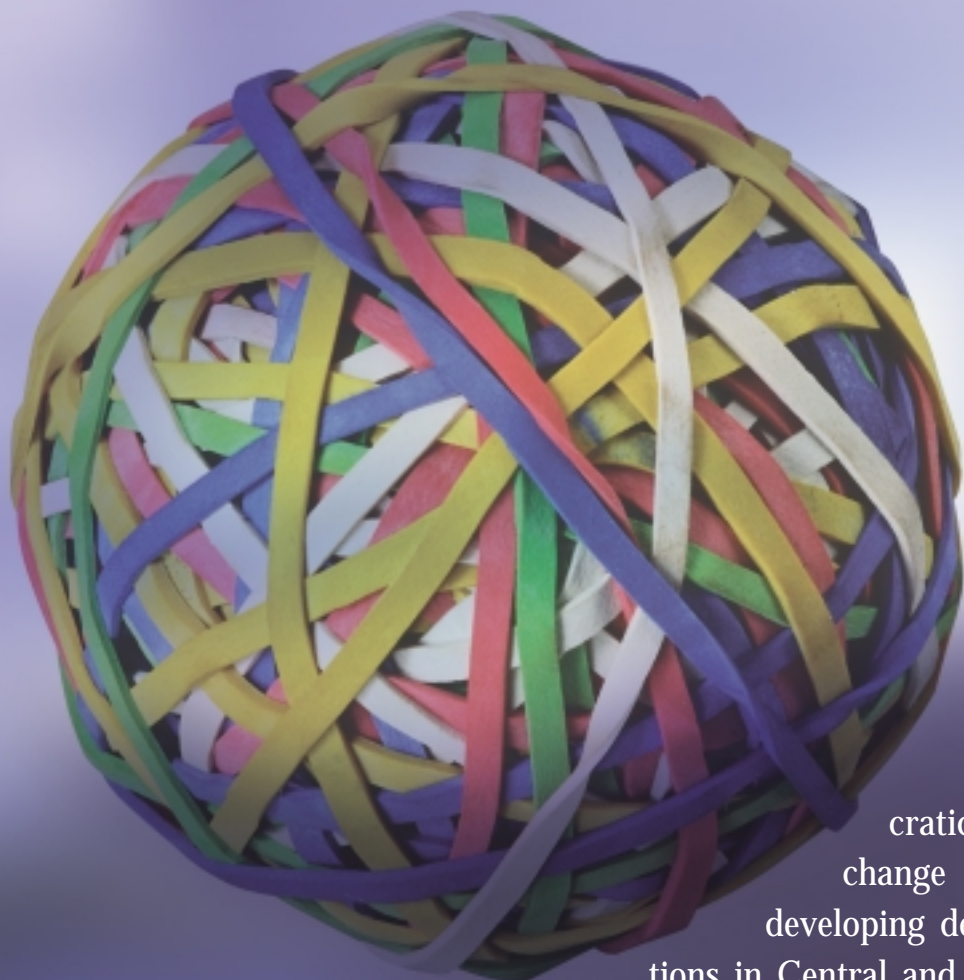


# BOUND for peace

IN AN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD



**W**e live in a new era. For many of us promoting democratic institution building and change and conflict management in developing democracies, the 1989 revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe marked the beginning of a new era. 1989 is now history. The post-Cold War period is history. We are now in a new era, the post-September 11<sup>th</sup> era.

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# Bound for Peace in an Interdependent World

(continued from cover)

by Raymond Shonholtz, Founder and President

Foreign and domestic affairs have changed and realigned. Many of yesterday's human rights violators are today's anti-terror campaign allies, and domestic policies make security a new mantra over civil liberties, especially as they relate to people of Middle Eastern descent, whether real or perceived. For democracy builders and supporters, our work now not only encompasses democracy building in developing and transitioning societies, but building bridges of communication and understanding from our own democracy to those cultures threatened by our intentions and values.

Our work needs to be seen through the prism of the demands and challenges of this new era. Within this changed world, Partners for Democratic Change renews its commitment to build transparent and participatory democracies and effective mechanisms for the management of conflict. This cannot be just an NGO task, but a new effort to promote policies that reduce the propensity for conflict and misunderstanding and even handedly promote justice, understanding, acceptance of differences, and conflict prevention and resolution especially for the displaced, ignored, injured, and state-less. We must begin to look for ways that democratic ethics and religious values co-exist and re-affirm one another.

Partners believes that democracy respects and embraces religious values, and can curb the excesses of market forces and build bridges among different cultures. Working through national Centers in diverse societies, including societies where the majority are Muslim, Partners believes that pluralism, good governance and an open society reduce tensions, hostilities and violence. Partners believes that there is a human family and that it needs enhanced tools to communicate, educate, grow and live peacefully.

As the days from September 11<sup>th</sup> pass and the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan proceeds, Partners and its partnership of national Centers recognize that our mutual endeavor has a heightened significance, if not urgency, to it. When re-reading the articles in this newsletter, which were written before September 11<sup>th</sup>, we realized that the programs they describe are even more relevant to this era.



Peaceful change and conflict management must be a priority from the governmental to the neighborhood level, and across national boundaries. Partners' women's programs (pages 6 and 7) are cross-border initiatives aimed at improving the leadership and dispute resolution skills of young women, who are creating multicultural relationships and collaborative projects. One such program supports Armenians and Azeris (page 7) working together despite tensions and violence between their two countries.

In creating a National Mediation Association in Hungary that promotes mediation to resolve disputes throughout the country, Partners-Hungary (page 4) is establishing venues for citizens, including Roma, to resolve their own disputes. Likewise, the Czech Center's national Street Law Program (page 8) educates majority and minority youth to utilize the law to enforce rights and resolve differences. These types of programs are critical to creating and maintaining a culture of peace; violence occurs when there are no societal and political mechanisms to address conflict. Partners' United States Division (page 11) builds the capacity of community organizations to promote participatory processes and increase the number of professionals of color who can do this work. Similar efforts are under way in Argentina (page 10), where the Center is working to create community based public security measures to reduce violence in the city of Castelar.

Building a culture of peaceful change and conflict management is a global priority in this new era. The articles in this newsletter highlight Partners' multi-layered approach to reducing deep cleavages within and between societies and the propensity for misunderstanding and violence domestically and internationally. ▲

*Partners extends its deepest sympathies to the families and loved ones of the victims of September 11th.*

*Due to the attacks on the World Trade Center, the International Division (situated one block away) is currently relocating within New York City.*

*Please reach Partners' San Francisco office for updated contact information. Partners expresses its utmost gratitude to LiveAdvice™ for its support and generosity in providing temporary office space.*

## Partners in Prisons

Bulgarian prisons are infamous for the poor conditions that afflict inmates and staff alike. Prisoners face overcrowding, a shortage of hygienic materials, and limited opportunities to partake in productive working activities. Penitentiary staff, meanwhile, work in a high-risk environment in which they are under-resourced and under-trained. As a result, three levels of conflict have manifested: among prisoners, between prisoners and staff, and among staff members themselves.

Despite these conditions, few efforts have been made to introduce peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms into the prisons. Partners-Bulgaria, through the support of the Open Society Fund-Bulgaria and the U.S. Embassy, decided to tackle this difficult situation by developing a program to foster prison reform. This year-long initiative provides conflict prevention and resolution methodologies to prison security officers, administrators, social workers and psychologists through a series of trainings, and then works with penitentiary staff to apply these skills in their daily activities in prisons from across Bulgaria. The trainings built participants' capacities in communication and negotiation techniques; crisis and conflict management skills; and institutionalizing mediation (a process in which a neutral, third-party works to facilitate a consensus resolution) into prisons, including adapting the mediation process to meet varying conditions. With the conclusion of the trainings, Partners-Bulgaria is continuing to work with prison staff to settle individual disputes using their learned techniques.

The results of Partners-Bulgaria's program have already become apparent. In one instance, a social sector inspector from a Sofia prison, who is a partic-



Prison in Sofia, Bulgaria

ipant in the Center's program, recently faced a violent conflict between two prison guards that promised to escalate. Exacerbating the situation, one of the guards planned to sue the other and also report the incident to the press. Utilizing his skills from Partners-Bulgaria's training, the inspector decided to mediate the case; he visited with both of the guards, studied the roots of the conflict, and analyzed the interests and intentions of the two parties.

The inspector convened a meeting with the two guards to initiate a resolution. During the mediation process, the key motivation behind the conflict manifested: they were fighting over the supervision of a group of prisoners. Within two hours of identifying this issue, the inspector facilitated a resolution in which the guards agreed to share responsibilities. One of the guards will now lead the prisoners during leisure time activities, while the other will lead during work activities. The inspector presented this case to the other program participants, illustrating how the peaceful resolution of one conflict allowed for a productive working relationship between the prison guards, improved leadership for inmates, spared the court system the burden of a case, and saved the prison a public relations fiasco. ▲

## NEW CENTERS IN ALBANIA & KOSOVA



Directors of Partners-Kosova and Partners-Albania, Shukrie Gashi and Juliana Hoxha

Partners welcomes its two newest Centers, in Albania and Kosova, which were founded and registered as NGOs in 2001. Beginning in 1999, Partners conducted needs assessments in Albania and Kosova, including visits to refugee camps during the war in Kosova, and garnered local and international support for the new Centers. Juliana Hoxha directs Partners-Albania, which promotes community-based cooperative initiatives and works to build the capacity of NGOs, women and youth leaders, local government officials and academics. Meanwhile, Partners-Kosova, under the guidance of Shukrie Gashi, is implementing a diverse workplan that includes providing mediation services, increasing citizen participation in local government initiatives, and developing the leadership skills of women and youth.

### Albania

Partners hired Juliana Hoxha to serve as Director of Partners-Albania. In previous positions, as Deputy Director of Local NGO Grants for Mercy Corps International and Country Director for ORT, she developed extensive knowledge of the capacity and needs of civil society organizations in Albania.

In May 2001, the Assembly of the Republic of Albania passed three long-awaited laws affecting NGOs: The Law on the Public Benefit Organizations, the Registration Law of NGOs and amendments to the Civil Code that deal with NGOs. Partners-Albania will be integrally involved in efforts to educate judges, lawyers, and NGOs about these laws.

Partners-Albania is conducting a country-wide NGO needs assessment in preparation for its program to build NGOs' capacity and provide technical assistance.

### Argentina

Partners-Argentina conducted an assessment of La Mesa de Concertación Juvenil de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, a coalition of youth-led NGOs in Buenos Aires, and addressed its needs through a series of workshops for its members in communication, negotiation, facilitation and consensus-building skills.

The Center provided technical assistance to facilitate cooperative planning sessions for a national network promoting the integration of persons with disabilities into the workforce, in order to build consensus among members of the network for future public policy negotiations with the Ministry of Labor and other government ministries.

Under a contract from a Chilean NGO, Partners-Argentina delivered a four-day training in collaborative planning for Chilean municipal officials. The NGO will replicate the successes of Partners-Argentina's cooperative planning work in Chile.

**Bulgaria**

Utilizing role-plays and games, Partners-Bulgaria trained staff of two multiethnic schools on the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Child Protection Act. Due to continued demand for the services of its child rights program, Partners-Bulgaria maintains a Child Rights Information Center in Sofia.



The Center secured additional funding and continued multiple initiatives within its Project on Ethnic Integration and Conflict Resolution in the city of Lom, organizing trainings on mediation and conciliation, conflict management, proposal writing and fundraising, and communication and negotiation skills for the Roma community.

Partners-Bulgaria established the "Alternative Support for Young People Without Parental Care Center" to train young people without parental care in assertive behavior, conflict resolution, and career planning skills, and is planning to expand the project to include development of youth social entrepreneurship.

**Czech Republic**

The six-month project in Plzen, "Integration of Immigrants to the Czech Republic," culminated with a roundtable in which NGOs, media, educators, town police and government officials discussed the outcomes of the program's eight seminars in communication and conflict resolution in an inter-ethnic context. Partners-Czech facilitated the discussion among representatives from the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Archdiocesan Charity, and the Ukrainian and Vietnamese delegation.

The Center trained primary and secondary school teachers in drug abuse prevention through two-day interactive educational programs for school drug prevention coordinators, educational counselors and teachers.

# Bridging the Disability Divide

An often overlooked problem facing the transitioning democracies of Central/Eastern Europe is ensuring that society integrates and accommodates persons living with disabilities.

Partners-Baltic has taken a leading role in incorporating the special needs of persons with disabilities into Lithuania's infrastructure by raising awareness of communication and access issues. With support from the Open Society Fund-Lithuania's East-East Program, Partners-Baltic worked with Partners' International Division to design a regional program for Partners Centers and NGO leaders from across the Baltic States, NIS and South Caucasus. After receiving introductory skills in disability issues, participants met with a panel of persons with physical and mental disabilities and their families to breakdown myths and apply first-hand the communication skills required when interacting with persons with disabilities.

Site visits to specialized centers that work with children and young adults living with disabilities complemented the training. These facilities provide care and education for these youth and offer a range of creative activities, including carpentry, ceramics, cooking, dance, drama, music, sewing and sports. As a result of the facilities' services, youth with disabilities have had the opportunity to perform in orchestras across Europe, display paintings at national art exhibitions, and present plays and musicals to the highest acclaim.



Artwork by a Lithuanian youth with a mental disability

This training illustrates how Partners magnifies the impact of a single program: Partners-Baltic shares its specialization with the other Partners Centers, who in turn incorporate the new skills into their own initiatives across Central/Eastern Europe, NIS, Balkans and Latin America. The results have included Centers using training facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities and educating staff, trainers and the public on disability communication issues. As Partners increasingly works in post-violent societies, in which significant portions of the population must live with both mental and physical disabilities, it is especially critical that societies utilize these skills to address and build awareness of the special needs of persons with disabilities. ▲

# Mediation Goes National in Hungary

Ever since Partners-Hungary first introduced community-based mediation to the country in 1996, it has increasingly become an accepted and demanded profession in Hungary, resulting in a greater interest among NGOs, academic institutions, and government entities. This influx, however, has lacked direction and communication among the various initiatives, thereby resulting in challenges to coordinate efforts at the national level.

In late 2000, Partners-Hungary took the lead in unifying diverse mediation initiatives by establishing the National Mediation Association (NMA), a professional organization that aims to introduce and utilize mediation as a mechanism for resolving disputes throughout Hungary. The NMA is officially registered with the national court system and has a growing membership of 140 that includes social workers, sociologists, psychologists, and lawyers.

Partners-Hungary facilitated the creation of working groups, composed of representatives of Hungarian mediation associations, to discuss the NMA's structure, public policy initiatives, academic

programs and the development of mediation standards. In addition, Partners' International Division has secured resources from the U.S. Agency for International Development for the Center's work with the NMA; with this support, Partners-Hungary will lead the implementation of the NMA's mediator certification and standardization program, the result of which will be a nationwide panel of qualified professionals who are certified to mediate cases.

The NMA specializes in promoting public policies that incorporate mediation as a dispute resolution process. For example, the Ministry of Health requested Partners-Hungary and the NMA's assistance in drafting a mediation act to resolve medical malpractice issues. As a result, NMA members are now listed as official mediators in health care issues and received formal consultative status to educate new mediators. Partners-Hungary will expand the NMA's public policy approaches beyond the healthcare sector, to pursue the inclusion of mediators certified by the NMA under other relevant Hungarian legislation. ▲

# School Conflicts, Student Solutions

Slovak youth face many problems common to transitioning countries. These difficulties are related to the erosion of traditional family life, rising unemployment, and other obstacles to socio-economic improvement. Further, youth role models often offer images of aggressive and confrontational behavior, and the Slovak education system is beset by financial strains. Therefore, a principal need in primary and secondary schools is to nurture civic culture, education for democratic change and values, constitutional principles and human rights.

Partners-Slovakia has been pioneering conflict resolution programs in primary and secondary schools for more than five years, reaching more than 40 schools in Bratislava, Naska Bystrica, Lev-ice and Nové Zámky. Several of the participating

outreach. The program has witnessed tremendous success, and several schools have sustained their programs beyond the period of Partners-Slovakia's assistance. Further, most students find the topic of conflict resolution very attractive if presented in an interactive way, and the young mediators have proven very creative in promoting peer mediation: writing articles in school newspapers, painting t-shirts, creating posters on conflict resolution topics, introducing mediation using role plays, and building a website ([www.mediacia.sk](http://www.mediacia.sk)).

In March 2001, Partners-Slovakia's school-based programs culminated in the simultaneous publishing of a handbook on peer mediation and the First Slovak Peer Mediation Conference, under support from the Charles Stewart Mott Founda-



Slovak students and Partners-Slovakia's Peer Mediation Project Manager, Āleš Bednařik (center), celebrate the success of their program and the Peer Mediation Handbook

high schools were selected based on a high number of minority Hungarian-speaking students and teachers. Training programs provide communication, cooperative behavior, negotiation and mediation skills to primary and secondary school students and teachers. Typically, these trainings are organized to be fun, full of interactive activities, simulations and games.

In order for participants to apply these skills, Partners-Slovakia builds peer mediation programs in which students can facilitate their own peaceful resolutions to school disputes. Partners-Slovakia provides full support to student mediators by helping them develop referral systems, conducting regular supervisory meetings, organizing refresher trainings and a rotation every year for both "new" and "old" mediators, and providing guidance on

tion. The conference included 60 students and teachers from primary and secondary schools participating in the programs. School representatives presented the current state of their peer mediation programs and discussed their successes, cases and challenges. The Center's publication, *Conflict Resolution — Handbook for Teachers and People Working with Youth*, has been widely distributed and summarizes five years of experience with peer mediation programs in Slovakia.

This Partners-Slovakia initiative teaches students and their teachers a framework that is relevant to their futures in a society coping with social dislocations, violence and multiethnic intolerance. It also promotes a new style of thinking in the Slovak education system by allowing students to act democratically and to 'own' solutions to their conflicts. ▲

In Pardubice, Partners-Czech continues to encourage collaboration between representatives of the Roma minority, the town administration, schools and self-government. The Center organized ten two-day seminars in ethnic tolerance, including a seminar on Roma rights and inter-ethnic communication. At the end of this project, Partners-Czech will have trained 125 participants in ethnic tolerance skills.

## Georgia

Partners-Georgia mediated its first case in March 2001, involving an NGO working with elderly persons. With the assistance of Center staff, the disputants reached a successful agreement and withdrew their court case.

With a final consultation for teachers and trainers from Youth Clubs across Georgia, and the completion of a manual on NGO management, Partners-Georgia concluded its ten-month NGO development training program. The project has been funded by AED/USAID and has empowered Georgian NGOs in various areas of organizational development.

In cooperation with the "Future is Yours" Movement, Partners-Georgia developed a program to promote change management skills among teenagers.

## Hungary

Partners-Hungary continued its work to develop minority self-government in Tiszavasvari, Eastern Hungary, by facilitating communication and cooperation between minority and local self-governments to improve living conditions, forming a nation-wide Roma civil association to represent their interests,



and conducting training programs for Roma citizens in employment skills and for Roma leaders in communication, presentation, negotiation and mediation skills. The series of meetings set a precedent for Roma and local government interaction and collaboration.

(cont. pg. 7) ►

*Over the past five years, Partners has worked with Centers to design and implement several women's initiatives to build the skills and networks among women that enable them to advocate effectively for their own needs, while also contributing to the peaceful transition of their countries. These pages reflect on some accomplishments thus far and offer perspectives on two of the programs.*

## Lessons Learned: Young Women Report

Young women involved in one of Partners' recent women's initiatives, the Leadership Institute for Young Women of Central and Eastern Europe, met in Prague in June 2001 for the final regional conference of their two-year leadership training program. This "Lessons Learned" conference, which brought together over thirty young women from Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Ukraine, focused on participants' experiences in applying the training skills to their own lives, work, and communities.



Belarusians model their trainings

The conference, facilitated by Partners-Czech and funded by the Levi Strauss Foundation, encouraged the young women to share their achievements. For example, the three Belarusian participants trained over 120 women in six rural communities in communication skills and civic participation; more than 20 of these Belarusian women have since joined NGOs due to their enthusiasm for the expertise of the young trainers and the skills they learned. Other impressive accomplishments by the Central/Eastern European women included: creating a

new NGO, conducting a training for over 80 librarians, utilizing conflict resolution in the classroom, team-building within organizations, and working with the Roma community. Several of the young women also led the group in interactive trainings on topics such as leadership, multiculturalism, and self-awareness. An overriding theme at the conference was not only the skills the young women gained from the three regional trainings on communication, teambuilding, and cooperative planning, but also their increased sense of confidence and commitment to leadership in their communities (see feature, right).

The conference concluded with a graduation ceremony, during which the participants shared cultural games, songs, and skits. Many of the young women have planned to work together in the future to conduct trainings and share experiences in their own organizations and communities. ▲

## Feature: A Leg Up on Leadership

Maja Branka, a 23 year-old Polish woman and Partners-Poland staff member, stands in front of 30 other young Central and Eastern European women to conduct an exercise and discussion on leadership skills. Her co-trainers, also young Polish women, hand out materials and explain how the exercise will work. Soon thereafter, small groups intensely negotiate strategies and roles in an effort to find cooperative approaches to their training projects. The young Polish trainers circulate the room, observing. At the end of the exercise, they facilitate a discussion on leadership roles within each group. A brainstormed list on the wall describes the qualities of good leadership, and it is impressive how often the young women identify collaboration as a prioritized skill.

These young women have gathered in Prague in June 2001 for Partners' Leadership Institute for Young Women of Central and Eastern Europe, a celebration of the concrete applications of the skills learned throughout the program. After watching the five young Polish women lead this particular exercise, it is easy to comprehend the success of their in-country trainings, which applied their newly acquired skills. In April 2001, the young women worked together, with mentoring from Partners-Poland, to conduct a training on leadership skills for 37 young women at the Polish-German house in Silesia (Poland). The response to the training was so positive that the Polish women were asked and funded to conduct another training later this year.

"We were really nervous to conduct the trainings at first," Sylwia Kot says, "but in the end we felt so proud and confident." The rest of the team grins and nods in agreement. In discussing their success, Joanna Olejek says, "We worked so hard and we really worked as a team. These girls are all my good friends now." Many of the other participants emphasize the inspiration the Polish participants gave them to further pursue their own community initiatives. From the example of these five Polish women, it is clear that this conference does not signify the end of a program, but instead represents the beginning of many years of young women's cooperative work across Central and Eastern Europe. ▲



Polish YWLI participants:  
Anna Modzelewska,  
Maja Branka,  
Ariadna Ciolkiewicz,  
Sylwia Kot,  
Joanna Olejek

## Georgia's Regional Gender Agenda

Young women in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, like others around the world, face the dual challenge of age and gender when pursuing positions of leadership. When compounded by the economic, political, and social hardships stemming from the transition to a democratic and market-oriented system, young women from the South Caucasus find themselves in an especially vulnerable environment.

Partners realized that young women, if empowered with tools to address the specific challenges they face, are a strong force for progress and reform in all sectors. But, in order to succeed, they must have access to a wide range of options, gain confidence in their own abilities, possess specialized leadership and management skills, and develop the capacity to advocate within government, businesses, and the general public.

In pursuit of these goals, Partners-Georgia and Partners' International Division collaborated to develop and implement the South Caucasus Young Women's Leadership Institute (YWLI). This 18-month program, funded by the U.S. Department of State, trained 24 young women from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia in key leadership skills. The young women gathered in Tbilisi, Georgia for four trainings on empowerment and personal development, effective leadership and management, conflict management, and cooperative planning. Participants also contributed to community service initiatives between the trainings to utilize their new skills.

As part of the program, participants from all three countries were involved in a plethora of activities in their home countries. For example, one young woman from Georgia participated in organizing the training on "Youth Against War" by the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly in Georgia; two Armenian participants conducted a training on team building and communication skills for refugee children; and two participants from Azerbaijan organized and facilitated the School for Intercultural Dialogue and Understanding Conference, attended by 70 participants from Western and Eastern Europe.

The young women had much to say about the implications of their new skills. One participant

from Georgia said, "This program taught me how to plan, develop, and implement any kind of presentation most effectively. These are the skills that are absolutely essential for any active NGO member. I made a few very important presentations at the university for our NGO and was pleasantly surprised at how well I did." Another participant from Armenia stated, "Thanks to my participation in the YWLI Program, I have become more self-confident as a person and as a professional. Effective communication skills helped me during my job interviews with various international organizations. For instance, three weeks ago I passed the competition and got a new prestigious job at the U.N. World Food Program."



Participants of the South Caucasus Young Women's Leadership Institute in Tbilisi

The YWLI participants not only impacted their region through positions of leadership and utilizing their skills to help hundreds of South Caucasian citizens, but also by demonstrating the potential for cooperation between divided groups, such as Armenians and Azeris. ▲

The Center facilitated a collaborative problem-solving process in a two-day workshop for refugee service providers to train staff from UNHCR, National Migration and Refugee Office, Reception Centers, Hungarian Red Cross, Menedek Association for Migrants and other NGOs on issues of administration, education, language courses, health care, employment and financial support.

Partners-Hungary conducted a training in mediation skills for 42 participants of its Public Administration Model program in order to build the capacity of social administration officials working in local governments across Hungary.

### Kosova

In order to meet the urgent need for conflict management skills in the province, Partners-Kosova was established in May 2001. Mediation services, a cornerstone of the Center, are provided to solve a variety of disputes, including community, family, minor or juvenile crime, property and business.

Partners-Kosova staff selected twenty young women from the underserved communities of Drenas/Glllogovc, Lipjan/Lypian, Podujeva/Besiana, and Suhareka/Therandë, to participate in its Women's Leadership program. This two-year program includes four central training segments, practice and application through specific projects, mentoring, and the development of a network bridging the four towns.



Another Center program, to promote Local Government and Public Service Reform, has been initiated in the same municipalities as the Women's Leadership Initiative, plus Shtimje. Staff attended Partners' trainings on Local Government-NGO Cooperation and Cooperative Approaches to Inter-Group Issues, and are conducting an assessment to determine areas of most critical need. The program will include training in communication and facilitation, leadership and public participation, and strategic planning and financial management. ➤

**Lithuania**

Partners-Baltic launched its program, "Reintegration of Women with Disabilities and Women Caretakers of Persons with Disabilities into the Labor Market" with implementing partners, Lithuanian Labour Market Training Authority and Berufliches Bildungs-und Rehabilitation Zentrum (BBRZ) in Austria.

Working groups from the newly formed municipality of Elektrenai sought Partners-Baltic's expertise in training NGOs and municipal leaders in cross-sector cooperation and fundraising. This training will serve as the precursor to an expanded program to build the capacity of newly formed Lithuanian municipalities.

Partners-Baltic, the Ministry of Social Affairs of Lithuania, Lithuanian Labor Exchange Training Authority, and partnering organizations in Austria, Spain and Denmark, developed a European-wide training resource for trainers of vocational advancement, including face-to-face and distance training approaches.

**Poland**

In collaboration with the Robert Schuman Foundation, Partners-Poland facilitated four workshops for Polish Public TV journalists on Poland's European Union accession and its future impact on the national education system, negotiation structure, property ownership, and employment.

Partners-Poland is developing a mediation service to resolve family disputes, including divorce, child custody, housing, and truancy. The program will also work to raise public awareness in Poland of mediation as a family dispute resolution mechanism and will pursue the support of the legal, judicial, social service and NGO communities.

Partners-Poland conducted a training in Krakow for 12 political leaders from Belarus in political campaigning for democratic opposition parties. The training topics included ground rules for political campaigning, targeting and researching techniques for the election committee, mobilizing focus groups, public relations, and political television analyses.

# Demystifying Czech Laws



A Czech police officer trained in Street Law explains democratic rights to students

Over the past decade in the Czech Republic, hundreds of new laws have been created and implemented that affect every aspect of society. Yet since the general public is often unfamiliar with these laws and the ways in which they impact their lives, the Czech Republic faces a dilemma familiar to many countries: how to demystify its legal system and involve citizens in its functioning.

In collaboration with the Czech Open Society Fund, Partners-Czech implements its Street Law program to explain and humanize laws, and to teach people to use the legal system as a problem-solving tool. Partners-Czech's Street Law program has three primary constituencies: law students, police officers, and elementary and secondary school students.

Through interactive trainings, mock trials, and role-plays, Partners-Czech educates participants about issues such as freedom of speech, the relationship between law and morals, alternative dispute resolution, family law, housing rights, and drug and crime prevention. As a result of Partners-Czech's efforts, participants have gone on to implement such "hands-on" methodologies in their classrooms and community programs.

When participants implement these skills, they find that the interactive methodologies excite and inspire students and other trainees to actively

participate in learning about laws. For example, two police officers trained by Partners-Czech regularly visit schools to conduct Street Law presentations. Before one presentation at a local school, a teacher who claimed that laws could never be taught in an interesting way discouraged the officers. After spending two hours at the school preparing a mock trial, however, they could hardly leave due to the enthusiasm of the students. Several days later, some of the students ran into the officers on the street and shared how much they appreciated the presentation and how it had changed their way of thinking about the legal system. In this instance, presenters not only engaged students in learning about law, but also created an atmosphere conducive to dialogue and interaction between students and police officers in their community.

Partners-Czech helps participants understand that the legal system is a real and tangible tool that can be used as a problem-solving mechanism to ensure the smooth functioning of society. They are able to impart this belief to students, teachers, police, and community members, who then further disseminate this understanding of laws and the legal system to others in their communities through additional trainings and activities. In this way, the Street Law program helps demystify the new legal system in the Czech Republic, thus increasing citizen participation and strengthening the rule of law. ▲

# Building Local Lomianki Youth Leadership

In Lomianki, a township outside of Warsaw, Poland, youth face many obstacles to realizing educational, cultural and recreational opportunities. Socio-economic disparities between recent and long-time inhabitants have created a tension and division that often paralyzes the community. This divergence has especially impacted youth, resulting in poor educational institutions, street aggression, substance abuse, unemployment, and deteriorating family support.

In response to Lomianki's needs, and with the support of the Alfred Jurzykowski Foundation, Partners-Poland developed and implemented a program to empower youth and the community as a whole to effect positive change. The process began with Partners-Poland staff conducting extensive interviews with the Lomianki mayor, City Council members, school principals, youth leaders, and other citizens in order to assess accurately the town's social landscape and needs.

Based on this analysis, staff facilitated two series of workshops to develop a strategy for action: one with local government and adult community leaders, the other with youth from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. These sessions worked to build trust and morale among community members from various professions and backgrounds, and resulted in the formation of two committees, the Lomianki Local Committee and the Lomianki Youth Local Committee.

With these two institutions in place, the community improved its ability to address not only the existing problems it faces, but also to tackle proactively new challenges that arise. The Committees, with the support of Partners-Poland staff, have achieved numerous concrete results in the brief time since their founding. The members of the Local Committee cooperatively formulated a "Vision for Lomianki" that details the ten-year development of educational, cultural and recreational facilities to improve the opportunities available to Lomianki's youth. Meanwhile, the Youth Local Committee has been busy implementing a short-term strategy, planning and hosting cultural and recreational events for youth and families from different socio-economic backgrounds. Its activities have included the First Annual Lomianki Festival of Culture and Entertainment; the publication of *Zur-nal*, a cultural magazine produced entirely by and for youth; and soccer and rugby sporting events.

Partners-Poland staff continues to work with the Youth Committee, which has evolved into a legally registered group, the "Association to Help and Support Youth Initiatives Workshops." It is furthering the Youth Committee's mandate through planning upcoming activities, including the Second Annual Lomianki Festival, additional issues of the *Zur-nal* magazine, photography workshops for children, and tutoring for disadvantaged children. Further, the Association has proven sustainable through support from the European Union to continue its community-building activities. For all involved, the Association and its accomplishments represent significant steps in the empowerment of Lomianki's youth and a sustainable youth movement for change.

PIERWSZY MŁODZIEŻOWY FESTIWAL ROZRYWKI I KULTURY ŁOMIANKI 2000

TURNIEJ WARCABOWY dla młodzieży do lat 16  
główna nagroda ROWER GÓRSKI  
zapisy na turniej od 11:30

17 CZERWCA 2000  
DOM KULTURY W ŁOMIANKACH

PROGRAM FESTIWALU:

- TURNIEJ WARCABOWY
- ZABAWY I KONKURSY SPORTOWE
- KONKURSY PLASTYCZNE
- CIEMNIA FOTOGRAFICZNA
- MALOWANIE TWARZY
- BĘBNI AFRYKAŃSKIE
- POKAZY WSCHODNICH SZTUK WALKI
- HAPPENING PLASTYCZNY
- WYSTAWA MALARSTWA
- KONCERT ZESPOŁÓW MUZYCZNYCH
- WYSTĘP ZESPOŁU „ŁOMIANECZKI”
- HYDE PARK „ŁOMIANKI 2010”
- POKAZ REZUSCYTACJI
- NAUKA ART-HAFTU performing by Ewa
- POKAZY GIMNASTYCZNE
- BIEG NA ORIENTACJĘ
- OSA z WARSZAWĄ z KABRIOLET
- NIEWIDZIALNY ŚMIGŁOWIEC

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- Stacja POCZTOWA tel. 751 30 30
- Stacja pocztowa gminna tel. 751 00 32
- Partnersia REMAN tel. 751 41 31
- Stacja TYRAMISO tel. 751 00 30
- Partnersia U BOCZANA tel. 751 20 10

DLA WSZYSTKICH UCZESTNIKÓW POCZESTUNEK I GWARANTOWANA DOBRA ZABAWA

Poster, designed by Lomianki youth, promoting the First Annual Lomianki Festival of Culture and Entertainment

Based on the continuing success of this program, Partners-Poland developed a case study and educational simulation game in order to share lessons learned with other organizations and communities. These tools capture the essence of the Lomianki program and demonstrate the tremendous possibilities for cooperation among diverse groups and the impact that citizen participation can achieve in a community. ▲

## Romania

As part of its "Building Bridges" program, which encourages and facilitates cross-sector cooperation, Partners-Romania developed, translated and adapted into Romanian training manuals on "Managing Conflict and Differences" and "Participatory Planning," initiated four participatory planning processes, organized meetings and public events, and worked to develop university training modules on democratization.

For her dedication to improving urban governance in Romania and Central and Eastern Europe, Ana Vasilache, Director of Partners-Romania, received from the United Nations Center for Human Settlements (Habitat) the Scroll of Honor Award for Year 2000 along with six persons and two organizations from all over the world.

Under the "Working Together" Program, now in its third year of municipal government reform initiatives, Partners-Romania trained participants from across the region on public service management, time management, local government-NGO cooperation and cooperative approaches to inter-group issues. The Center is currently working with participants to implement their acquired skills through trainings in their home communities.

## Slovakia

Partners-Slovakia celebrated its 10th anniversary by hosting a two day conference on "Civil Society and its Ability to Deal with Conflicts" in early October 2001. The conference, held in Bratislava, was attended by over 150 participants representing diverse sectors in Slovakia and countries from the South and Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus, and the United States.

As part of a joint project supported by the British Council and Partners-Slovakia, more than 30 representatives from 15 environmental organizations met in March 2001 to answer the question "What does public participation mean and how can we bring it into everyday life?" in order to build citizens' confidence to participate in public issues.

Partners-Slovakia published a new resource on assistance possibilities for the cultural development of Roma communities, including background on Roma education, existing and potential education projects, experiences of Partners-Slovakia and Partners-Czech in working with Roma, and a resource list of 250 publications and 40 websites offering information on Roma history, culture and issues. Partners-Slovakia also published two books on youth issues: "Conflict Resolution—Handbook for Teachers and People Working With Youth" and "Youth at Risk."

**Cross-Border Highlights**

Partners' International Division and Partners-Romania coordinated four trainings-of-trainers in the Southeastern Europe Municipal Training Capacity Development Program, on Public Service Management, Local Government-NGO Cooperation, Cooperative Approaches to Inter-Group Issues, and Mediation Skills.

Partners-Romania conducted a training-of-trainers and pilot workshop on elected leadership in Madagascar and Senegal, funded by UNCHS (Habitat). In Madagascar, the Center trained 14 trainers from the NGO, civil service, and private sectors, and 18 elected officials from the Antsirabe local government; in Senegal, participants included senior trainers from ENDA Tiers Monde, and 167 trainers from NGOs and local governments.

Partners-Hungary extended its expertise on minority issues to the cross-border Roma program in the Voivodina province of Serbia, providing trainings for Roma leaders and developing a regional Roma cooperation program. The program involved Roma civil organizations and Roma minority governments from Somogy, Bala and Bacs-Kiskun counties.

Both Partners-Bulgaria and Partners-Hungary are members of the South East European Child Rights Action Network (SEECRAN). Bulgarian staff assisted in the formation of the movement's Regional Network, and Partners-Hungary's Antonia Haga was elected president of the governing board. The mission of SEECRAN is to promote the best interest of children at a regional level, provide child participation programs, support families, and advocate for the incorporation of children's rights into negotiations on accession to the European Union. ▲

# Public Security: Everyone's Problem

Argentine citizens have become increasingly concerned with the rise of violent crime in their communities. The boiling point came with the murder of a child in the city of Castelar, the largest city of Morón County, Buenos Aires Province. Following this incident, citizens decided to take action by forming neighborhood Security Forums through which they could discuss and resolve public security problems. Citizens also lobbied the legislature of Buenos Aires Province to enact the Public Security Provincial Act 12154, mandating citizen participation in public safety through the creation of over 300 Security Forums throughout Buenos Aires Province.

Partners-Argentina, in collaboration with Partners' International Division, built a program to work with the South Castelar Forum (one of two formed in the city) to design community-based public safety measures. With support from the Tinker Foundation, Partners-Argentina facilitated cooperative planning sessions that brought together all members of the South Castelar Forum to address pressing security issues in the neighborhood and to implement effectively Act 12154. The sessions yielded numerous improvements, including an agreement with municipal officials to cover the costs of Forum meetings; the development of a strategic plan for public outreach; and the gathering of victims of violent crimes to relate their experiences to Forum representatives.



A member of the South Castelar Forum expresses his view on the purpose of the Security Forum.

With the support of local government officials, Partners-Argentina decided to expand the scope of the South Castelar project to include public policy recommendations from a more diverse cross-section of citizens and communities concerned with public safety. The Center is currently working with seven additional Security Forums in the County of Morón to develop and build consensus around a series of potential public policies. Through an upcoming public event, Partners-Argentina will present the recommendations to a wide range of government officials. ▲

# A Cooperative Approach to Urban Problems

Romanian cities endure a host of public service provision problems in the post-Communist era. Municipal leaders, accustomed to centralized control, operate on shrinking budgets and face increasing responsibilities, including mastering democratic leadership, change management and citizen participation skills. Not the least of their problems is urban waste management.

Partners-Romania assembled 22 experts from 14 Central/Eastern and Southeastern European countries, representing organizations as diverse as ministries of foreign affairs and NGOs, to study management of solid waste in Eforie, the oldest and most polluted Romanian resort town. The event was an intensive one-week Public Service Management Workshop, one of a series of trainings-for-trainers under a regional municipal development program, designed and coordinated by Partners-Romania and Partners' International Division, and supported by the Open Society Institute's Local Government Initiative, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Partners-Romania's trainers designed the workshop as a real-life introduction to cooperative approaches to public service provision. Following a training component, and as part of Partners-Romania's "learning through doing" methodology, the twenty-two participants worked with the city as consultants to investigate the roots of its service problems. They fanned across the city and talked to as many stakeholders as possible, from school officials to business owners to representatives of ethnic minority communities. Their cooperative efforts resulted in a presentation of their findings and suggestions to local public service officials.

Following this experience, participants drafted action plans, based on the local needs of their home cities, and returned to their communities to organize similar trainings for municipal leaders in management and cooperation skills. The training thus produced a multiplier effect, creating not only experts on resolving public service issues through cross-sector collaboration, but also facilitators and trainers capable of further disseminating these skills. ▲

# PARTNERS' U.S. DIVISION

## Reinforcing Community Building in West Fresno

One by One Leadership, The West Fresno Planning Collaborative is a vibrant, committed community group and advocacy organization. Its mission is to convene and connect community members, coordinate plans, and work to build the capacity of its members to achieve a shared vision for the West Fresno community. Since Partners-U.S.' first meeting with the Collaborative, the organization has succeeded in establishing a nonprofit organization and is moving ahead to position community stakeholders, including youth and people of color, in participatory roles.

Partners-U.S.' services to the Collaborative have included trainings on cooperative planning and problem-solving, group consensus decision-making, and core competency development aimed at strengthening West Fresno's public participation and civic engagement processes. "We focused our community leadership efforts, went after funding, and established a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. Partners-U.S. offered training and tools that helped us increase our credibility, focus on our assets and our work, and convene the Collaborative," said the Mentoring Director of One by One Leadership, West Fresno Planning Collaborative.

In the early stages of Partners-U.S.' work with the Collaborative, three community representatives attended its Core Competency Training in South San Francisco, and conducted two days of training on how

to address issues of multicultural inclusion with sixty members of various community groups within the Collaborative. "I liked the unbiased, impartial advice and direction. They [Partners] provided a fresh perspective and an experienced perspective. This added credibility to the Collaborative, and made the community want to become a part of it; we focused on accountability. The partnership between West Fresno and Partners-U.S. is about reinforcing ongoing community-building efforts," said Gwen Robinson, Director of West Fresno Planning Collaborative. "The skills helped me to recognize the various types of facilitation needed to direct diverse groups of people. Partners was able to listen to our needs and communicated clear-cut goals around the work we wanted to accomplish."

"We are excited about continuing to work with West Fresno's visionary and capable leadership," said Roberta Joyner, Partners-U.S.' new Director, following a recent site visit. "It was heartwarming to learn about the work my predecessors engaged in, and equally exciting to hear Fresno's responses about the positive impact Partners-U.S. had on their own capacity building." The West Fresno group intends to focus on helping youth build skills and develop their collective capacity to become an active voice in resolving complex public disputes through collaborative processes. ▲



A native of Berkeley, California, Roberta Joyner joined Partners in April to serve as the new director for Partners' U.S. Division. Her background includes over twenty years directing award winning community development initiatives. Her early career as a community organizer progressed to managing projects and training staff in twenty-two states. More recently, as director at the Haas School of Business at U.C. Berkeley, she led a team that developed youth education and entrepreneurship programs for statewide implementation. Roberta recently completed the course work for a Masters Degree in Nonprofit Management.

**Partners-United States**, a Division of Partners for Democratic Change, helps nonprofit organizations and advocacy and community mediation groups develop sustainable capacity and a more pronounced voice in social justice issues that impact individual neighborhoods across the country. Partners' flexible services are designed to increase the number of people of color, youth, and members of ethnic and national minorities skilled in collaborative and consensus building processes. Along with its work at the neighborhood level, Partners is launching the development of a cooperative planning multicultural model. Partners-U.S. works with the following organizations:

- ❖ City of Franklin Micro-Society School (K-6th), Berkeley, California
- ❖ Community Mediation Program, Baltimore, Maryland
- ❖ Cross Community Coalition and the Colorado People's Environmental and Economic Network, Denver, Colorado
- ❖ FOCUS St. Louis, Missouri
- ❖ Neighborhood Mediation Center, Portland, Oregon
- ❖ West Fresno Planning Collaborative/One by One Leadership, California
- ❖ Community Mediation Center, Knoxville, Tennessee
- ❖ Conciliation Forums of Oakland, California
- ❖ Louisiana Health Care Campaign, Baton Rouge
- ❖ NICOS Chinese Health Coalition, San Francisco, California
- ❖ St. John's Educational Thresholds Center, San Francisco, California
- ❖ Youth and Family Assistance, Redwood City, California

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## MISSION STATEMENT

Partners for Democratic Change is an international organization committed to building sustainable local capacity to advance civil society and a culture of change and conflict management worldwide.

## ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The **PRESIDENT'S OFFICE** is responsible for implementing and monitoring Partners' five year strategic plan, planning new Center development, developing organizational initiatives, and overseeing and coordinating the Divisions, finance, and administration. Raymond Shonholtz serves as President and the Office is located in San Francisco.

The **INTERNATIONAL DIVISION** promotes Partners' mission through building the capacity of its Centers; transferring expertise among Centers; designing and managing multi-national and in-country programs on intergroup relations, community development, citizen participation and good governance; providing change and conflict management skills to transitioning countries worldwide; and partnering with local and international organizations. Brad Heckman is Director of the International Division, based in New York City.

The **UNITED STATES DIVISION** is responsible for promoting social change and conflict prevention, incorporating consensus processes within existing community groups, increasing the number of leaders of color implementing consensus processes, developing multicultural cooperative planning materials, and conducting training programs. Roberta Joyner is Director of the United States Division, which is located in San Francisco.