

Project profile

Supporting youth for tolerance and democracy

Introduction

In 2017 Saferworld and the Foundation for Tolerance International (FTI) launched a project to support young people from across southern Kyrgyzstan to come together and discuss issues around religion and democracy, and to take action to shape public opinion and government responses. The project aims to create greater understanding and increased interaction between young people from different backgrounds to build peace.

Background

In Kyrgyzstan, approximately 41 per cent of the population are under the age of 29. In the absence of a stable and secure environment for growth and development, some people, including youth, may turn to non-state sources of stability and security.

The rise of violent groups around the world increased concerns at home and abroad that extremist messages could resonate with youth who regularly face discrimination and exclusion. Many of these marginalised groups have few opportunities to raise their concerns, increasing the sense of disenfranchisement, which can further push them to the fringes of society.

It is in this context that Saferworld's project seeks to facilitate greater cooperation and civic activism and to support young men and women to lead collaborative initiatives that raise awareness of security concerns and carry out action plans to address them.

Project approach

Together with our partner FTI, Saferworld will:

- train young people and women leaders on democracy and civic participation, with a focus on diversity of and respect for religions, cultures and community security
- support young people and women leaders to implement initiatives that address issues that are important to them



Photo: Saferworld

Project

Supporting youth for tolerance and democracy

Project locations

Osh, Batken and Jalal-Abad oblasts

Donor

European Union

Size of grant

EUR €1,073,649

Project duration

February 2017- January 2020

Saferworld thematic area

Security and justice

Youth

- conduct research on youth perspectives on what drives division and intolerance in Kyrgyzstan, and what they believe leads to extremist attitudes and behaviours among their peers, which will provide recommendations on how to improve social cohesion
- work with parliamentarians, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the State Agency for Youth and Sports under the Kyrgyz Government to conduct an information campaign about tolerance, drawing from the research results
- actively involve local authorities, youth committees, crime prevention centres, police and other civil society actors to collaborate with young people on these initiatives.

Anticipated outcomes

- Young women and men, including formal and informal women leaders, demonstrate an increased understanding of the effects of intolerance, the benefits of dialogue and collaboration, and finding ways in which they can address challenges facing their communities and society more broadly.
- There is greater collaboration among communities, and between communities, local authorities and security providers through youth-led initiatives that aim to address youth concerns.
- Young women and men, including formal and informal women leaders, advocate for more context-appropriate government policies and practices to address youth concerns and to support collaboration among youth.

Partners

Foundation for Tolerance International (FTI)

Activities

- Coordinate nine youth camps for youth from different backgrounds, ethnicities, regions, and religious beliefs. Participants will take part in interactive trainings, debates, and exercises that promote tolerance and respect for diversity.
- Conduct nine conflict and peace analysis workshops with selected participants from the youth camps, focusing on the complex drivers of conflict and social division among young people.
- Provide advisory, technical and financial support to groups of young people and women leaders to develop and implement local campaigns, address problems, and promote social cohesion in their communities in three southern provinces.
- Lead a youth study visit to Europe to exchange experiences, best practices, and lessons learnt based on their experiences working to promote tolerance in their communities.

Funded by



**PROJECT FUNDED BY THE
EUROPEAN UNION**

Saferworld is an independent international organisation working to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives.