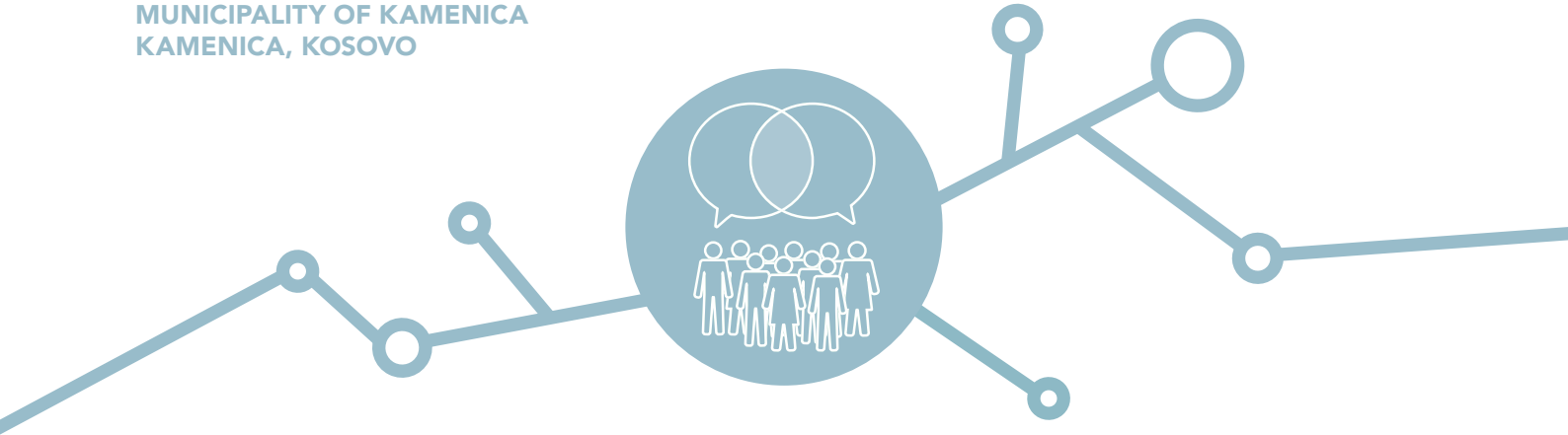


LEARNING EACH OTHER'S LANGUAGE

MUNICIPALITY OF KAMENICA
KAMENICA, KOSOVO



CATEGORIES

- A** Connecting activities & community events
- F** Formats overcoming conflicts & division

PRESENTER

Qendron Kastrati, Mayor of Kamenica

DESCRIPTION

In January 2019, The Municipality of Kamenica started language courses for the Serbian and Albanian citizens who were interested in learning each other's languages. We have completed the first level A1 using the platform VocUP developed by IOM and supported by the British Embassy. The project has continued with another class of beginners and the Second Level and is taking place in the Municipality of Kamenica facilities. More than 100 citizens of different ages, genders, and backgrounds have been part of the project so far. The project, which started in our municipality and resulted in success in its pilot stage, is now being implemented in other municipalities in Kosovo.

MOTIVATION

Gradual but steady reintegration of different ethnicities in Kamenica.

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

The aim of the project is to overcome communication barriers which lead to more pressing issues, such as stereotyping and judgement as well as unemployment in many cases.

MORE DETAILS

As part of its reintegration goals and due to the difficulties that its citizens faced in their daily lives due to communication barriers, the municipality of Kamenica has begun to offer language courses in order for people to meet with each other, learn each other's languages, and discuss their shared issues as well as their vision for the future. The students use booklets developed by experts and supported by IOM and the British Embassy. They also use the digital platform voc-up.com, which is an innovative and interactive platform that teaches Albanian and Serbian to people via a website that is Android and iOS friendly.

This project started in an effort to encourage social inclusion through learning the official languages of our multi-language community. Language is an important tool that facilitates necessary communication between different groups and fosters mutual understanding and cooperation. This is relevant not only to institutions but to Kamenica's youth population and public servants as both groups benefit tremendously from this project.

Community-based development initiatives in Kamenica, such as the painting of a mural in the town centre by Serbian and Albanian artists, are also part of the project. Course participants further visited important sights of historic and cultural significance of both communities in Kosovo.

This project will be utilised to benefit the beneficiaries and enable a seamless and effective re-integration process. It will also contribute to enhancing their employment prospects and encourage inter-cultural dialogue between the beneficiaries and members of the existing community.

OUTCOMES

Hundreds of participants have participated in the project activities, such as visits to cultural and religious sites, language courses, artistic activities etc. We aim to include even more people in the future.

LESSONS LEARNED

We will continue with the project and aim to increase publicity. Our aim is to find a permanent location for the courses and devise a more sustainable approach for the project.