

Youth Answer the President's Challenge



Photo: Community Self Help Initiative

Mak Action's brilliant yellow T-shirt and cap show up across Macedonia. Young people organized creative Mak Action projects throughout Macedonia and a team of Mak Action volunteers helped paint the toll booths leading to Greece for the summer Olympics.

In 2002, Macedonia President Boris Trajkovski called for a volunteer organization - modeled on the U.S. Peace Corps – to help Macedonia's transition to a democratic, market-oriented nation which had endured numerous economic shocks and ethnic tensions. USAID began working with local leaders to create an organization that would undertake community-based activities to promote multi-ethnic collaboration and environmental concern, while benefiting the community and involving a large number of volunteers.

Today 300 volunteers, mostly students in eleven cities, form the nucleus of Macedonian Volunteers for Action (Mak Action). Mak Action serves as a training ground for young leaders with the goals of development, community action, multi-ethnic harmony and peace in Macedonia. In 2003, more than 100 events in which 12,000 Macedonians participated were held where young people organized creative projects. Mak Action volunteers organize events, as well as recruit participants and supporters, to stage plays, write guide books, and produce newsletters and movies, and perform community service activities.

Photo & Caption