop informed policies on health, housing, and income security for older citizens.

CHANGE

The Emekli Profili Anketi (Retiree Profile Survey) reached thousands of pensioners through face-to-face interviews across Türkiye. Carried out in partnership with universities, the results sparked media attention and provided a new evidence base for policymaking, bringing retiree voices into the national conversation.



FROM CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

Anadolu Engelliler Toplu Yaşam Merkezi
Cooperative Project– 2009–ongoing
Anadolu Sakatlar Derneği (ASD)

CHALLENGE

People with disabilities in Türkiye faced enormous barriers to finding accessible housing, work, and public services. There were no inclusive living spaces at scale, and disabled citizens remained largely invisible in urban planning.

CHANGE

ASD Developed and implemented Türkiye's first large-scale inclusive housing cooperative (Anadolu Engelliler Toplu Yaşam Merkezi). Over 650 homes were built and 1,200 people supported through accessible infrastructure, local services, and employment programmes. The project became a national model of disability-led urban transformation.