

Inclusive social approaches

good practices of South-East Europe municipalities



Inclusive social approaches: good practices of South-East Europe municipalities

Publisher:

Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS)

For the publisher:

Goran Cvetanović, NALAS President

Kelmend Zajazi, NALAS Executive Director

Editors:

Marina Tuneva

Jelena Janevska

Program staff:

Boran Ivanoski

Zana Shehi

Coordination in the implementation of practices:

Blagorodna Shopova, ZELS

Dardan Gjevori, AKM

Mirjana Komnenović, SCTM

Aida Cacaj, AAM

Keti Daja, ALAA

Vladana Popović Đorđić, AMTRS

Luna Seković, ACMFBIH

Design:

Branislav Jovanović

©Skopje, August 2022

The project “Enhancing local capacities to implement the 2030 Agenda and the “Leave No One Behind” Principle” is realised with the financial support of the project “Social Rights for Vulnerable Groups II (SoRi II)”, implemented by GIZ, in partnership with NALAS, within the program “Strengthening Good Governance in the Western Balkan Countries”.

Content

Awareness Raising for human rights, non-discrimination and inclusion at local level	5
Municipality of Apatin / Serbia	6
Municipality of Bitola / North Macedonia	9
Day-Care Centre: family and community-based services at local level	12
Municipality of Kavadarci / North Macedonia	13
Municipality of Obiliq / Obilić / Kosovo ¹	16
Inclusive Disaster Risk Management	18
City of Zrenjanin / Serbia	19
Municipality of Kalesija / Bosnia and Herzegovina	22
Municipality of Lezhë / Albania	25
Mobile Outreach Teams Services	27
Municipality of Himara / Albania	28
Municipality of Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje / Kosovo ¹	30
The City of Doboj / Bosnia and Herzegovina	33
Minority Commissioner	36
City of Trebinje / Bosnia and Herzegovina	37
Minority Inclusion Models - Social Dialogue Forum	40
Municipality of Roskovec / Albania	41

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

Foreword

Equality, fight against discrimination and inclusion of vulnerable groups constitute an important part of the negotiations in the EU accession process. The South-East Europe region faces vast socio-economic challenges, while the economic consolidation is slow and only reaches part of the population. Those suffering the consequences are primarily the vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities, economically disadvantaged people, residents of rural areas, single parents, elderly, young people, ethnic minorities as well as women and girls. Traditional roles, prejudices against ethnic minorities, and exclusion of people with disabilities are anchored deep in the society and influence the political discourse.

Many citizens belonging to the vulnerable groups lack knowledge about their social rights and access to social services, education, and healthcare. On the other hand, municipalities and other relevant stakeholders that need to bridge this gap often face the lack of knowledge and competencies, as well as insufficient financial resources. In addition, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 development goals, and especially the “Leave No One Behind” principle, enjoys little attention among the authorities and is progressing slowly.

In the frame of NALAS' project “Enhancing local capacities to implement the 2030 Agenda and the “Leave No One Behind” Principle”, 12 municipalities went a step further, learned and implemented different social inclusion approaches that ensured inclusion of the most vulnerable ones.

This booklet presents these 12 good practices on provision of social services to the left behind communities piloted by local governments throughout the region. The practices were developed in the frame of the regional peer-to-peer exchange learning clusters on social inclusion approaches, managed by NALAS' member associations from the target economies, supported by resource persons.

The practices are presented in five chapters related to the five social inclusion approaches:

- Day-care centre;
- Minority inclusion models (social dialogue forum and minority commissioner);
- Mobile outreach teams;
- Raising the awareness on the rights of the vulnerable groups; and
- Inclusive disaster risk management.

All of the 12 practices are inspirational, they change the perspectives, include, engage and achieve more with limited resources, in most of the cases by joining community forces. We hope that these examples will motivate other local governments, local practitioners and stakeholders to learn, analyse and scale-up and therefore contribute to the social, economic and cultural rights of their citizens in line with the overarching principle "Leave no one behind" of the 2030 Agenda.

1 Association of Municipalities and Cities of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Association of Municipalities and Towns of Republic of Srpska; Association of Kosovo Municipalities; Association of the Units of Local Self-Government of the Republic of North Macedonia; Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities; Association of Albanian Municipalities; Association for Local Autonomy



Social Approach

Awareness Raising for human rights, non-discrimination and inclusion at local level

Many local communities across the Region still face challenges related to discrimination and gaps in the provision of social services to Roma, youth, persons with disabilities, economically deprived, migrants, refugees, homeless and other people living under social risk. At the same time, local communities often demonstrate lack of knowledge and understanding about human rights, non-discrimination and social inclusion of these vulnerable groups. Consequently, there is resistance to social change which makes the efforts and measures of the local authorities insufficient and less effective.

By using the Awareness Raising as a social approach, municipalities as major political strength in the local community and as guardians of the public interest, can: 1) increase the knowledge of vulnerable groups about their fundamental rights and enabling them to demand those rights self-consciously; 2) make society aware about those groups, sensitising them for their situation and reducing stereotypes; and 3) create an understanding of relevant stakeholders about the situation of vulnerable groups, their needs and drawing their attention to the gaps between the needs and social services offered.

The strategic approach to raising awareness includes:

- R - Research
- A - Action planning
- C – Communication
- E – Evaluation



Municipality of Apatin / Serbia

Promoting the skills of people with disability for raising community awareness about their integration in the labour market

What was the need?

According to the data of the Centre for Social Work, there are 64 adults with disabilities living in the Municipality of Apatin, all with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments. They do not have a job and are on the records of the local employment bureau. People with disabilities, apart from the Day Care Centre, operating since 2009, do not have any organised social or other activities.

In the Social Development Strategy of the municipality, people with disabilities are recognised as the most vulnerable group in the community. It is recommended to expand the existing and develop new services for this group, to improve their inclusion in the society, as well as to continuously implement occupational therapy and working programs that would positively affect the development of various psychomotor abilities.

What did the municipality have in place?

The municipality of Apatin has a Social Development Strategy that diversifies people with disabilities as a separate target group and commits to improve their position through jointly planned and coordinated actions, as well as raising public awareness about the rights and needs of people with disabilities. The municipality also runs a Day Care Centre for people with disabilities.

How was the social approach implemented?

The Awareness Raising social approach was implemented and coordinated by a team of representatives of the municipality, the Centre for Social Work, the Association of Citizens "Breza" and the Cultural Centre Apatin.

The following activities have been implemented:

- Establishing a network of local institutions and a team of volunteers;
- Educational sessions for people with disabilities on social entrepreneurship;
- Workshops on sublimation application - image transfer to various products;
- Organisation of a sales street exhibition of works made in the workshops;
- Local media coverage and awareness raising;
- Organising a field trip for the beneficiaries with the money collected from the sales exhibition.



What were the main results?

- 15 people with disabilities benefited from work and art therapy, developing their psychomotor skills and improving socialisation.
- 15 people with disabilities were educated on the importance of developing social entrepreneurship skills.
- 300 citizens attended the sales exhibition, raised their awareness about the involvement of people with disabilities in the labour market and supported their work.
- The money collected during the sales exhibition was used for a trip to a special nature reserve, where the people with disabilities benefited from socialising and sport activities.
- 10 volunteers contributed to this activity and increased their awareness about the needs of people with disabilities.
- The citizens of Apatin were informed about the social, economic and cultural rights of people with disabilities.

Useful tips

- Creative activities, art, sports and culture often raise much more attention and attract audiences than roundtables, lectures and workshops do.
- Ideally, you involve the target group itself in developing and implementing awareness raising activities, as Apatin did. This way you ensure that the real experiences of persons with disabilities are taken into account and that their voices are heard.
- Involve the whole community in activities and make use of volunteers: This breaks boundaries between the different groups in the community and improves the general social cohesion in society.

Testimonials



"I want to be a useful member of the society, to make useful items and souvenirs that I can sell. In this way, I help myself and my family."

"In the workshops, I learned how to make mugs and magnets that look good and that I can sell. I want to continue these activities."

"I am very pleased that so many people visited our exhibition and that I received praise for my work."

Beneficiaries



"The Municipality of Apatin invests funds in maintaining the work of the Day Care Centre for people with disabilities. This project perfectly fits our goals related to the development of social entrepreneurship of people with disabilities. We will continue to support similar projects in the future."

Ms. Dubravka Korač, Mayor of the Municipality of Apatin





Learn more about this practice

[Facebook page](#)

[Instagram page](#)

[Radio Apatin](#)

[Radio Dunav](#)

[025 Info](#)

[RTV](#)

[RTS](#)

[Radio Apatin](#)

Contact

Mr. Duško Bursać, Psychologist, Director of UG Breza, dulebu@yahoo.com, +381 69 228 1 401

Ms. Nikolina Sučević, Social Worker, Director of Centre for Social Work, nina.sucevic@gmail.com +381 62 776 809





Municipality of Bitola / North Macedonia

Identifying the needs of people with disabilities, sharing them with the community and taking a joint action for improvement

What was the need?

In 2021, the Municipality of Bitola conducted social mapping, which indicated that persons with disabilities experience negative attitudes, stigma, discrimination and exclusion from training and employment opportunities. The mapping identified a lack of available community-based social services, such as counselling, rehabilitation and reintegration services, day-care centres, home services, as well as appropriate sport facilities. According to the official data from the Centre for Social Work, 3,045 people with disabilities receive social assistance, while according to local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) the total number of people with disabilities is much higher.

What did the municipality have in place?

The social mapping provided a clear picture what the needs of people with disabilities in Bitola are, and they were addressed in the revised Municipal Social Plan 2021 – 2024 and the Municipal Program for Social Protection for 2022. Both documents commit to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and provide a broad range of measures for social inclusion of children and adults with disabilities, prevention of disability and rehabilitation, including measures for inclusion of people with disabilities into sport and recreational activities.

How was the social approach implemented?



The Awareness Raising social approach was implemented and coordinated by the municipal administration, the Head of the Department of Public Affairs, responsible for development of local policies for social protection, and the Social Services Advisor for Vulnerable Groups, in partnership with the associations of people with disabilities and the Social Protection Council, a local multistakeholder advisory body established by the municipality.

The following activities have been implemented:

- Design and distribution of 10 different digital flyers for raising public awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities;
- Organisation of a workshop on the rights and needs of people with disabilities for decision-makers, relevant institutions and policymakers and CSOs of people with disabilities;
- Social media campaign, via the municipal website and Facebook pages of the municipality, Municipal Council for Social Protection and the associations of people with disabilities;
- Procurement of fitness and sports equipment, which is now part of the sports hall for people with disabilities used by the Association for Sports and Recreation of the Disabled Bitola and located in the Centre for Social Work in Bitola.



What were the main results?

- Strengthened capacities of the municipal civil servants in charge of social protection to implement the social approach;
- Representatives of the Municipal Council, Social Protection Council and relevant institutions sensitised about the needs and priorities of people with disabilities;
- Improved local policies for over 3,045 persons with disabilities - sensory impairments, physical and intellectual disabilities.
- Improved access of people with disabilities to local services, especially to sport facilities;
- Persons with disabilities and their associations are more aware of their fundamental rights;
- Measures to promote the rights of persons with disabilities are integrated into the Municipal Program for Social Protection for 2022.
- The Mayor and the Municipality of Bitola pledge to apply this approach to improve local policies and the rights of vulnerable groups;
- Increased awareness of the society about the needs and rights of people with disabilities.

All these results contributed to improve the lives of people with disabilities and towards the municipal strategic objectives in the area of social protection.

Useful tips

- Any municipal measure for vulnerable groups should be based on a proper identification of their needs. Social mapping is a very useful tool to do this.
- For a long-term impact, the municipality and its structures must play an active role in identifying and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups.
- Communication and cooperation with CSOs, especially those representing the specific vulnerable group, is key.
- It is important to continuously develop the capacities of municipal administration and other community stakeholders.
- It is crucial to identify all key stakeholders and involve them in the awareness raising activities. The messages sent need to be tailor-made, based on the needs and specific circumstances.
- A wide promotion of the activities and the results achieved will bring you new supporters, often matching resources and enabling the municipality to achieve more.
- Do not hesitate to use social media and media in general to promote democratic values, positive changes, success stories and results.

Testimonials



“The Municipality of Bitola implements a set of activities, aiming at increasing the awareness for the needs of vulnerable groups, including the needs of people with disabilities among civil society organisations, decision-makers, policymakers, but also among representatives of other entities, in order to ensure partnership and cooperation.”

This approach, above all, will result in sustainable solutions to the problems that arise due to insufficient access of people with disabilities to services, including sports and recreational activities, which will significantly affect the improvement of social inclusion of these people.

What we are striving for is to achieve inclusion which actually means understanding the connection between the way people function and how they could participate in the society, and to ensure that everyone has the same opportunities to participate in every aspect of life as best as they can in accordance with their abilities, skills, opportunities and desires.”

Mr. Toni Konjanovski, Mayor of the Municipality of Bitola

“Raising awareness of people with disabilities as a vulnerable group, was chosen as an appropriate approach because it primarily means making people aware of a particular problem or issue. Raising awareness is the only way to make a particular subject more visible in a society and to receive support by the members of the society in the efforts to improve conditions.

When it comes to people from vulnerable groups, in every society, as well as in our society, there is a certain level of exclusion from daily activities. The purpose of this approach is to encourage them to take an active part in the process of positive change.

The Municipality of Bitola is actively working towards the creation of an equal opportunity society, in which everyone will make their contributions and their capacities will be used as a benefit for the good of the society as well as for the individuals and their families.”

Ms. Simona Joveska, Social Services Advisor for Vulnerable Groups

Learn more about this practice

[Municipal website article](#)

[Social media campaign](#)

Contact

Ms. Simona Joveska, Social Services Advisor for Vulnerable Groups, simonajoveska132@gmail.com, +389 71 385 682

Ms. Violeta Nalevska, Head of the Department of Public Affairs, viki.nalevska@bitola.gov.mk, +389 71 22 28 39



ДАЛИ ЗНАЕШ
дека секој ученик со попреченост од
Општина Битола има право да ги користи услугите
во Центарот за поддршка на учењето на
децата со попреченост?

За повеќе информации околу одредено право јавете се на:
+38947208302 или во просторите на Општина Битола.

german cooperation
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

giz

ЗЕЛС





Social Approach

Day-Care Centre: family and community-based services at local level

Many families of vulnerable groups suffer from long-term unemployment and lack of access to social services, education, housing and other preconditions for decent life. Community-based Day-Care Services offer an alternative approach to reach out and provide direct support to vulnerable families, particularly to children and youth. Being the closest to citizens, municipalities increasingly understand that the wellbeing in their communities can only be achieved when those left behind are served first, and are able to participate and benefit from the development. Thus, they engage in establishment of Day-Care Services to bring vulnerable groups “on board” of development and provide long-term solution to social inclusion, alleviating poverty and reducing inequalities.

The social approach Community Day-Care Services is a holistic approach that includes wide spectrum of services for protection, prevention, resocialisation, rehabilitation and reintegration of the beneficiaries. Services range from education, social care, employment support, recreation and socialisation, psychological support and counselling, etc. The approach is needs-based and follows the individual progress of beneficiaries. The success lies in the multi-disciplinary approach and requires cooperation between the local institutions, civil society organisations and the private sector.

The strategic approach to Day-Care Services includes three key phases:

- Preparation;
- Implementation; and
- Monitoring and evaluation.



Municipality of Kavadarci / North Macedonia

When needs and plans transform into actions: A Sensory Room meets the needs of children with disabilities

What was the need?

The Municipality of Kavadarci has adopted a strategic document in the field of social protection, the Social Plan 2021 – 2024, developed through a consultative process involving all relevant stakeholders at the local level - the social sector, police, educational institutions and relevant Civil Society organisations.

The data of the Centre for Social Work Kavadarci shows that the municipality has 278 persons with disabilities, and additional 146 children with disabilities. The current Day-Care Centre for people with physical and intellectual disabilities offers services for only 15 beneficiaries.

For this reason, the Social Plan identified the need to establish a new Day-Care Centre for persons with disabilities with larger capacity and better quality of services, including a sensory room for children with disabilities that will help them achieve multiple learning and therapeutic objectives.

What did the municipality have in place?

The Social Plan 2021 – 2024 provides a roadmap for the Municipality of Kavadarci for improving the social protection and care and filling in the gaps in social services for its vulnerable citizens.

Based on this, one of the priorities of the municipal Annual Local Economic Development Program is the construction of a new Day-Care Centre for persons with disabilities, which will have a larger capacity and provide better quality services to persons and children with disabilities.





How was the social approach implemented?

The Day-Care Centres social approach was implemented and coordinated by the municipal administration, the Junior Associate and the Deputy Head of the Sector for Local and Economic Development, as the municipality does not have a separate department for social protection and these issues are addressed within the Local Economic Development Sector. The activities were prepared and implemented in close cooperation and coordination with the Day-Care Centre for Persons with Disabilities and the Centre for Social Work.

The municipality, in collaboration with the Day-Care Centre and the Centre for Social Work provided space for the Sensory room.

The following activities have been implemented:

- Designing and equipping the Sensory Room;
- Training for sensory integration of children with disabilities for the staff of the Day-Care Centre for Persons with Disabilities;
- Official opening of the Sensory Room in the Day-Care Centre, which operates as an organisational unit of the Centre for Social Work in Kavadarci;
- Promotion of the Sensory Room and its services in national and local media.

What were the main results?

- 15 children with disabilities or developmental delays currently benefit from the Sensory Room, which is specially designed to encourage the development of the senses and sensory stimulation, providing a therapeutic effect, but also an ideal space for learning, stimulation and relaxation.
- The Sensory Room is preceding the construction of a new, larger Day-Care Centre for persons with disabilities, envisaged in the Municipal Social Plan 2021 – 2024 and the Annual Local Economic Development Program. Once the new Day-Care Centre is constructed, the Sensory Room will become its integral part and offer services to a larger number of children.

Useful tips

- There are three crucial steps in setting-up a day-care centre: 1) Identifying the needs of vulnerable groups, 2) Planning appropriate actions and 3) Implementing these actions to create a new, better reality. The Municipality of Kavadarci successfully demonstrated this by integrating the measures from its Social Plan into the Annual Local Economic Development Program.
- Institutional cooperation is crucial for achieving more when it comes to support to vulnerable groups. In this case, the Municipality, the Day-Care Centre and the Centre for Social Work worked closely together to design and implement this measure.
- Equipment is important, but it is equally important to provide continuous training for the staff delivering the services in the day-care centres.

Testimonials

“By equipping this Sensory Room, children who use the services of the Day-Care Centre for persons with disabilities will benefit from new development opportunities. The Sensory room is of crucial importance as it encourages early childhood development and stimulates children with disabilities in a protected and controlled environment. The Sensory room is a tool in the hands of professionals, with which they will respond to the needs of children with disabilities to develop their sensory abilities.

This small project is only the beginning of a number of planned social service measures in the upcoming period in the Municipality of Kavadarci: The Municipality of Kavadarci is planning to build a new Day-Care Centre for persons with disabilities that has already been included in the annual plan. Following the completion of the necessary technical documentation by the Municipality, we will have a new and modern Day-Care Centre and the equipment we received for the Sensory room will be transferred to the new Day-Care Centre.”

Mr. Mitko Jancev, Mayor of the Municipality of Kavadarci

“The Sensory Room is extremely important for improving the quality of life of children with disabilities and their families. But it is also very important that this project has given professionals the opportunity to improve their skills in order to provide proper services to the children using the room.”

Ms. Marija Kamceva, Junior Associate in the Sector for Local and Economic Development

Learn more about this practice

[Article 1](#)

[Article 2](#)

[Article 3](#)

[Video 1](#)

Contact

Ms. Marija Kamcheva, Junior Associate in the Sector for Local and Economic Development,
kamcevamarija95@yahoo.com, +389 72 21 87 72





Municipality of Obiliq / Obilić / Kosovo¹

A Day-Care Centre helps enhancing the potentials of children with disability

What was the need?

Obiliq/Obilić is a town of 6,864 inhabitants located in Prishtina District and the home of 11 children with disabilities who attend the primary school “Dr. Ibrahim Rugova”. The municipality and the school identified a need for additional personalised after-school educational and social assistance services aimed to improve certain aspects of the children's development, as well as supporting their families in raising their children.

What did the municipality have in place?

Within the Municipal Strategic Plan included are measures for providing shelter and social care for vulnerable groups. Thus, the Municipality and its directorates for Education, Health and Social Welfare work in partnership with the Centre for Social Work and the local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on improving the services provided to children and youth, especially to the most vulnerable ones.

How was the social approach implemented?

The Day-Care Centres approach was implemented by the primary school with the support of the Municipality, the Centre for Social Work and the local Civil Society Organisations. Measures were tailored to improve the services of an existing Day-Care Centre for children with disability which is located in the premisses of the primary school.

The school provided the location for the Day-Care Centre, while the staff and the running costs are provided by the municipality.

The following activities have been implemented:

- Designing a programme of the Day-Care Centre, including: psycho-social assistance, education, and creative activities for social, educational, emotional, and cognitive development of children with disabilities, as well as psycho-social support and counselling for the families;
- Renovation of a classroom and equipping of the Day-Care Centre;
- Engagement of a social worker and psychologist, in cooperation with a local CSO;
- Implementation of the Centre's programme, three times a week.





What were the main results?

Impact

Overall, the interventions contributed towards inclusion and integration of children with disability in the educational system and society. The extended access to these specific day care services resulted in better behaviour, improved orientation in the environment of the disadvantaged children, achieving better results at school and increased awareness of the parents on inclusion of children.

Results

- 11 children benefited from the educational and psycho-social support of the Centre, improving their educational performance and developing their social, emotional, cognitive and creative performance.
- 22 parents of children with disabilities improve their parenting skills and competences in assisting the children in overcoming educational, social and emotional issues.

Useful tips

- It is probable that one institution might not have all the resources needed for implementation of the Day-Care Centre. In such case, look around. Obiliq/Obilić Municipality pulled \ntre for Children with Disability.
- Day-Care Centres often do not sustain, not because they were not relevant or good, but because of the lack of institutional support. In the case of Obiliq/Obilić, the municipality committed to support the staff and utility costs creating a ground for long-term sustainability.

Learn more about this practice

[Website article](#)

Contact

Ms. Mema Mjeku, Department of Education, mema.mjeku@rks-gov.net, +383 44 163 666

Ms. Shyrete Gashi, Director, Primary School “Ibrahim Rugova”, shyhretegashi@hotmail.com, +38349831092



Social Approach **Inclusive Disaster Risk Management**

Disasters such as floods, fires, earthquakes, landslides, droughts, pandemic became everyday reality across the Globe, causing massive economic damage and increasing vulnerability of people. Still, not all are equally hit by the disasters. Economically disadvantaged, people at social risk, families from rural areas, internally displaced persons, returnees, women and girls, children, elderly and persons with disabilities become even more vulnerable in situations of crisis.

Being at the forefront in dealing with crisis, local governments have the obligation to develop disaster risk management strategies for timely and appropriate response, that protect all citizens, paying special attention to vulnerable groups. This is to be achieved by developing procedures and mechanisms for obtaining, analysing and responding to early warning information related to hazard detection, forecasting and alerts.

By using the Inclusive Disaster Risk Management as a social approach, municipalities are enabled to identify and assess different types of natural and human-made hazards, take preventive and preparedness measures, respond and recover, while addressing how vulnerable groups can be integrated and considered in disaster risk management.



City of Zrenjanin / Serbia

Preparing and supporting children and youth with disability to respond to emergencies

What was the need?

The City of Zrenjanin, being surrounded by three rivers - Bega, Tisa and Tamis- is an area with a high risk of floods. The city has developed a comprehensive system for civil protection, including a disaster risk assessment, protection and rescue plan and a decision on rights and services in social protection of the City of Zrenjanin.

The city also takes care of people with disabilities. Under the umbrella of the city's Centre for Social Protection Services "Most", runs a Day Centre for children and young people with physical and mental difficulties "Alternativa". The Centre offers an eight-hour programme, five days a week for beneficiaries from 5-26 years of age, developing their skills and enabling them for independent life.

Thus far, the programme of the Centre did not include any systematic education on disaster risk preparedness for this target group, nor had the city system in place to educate and prepare them, as well as mobilise the relevant institutions to pay special attention to this target group during emergencies.

What did the municipality have in place?

The city has disaster risk preparedness and management structures in place. Since 2020, the city runs the Centre for Social Protection Services, under which operates a Day Care Centre for children and young people with disabilities.

How was the social approach implemented?

The Inclusive Disaster Risk Management social approach was implemented and coordinated by the city, in partnership with the Centre for Social Work, Centre for Social Protection Services "Most", primary and secondary school "9th May", Red Cross and the Fire and Rescue Battalion. The following activities have been implemented:

- Situation analysis and mapping of children and youth with disabilities.
- Developing a multi-stakeholder plan of action.
- Establishing a network to help vulnerable groups through the system of the Civil Protection Commissioner.
- Development and distribution of promotional leaflets.
- Series of trainings for children and youth with disabilities on emergency preparedness.
- Establishing a professional operational unit in the city administration for providing support to children and youth with disabilities before, during and after emergency.



What were the main results?

- The City developed a system for assisting children and youth with disability before, during and after emergency, consisted of a unit within City administration and a network of relevant community stakeholders, that will provide support through the system of the Civil Protection Commissioner.
- 60 children and young people with disability, attending the Day Centre and included in the school system, were trained on types of emergencies and how to respond during each of these emergencies.
- The Inclusive Disaster Risk Management Social Approach will be integrated in the programme of the Day Centre for children and youth with disabilities within the Centre for Social Protection Services “Most”.

Useful tips

- One of the ways to ensure sustainability of your actions is to integrate them within an existing program or activity. The city of Zrenjanin integrated the Inclusive Disaster Risk Management in the programme of the Centre “Most”, with a triple win – enriching Day Centre's program, providing additional skills to their target groups and ensuring that these efforts will last.
- Disaster preparation and response look different for people with different abilities. Therefore, it is important to adjust trainings to the needs and capabilities of the specific target group.
- Specifically for children and youth, disaster and emergency response trainings can be implemented in a playful way. This ensures that the children and youth stay engaged during the training, learn more and have fun along the way.

Testimonials



„The City of Zrenjanin fully supports and joins the initiative of NALAS for the implementation of this type of project. It will also be devoted to the implementation and maintenance of certain actions for sensitive population groups in connection with disaster risk reduction and their proper response in emergency situations“.

Mr. Miroslav Sladojević, Head of the Department for Defence and Emergency Situations

“We taught the children about different types of emergency situations, as well as about weather and natural disasters. We talked about the fire and floods, how to react, who should be called, how they should behave in an open or closed space. We taught them basic things, which they can master without panicking, without creating a problem. To our great surprise, many children knew the phone numbers of the emergency services. They knew that they should not run and push others. They knew a lot, and they learned a lot. We activated a few of them through play and entertainment. We taught them through practical work“.

Ms. Ana Čkonjević, Manager of the Day Care Center “Naša priča”





Learn more about this practice

[Article : Inkluzivni pristup reagovanju u vanrednim situacijama](#)

[Article : Realizovan projekat "Inkluzivni pristup reagovanju u vanrednim situacijama"](#)

Contact

Mr. Miroslav Sladojević, Head of the Department for Defence and Emergency Situations,
miroslav.sladojevic@grad.zrenjanin.rs, +38164 811 66 63

Ms. Jelena Rikalo, Expert Associate in Preventive and Operational Affairs, Department of Defence and Emergency Situations,
jelena.rikalo@grad.zrenjanin.rs, +38164 811 64 96





Municipality of Kalesija / Bosnia and Herzegovina

Disaster Risk Action Plan for people with disabilities in risk exposed communities

What was the need?

The Municipality of Kalesija has a “Plan of preparedness and action in case of natural and other disasters (2021-2024)”, developed by the Centre for Social Work with the support of UNICEF. The plan identifies persons with disabilities and particularly children as one of the priority groups for action in emergency situations. Still, the plan did not include a special social mapping for the needs of this target group and does not include detailed measures specific to their needs.

In 2014, 2018 and 2020 the Municipality faced devastating floods and the COVID-19 pandemic, and felt the consequences of the lack of a special disaster risk management plan for people with disabilities, that would have enabled them to provide better help and support to this group. Based on these experiences, the Municipality identified three neighbourhood communities (Hrasno Donje, Zukići and Vukovije Donje) that are the most vulnerable when it comes to support people with disabilities during disasters. These three communities have around 500 people that need special assistance during crisis.

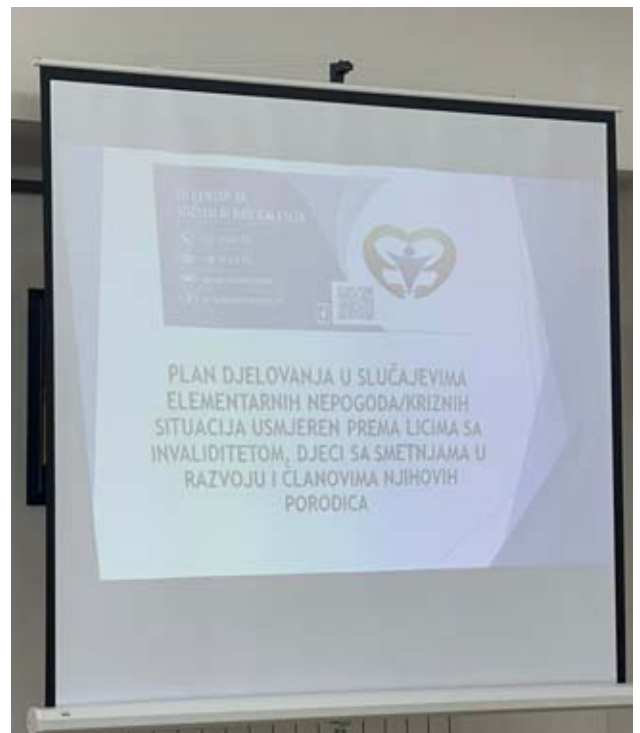
What did the municipality have in place?

The Municipality has a plan of preparedness and action in case of natural and other disasters (2021-2024) and an operational structure for disaster risk management, including the Civil Protection, Service for Communal Affairs and Centre for Social Work.

How was the social approach implemented?

The Inclusive Disaster Risk Management social approach was implemented and coordinated by the municipality and the Centre for Social Work. The following activities have been implemented:

- Conducting social mapping of the people and children with disabilities and their families in the three communities (with a total population of around 4,000), focused on the needs related to building resistance, as well as quick and effective recovery after disasters.
- Based on a developed questionnaire, the social mapping included 76 households where persons and children with disabilities live.
- Analysis of the collected data.
- Development of an Action Plan for cases of natural disasters or crisis situations aimed at persons with disabilities, children with developmental disabilities and their family members.
- Presentation of the Action Plan and discussion with representatives of public institutions, educational institutions and non-governmental organisations.



What were the main results?

- Developed Action Plan in cases of natural disasters or crisis situations aimed at persons with disabilities, children with developmental disabilities and their family members.
- Total of 597 people will benefit from the action plan, while it will provide an operational guide for the professionals of the Service for Communal Affairs, the Civil Protection and the Centre for Social Work, in all future crisis.

Useful tips

- Not all communities in your municipality are the same when it comes to vulnerable population or disaster exposure. In the case of limited resources, you might wish to follow Kalesija's example and conduct the social mapping in selected, sample communities.
- Get the information and data directly from the target groups, in this case the persons with disabilities. This way their needs are best considered.
- Involve various relevant stakeholders in the consultations and development of action plans or similar documents. Crisis situations require the support of the whole community and everyone should be aware of the challenges particularly vulnerable persons may face.



Testimonials

“In emergency situations, the largest part of the population, material goods and the environment are threatened by the effects of natural disasters. The state of social need is also present in people who have never been beneficiaries of social welfare, and the state of existing beneficiaries is further complicated and worsened.

For this reason, in each local self-government unit, centres for social work should be part of the protection and rescue system, with clear and precisely defined tasks, in accordance with their mission. In the plans for protection and rescue in the local self-government units, the obligations and responsibilities of these institutions in the performance of social welfare activities during a natural disaster are defined and the method of communication and coordination is defined in order to ensure the organised and coordinated operation of the centres with other participants in the protection and rescue system. In addition to the aforementioned legal framework for the operation of centres for social work in emergency situations, it is extremely important to have one's own plan of action in protection and rescue. Bearing in mind the above, the creation of strategic documents such as the Action Plan in cases of natural disasters/crisis situations for persons with disabilities, children with developmental disabilities and their family members is extremely important.”

Mr. Sead Džafić, B.Ecc, Mayor of the Municipality of Kalesija

“The need to create this manual arose from the diversity of experiences at the local level in connection with the role of centres for social work, and the expressed request to define the role of these institutions more clearly, not only for their own sake, but also for the sake of other institutions at the local level that are obliged to act in the system of protection and assistance to the vulnerable population. We believe that this manual will greatly contribute to better coordination and local planning of protection measures, not only in crisis situations, but also in the preparation of responses to possible crises, and in the stages of recovery.

We would like to thank you for the excellent cooperation so far and hope that we will continue to do so in the future.”

Mr. Senaid Tupajić, Senior expert associate for planning and protection and rescue measures of the Municipality of Kalesija

“The public institution Centre for Social Work of Kalesija has recognised its role and importance during natural and other disasters. Persons with disabilities and children with developmental disabilities are a special group that requires special treatment in crisis situations. That is why the implementation of this project contributed to the development of our institution, so that in the future we will be able to respond much more easily to crisis situations, especially towards persons with disabilities and children with developmental disabilities.”

Mr. Muhamed Majdančić, B.Sc., Director of the PI Kalesija Centre for Social Work

Learn more about this practice

[JU Centar za socijalni rad Kalesija](#)

Contact

Mr. Muhamed Majdančić, B.Sc., Director of the PI Kalesija Centre for Social Work, majdancic.muhamed@gmail.com, 035 631 176

Mr. Sead Džafić B.Ecc, Mayor of the Municipality of Kalesija, opcina@kalesija.ba, 035-367-700

Mr. Senaid Tupajić, Senior expert associate for planning and protection and rescue measures of the Municipality of Kalesija, civilnazastita@kalesija.ba, 035-367-745, 061-677-107.





Municipality of Lezhë / Albania

Disaster Risk Action Plan that meets the needs of children with disabilities

What was the need?

According to the Local Social Plan, 296 children with disabilities live in the Municipality of Lezhë. Although the municipality strategically approaches disaster risk management, the needs of this vulnerable group have not been elaborated in details in their previous strategies.

The implementation of the Inclusive Disaster Risk Management social approach was a good opportunity for the municipality to get a clear picture on the needs of children with disabilities in civil emergencies, design specific measures and assign responsibilities for their implementation.

What did the municipality have in place?

The municipality has a Local Plan for Civil Emergencies in place, as well as a Strategy for Natural Risk Reduction. It has operational Commission on Civil Protection and Department of Civil Emergencies.

These plans set out procedures and rules for comprehensive stakeholder coordination in emergency situations, as well as activities for prevention and relief, preparation and protection, for coping with any emergency situation caused by natural and other disasters.



How was the social approach implemented?

The Inclusive Disaster Risk Management social approach was implemented and coordinated by the municipal administration, the heads of Projects' Department, the Social Services and the Civic Emergency Sectors. In this direction, the following activities have been implemented:

- Analysis of the existing Plan for Civil Emergencies and Social Plan to identify the gaps in addressing the needs of children with disabilities in the disaster risk prevention and management.
- Development of an Action Plan for Children with Disabilities in the Municipality of Lezhë on Disaster Risk Management. The Plan identified seven main areas of intervention:
 - a) Early warning system for children with disabilities;
 - b) Preparations for emergency response;
 - c) Training and capacity building needs of emergency administration related to children with disabilities;
 - d) Infrastructure capacity and accessibility;
 - e) Technical capacities and human resources;
 - f) Financial capacities;
 - g) Information, communication and awareness.
- Strengthening the capacities of the Social Department of the Municipality with equipment to be used for improved speech and mobility therapies for children with disability.



What were the main results?

- Developed Action Plan for Children with Disabilities in the Municipality of Lezhë on Disaster Risk Management. This will result in a better response in case of disasters, meeting the needs of children with disabilities living in the municipality.
- With the Action Plan, the municipality commits to ensure early warning system for children with disabilities and provide timely information flow. It will develop the capacities of municipal structures and increase their readiness to respond and meet the needs of children with disabilities during crisis. Also, the municipality will reduce the physical barriers and create a functional and accessible infrastructure.
- The Action Plan for Children with Disabilities in the Municipality of Lezhë on Disaster Risk Management will be integrated into the Municipal Emergency Plan. The Municipality committed to allocate appropriate resources and consistently implement the Action Plan.

Useful tips

- You might be certain that your municipality has the best strategies and action plans. What about looking at them through different lenses, like the Municipality of Lezhë did? In the case your strategies and action plans do not meet the needs of the most vulnerable ones, you always have the chance to improve them and you better start now.
- This starts with knowing who lives in your municipality and what makes them vulnerable to specific disasters and emergencies. If you do not have this kind of data, start with conducting mappings to find out who your target group is.
- Different municipal strategies are often addressing the needs of the same target groups. When creating a new one, make sure that you review all the existing strategies and consult the relevant target group directly.
- In disaster response clear allocation of responsibilities is key for timely and effective measures. Ensure early on that all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities and are able to apply them.

Testimonials

“Regarding the action plan, we think it is very innovative in introducing new concepts or even improving the way of providing services for children with limited abilities in relation to the response to emergencies. Many of these elements are in accordance with the National Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2021 - 2025. It is important for us to focus on increasing school readiness. This is because the schools are following the approach of education inclusion and are in daily contacts with the target group. Capacity building on response to emergencies should be increased in schools and staff such as teachers, security officers and psychologists. Raising awareness is the only way to make a particular subject more visible in a society and to receive support by the members of the society in the efforts to improve conditions.

When it comes to people from vulnerable groups, in every society, as well as in our society, there is a certain level of exclusion from daily activities. The purpose of this approach is to encourage them to take an active part in the process of positive change.

The Municipality of Lezhë is actively working towards the creation of an equal opportunity society, in which everyone will make their contribution and capacities will be used as a benefit for the good of society as well as for the individuals and their families.”

Mr. Erjon Elmazi, Social Services Advisor

Learn more about this practice

[Shoqata e Bashkive të Shqipërisë](#)

Contact

Ms. Aida Cacaj, Sori II Coordinator for the Albanian Association of Municipalities, aidacacaj@aam.org.al, +355672004694





Social Approach Mobile Outreach Teams Services

Many families of vulnerable groups face marginalisation, dire living conditions and no access to the so needed services. In such circumstances, the standard institutionalised social, education and health services are not suitable as these groups require more flexible, targeted approach.

Municipalities that care for the wellbeing of each and every citizen engage in establishment of Mobile Outreach Team Services, offering an alternative approach to service provision, “at the doorstep” of the vulnerable population and hard to reach community groups. Mobile Outreach Teams serve a wide range of citizens such as economically deprived families, in particular children and youth, people with mental health issues, persons with disabilities, street children, children in crisis, foster families, elderly people, etc.

Services range from physio-social therapy, providing medicines, facilitating access to educational institutions, monitoring the home training, referral of beneficiaries to other existing social services, psychological counselling of parents, providing support in obtaining social benefits for families with people with disabilities, etc. The approach is needs-based and follows the individual progress of beneficiaries.

The strategic approach to Mobile Outreach Team Services includes three key phases:

- Preparation;
- Implementation; and
- Monitoring and evaluation.



Municipality of Himara / Albania

Combating school bullying with the help of the Mobile Outreach Team

What was the need?

School bullying is one of the key problems that young people face today, and Albania is not an exception. According to a UNESCO report, about 20% of Albanian students (22.6% male and 17.3% female) aged 9-15 have been victims of school bullying. This makes school bullying a problem that must be addressed within the Albanian education system and beyond. The issue of school bullying is thus included in the National Education Strategy 2021-2026.

The Municipality of Himara recently had several officially registered cases of school bullying. One of them was reported in the police station, and five referred by the counselling line for girls and women and by school principals. Aside from the reported cases, there are many victims that do not report it for various reasons. Bullied children suffer mental and physical trauma, social exclusion and marginalisation, and they need strong support from the family, school and society.

For this reason, the municipality identified the need to mobilise all community stakeholders to raise the awareness about school bullying, provide support to young people to reduce aggressive behaviour and increase capacities of schools to identify situations of bullying and react swiftly.

What did the municipality have in place?

The municipality has a Social Plan (2021-2024) that includes a strategic objective focused on protection of children and their rights. Still, it has not elaborated school bullying in specific policies or strategies, nor has implemented activities for combatting it.

How was the social approach implemented?

The Mobile Outreach Teams social approach was implemented with the idea to raise the issue of school bullying higher on the community agenda. The municipality committed to institutionalise Mobile Outreach Team (MOT) that will work with students in their school environment, but also involve parents and teachers.



The MOT aims to raise awareness about the effects of school bullying, reduce discrimination, prejudice, aggressive behaviour and harassment. Another goal of the MOT is to improve teachers' skills in identifying and assisting victims of bullying and discrimination, improving parents' ability to create a safe family environment for their children and establishing School Safety Committees in five schools that will deal with the identification and assistance of victims of bullying.

The MOT was established by the municipality in order to bring together all relevant community stakeholders: the Child and Education units of the municipality, schools principals, police, a licensed psychologist, representatives of the boards of parents and of the Student Senate.

The following activities have been implemented:

- Establishment of the MOT.
- Series of meetings of the MOT for activity planning.
- Series of discussion sessions in the five schools, including children from 6th to 9th grade, as well as their parents, under the slogan 'Do not bully, be a friend'.

What were the main results?

- The Municipality of Himara institutionalised the Mobile Outreach Team as a mechanism to prevent and combat school bullying.
- 200 students from five schools, as well as their teachers and parents raised awareness about identifying and reacting to school bullying, as well as supporting victims.
- The MOT was included in the municipal Social Development Plan and will be supported by the Medium-Term Budget Plan 2021-2024.

Useful tips

- No matter what actions you design and implement, always think about the sustainability. The Municipality of Himara succeeded to institutionalise the MOT, include it in the municipal strategies and ensure support for its work.
- Adapt the language and style of awareness raising material produced to the target group. In this case, phrase it in a way that is particularly interesting to children and youth.
- For the members of the MOTs, find people that can communicate well with children and parents, so that their help will be accepted.

Testimonials

“With the establishment of M.O.T was achieved psychological support for children suffering from bullying. Raising awareness of institutions to reduce discrimination, aggressive behavior and harassment towards young people.”

Jorgo Goro, Mayor of Himara Municipality

Contact

Ms. Aida Halilaj, Child protection unit,
aidahalili93@gmail.com, +355 69 41 18 298





Municipality of Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje / Kosovo¹ Establishing a Mobile Outreach Team to increase access to information on employment opportunities for the most vulnerable ones

What was the need?

Based on the statistics of the Centre for Social Work of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, there are 945 families that benefit from social financial assistance. Due to the specific regulation, each month, about 15 families lose their right to financial social assistance, as their children reach 5 or 18 years of age. Although the financial social benefits are very low compared to the basic living costs, losing them additionally increases the vulnerability of these families.

This problem applies to all ethnic groups. Among them, there are internally displaced families, families of returnees from the region (Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia) and repatriated families (deported from the EU). Left without any financial resources, these families remain isolated, away from the labour market and the key social services and dependent from ad-hoc support from various institutions and organisations.

What did the municipality have in place?

The Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje has shown a committed to support its most vulnerable citizens. Through the municipal directorates for health and for education, the municipality works with all relevant institutions, such as the Centre for Social Work, the Community Health Centre, the Employment Office, the Ministry of Returnees and Communities, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Red Cross and a number of local and international organisations, to provide assistance to the families in need. As a step further, the municipality decided to establish a Mobile Outreach Team that will bring these stakeholders together and find solutions for the families in the future.





How was the social approach implemented?

The Mobile Outreach Teams social approach was implemented with the idea to improve the access to information related to employment opportunities, as well as starting an own business.

Mobile Outreach Team (MOT) was established with a decision of the municipality, bringing together all relevant community stakeholders. The following activities have been implemented:

- The MOT visited a number of families excluded from social financial assistance to determine their immediate needs.
- Based on the identified needs, the MOT initiated the distribution of food and hygiene packages to the families in need that were supported by the project.
- The MOT organised a workshop assisting job seekers with information about employment opportunities, possibilities for start-ups, additional professional training and filling out different application forms.
- Two meetings of the MOT were organised, to discuss the issues and decide on the future actions.

What were the main results?

The Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje institutionalised the Mobile Outreach Team as a mechanism to reach to and serve the most vulnerable ones when it comes to employment. It brought together all relevant community stakeholders, raising their awareness about the needs of these people and working jointly to meet them.

100 families received the support of the MOT, through first-aid packages, providing information and developing their skills for a more successful job search.

At one of the MOT meetings a cooperation with the Associations of Kosovo Municipalities was initiated, to raise the issue of changing the law on social financial assistance, which would reduce the number of excluded families.

Useful tips

A number of different stakeholders are active in the provision of support to vulnerable groups. Joining their efforts within Mobile Outreach Teams can be a good way to bring them together, synchronise approaches and achieve better and more efficient results.

Although ad-hoc activities can give some results, the impact is always bigger when efforts are planned, systematised and continuous. Municipalities are in a central role for steering and coordination.

Having members of the vulnerable groups directly consulted or engaged when setting up the Mobile Outreach Teams ensures access to the groups in the field and that the services are based on their real needs.

Testimonials

“From the total number of employees in Kosovo, only 3-10% belong to the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, which makes them especially vulnerable. These communities have a low number of professionally trained persons, as well as low number of people engaged in more complex and better paid jobs. It is very important that the MOT focuses on the families excluded from the social finance assistance, since a large percentage of the adults in these families does not have opportunity for employment.”

Ms. Teuta Briscu, Clerk of the Employment Office

“The Directorate for Health and Social Affairs of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje implements various measures to support vulnerable categories in the municipality, such as: construction and renovation of houses, assistance with medical treatment and medicines, food packages, etc. The families that are excluded from the social financial assistance are especially vulnerable and are one of the priorities for support by the Directorate for Health and Social Affairs.

Ms. Mimosa Kolshi, Director of the Directorate for Health and Social Affairs

Learn more about this practice

[Website article](#)

Contact

Mr. Zoran Kitić, Coordinator for community rights and reintegration, zoran.kitic@rks-gov.net,
038 200 40 502, 049 274 793





The City of Dobož / Bosnia and Herzegovina **A Mobile Outreach Team brings services closer to vulnerable groups in remote areas**



What was the need?

The City of Dobož continuously works on providing support to the most vulnerable citizens. They have established a Day-Care Centre for children and youth with developmental disabilities that provides valuable services to this target group. Still, they realised that a large percentage of the families from rural areas are not able to use the Centre, due to distance, lack of transportation and lack of financial resources. Additionally, according to the Centre for Social Work, there are about 1,400 mothers from rural areas, as primary care-givers, who belong to the vulnerable groups and lack information on the available health, social and education services and therefore do not benefit from them.

What did the municipality have in place?

The city has a Strategy for Integrated Local Development, which includes a strategic objective on regionally competitive human resources and developed overall social infrastructure and public services. Under this objective, the City set a sectoral goal - improved conditions and services for socially excluded persons and vulnerable categories, and developed the programme for increasing capacity for socially excluded categories.

To achieve this, the City of Dobož has established a good cooperation with the key stakeholders: the Centre for Social Work, the Day-Care Centre for children and youth, the Health Centre, the Association of parents of children with developmental disabilities and the Council of secondary school students, which was a good base for establishment of the Mobile Outreach Team.

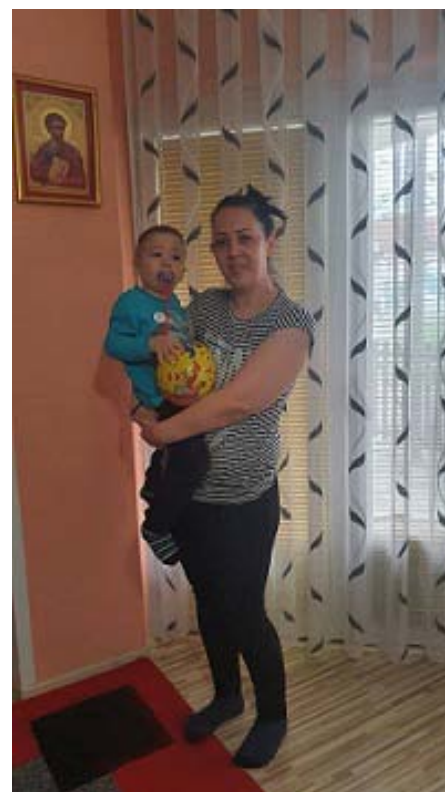


How was the social approach implemented?

The Mobile Outreach Teams social approach was implemented with the idea to improve the access to information related to employment opportunities, as well as starting an own business.

Mobile Outreach Team (MOT) was established with a decision of the municipality, bringing together all relevant community stakeholders. The following activities have been implemented:

- The MOT visited a number of families excluded from social financial assistance to determine their immediate needs.
- Based on the identified needs, the MOT initiated the distribution of food and hygiene packages to the families in need that were supported by the project.
- The MOT organised a workshop assisting job seekers with information about employment opportunities, possibilities for start-ups, additional professional training and filling out different application forms.
- Two meetings of the MOT were organised, to discuss the issues and decide on the future actions.



What were the main results?

The City of Doboj institutionalised the Mobile Outreach Team within the Day Care Centre, as a mechanism to reach out and inform the most vulnerable ones living in remote areas, so that they can benefit from the social, health and education services.

- 26 families were reached out and informed by the MOT during the field visits.
- 17 families used services they did not use before as a result of the activity of the MOT.

The citizens of Doboj were reached out and informed via distribution of flyers and through local media.

As result of the efforts of the MOT, in the future the most urgent vulnerable groups would be provided with a free of charge transportation service to social protection and health care institutions in the area of the City of Doboj. The three key institutions, the Centre for Social Work, the Day Care Centre and the Health Centre will provide the human and financial resources for continues activities of the MOT.

Useful tips

Involving different community stakeholders relevant to the focus of the MOT is not only beneficial for the scope and the impact they have, but also for the sustainability of the action. In this case, the city and several key institutions are sharing the responsibility for the successful future of the MOT.



Testimonials

“The city of Dobož is dedicated to activities to improve the position of vulnerable categories of society, and such our commitment resulted in the establishment of the Centre for Children and Youth with Developmental Difficulties. By forming the Mobile Team for visiting the vulnerable category of the population in the rural part of Dobož, we established a system of communication with vulnerable groups of the population and created the basis for future forms of support for them, and coordinated connections with the project partners - Day Care Centre, Centre for Social Work, Dom zdravlja Dobož, Association of Parents of Children with Developmental Difficulties and the Association of High School Students.”

Mr. Boris Jerinić, Mayor of the City of Dobož

“As the mother of a child who was diagnosed with spinal cancer 4 years ago, and was left completely immobile and unable to take care of herself, I believe that the formation of the Mobile Team has made a great contribution to those of us who live in rural areas. I personally was not familiar with the rights that my child has, as well as me as a mother of a child with developmental difficulties. Thanks to the members of the Mobile Team who came to visit us, I learned about the rights we have, and I started taking my child to the Day Care Centre every day. You can see huge progress with her. Also, I no longer have to take my child to physical therapy privately, because we have it at the Day Care Centre for free. I also gained rights at the Centre for Social Work that I didn't know existed before. The work of the Mobile Team is really excellent and I hope that as many families as possible will succeed in getting to know their rights and the possibility of using them.”

Ms. Mira Stojanović, Mother of a child with developmental difficulties

Contact

Ms. Snježana Stević Stanojević, Project Coordinator, PI Centre for Daily Care of Children and Youth, City of Dobož, snjezanas985@gmail.com, 065 438 192





Social Approach **Minority Commissioner**

The implementation and protection of minority rights, as an important part of human rights is still a challenge throughout the region, due to stereotypes, prejudices and other grounds for social exclusion. Despite the significant improvements over the past decades and the reforms in the area of rule of law and human rights, members of various minority communities remain among the most vulnerable citizens of their countries, exposed to poverty, social exclusion, and various forms of discrimination.

For municipalities that are committed to improvement of minority rights, the position of Minority Commissioner should fill in a significant gap, identifying the needs and improving the planning and delivery of municipal services to the vulnerable groups through efficient communication and better contacts between the service providers and the beneficiaries.

The Minority Commissioner social approach introduces the minority inclusion model to local self-governments and enhances capacities of local stakeholders for implementation of the human rights-based approach which improves the quality of life and access of different minorities and disadvantaged groups to existing municipal services.



City of Trebinje / Bosnia and Herzegovina

A Minority Commissioner improves municipal care for its minorities

What was the need?

The City of Trebinje is a home of 94% Serbs, 3% Bosnians, 1% Croats and 2% other ethnic groups, among which are eight Roma families. Although the city does not have an official strategy for supporting minorities, it provides different measures, such as grants for primary schools for supporting education of Roma children, grants for co-financing of projects for socio-humanitarian activities, as well as grants for co-financing projects in the field of social care for the elderly, national minorities and returnees.

Unfortunately, the Association for National Minorities of Eastern Herzegovina is not very active and does not provide support to this group. That was the reason why the city decided to appoint a representative for minorities in the administration, who will bring the information about the social, health and education services closer to these groups and assist better community involvement.

What did the municipality have in place?

The city is in the final phase of establishing a Community Centre for all citizens, that will once a week provide special support to minorities. The city has good coordination with the Centre for Social Work, primary and secondary schools, health institutions, the employment agency and the Red Cross, which will provide a solid basis for successful referral and addressing the needs of minorities.



How was the social approach implemented?

The Minority Commissioner social approach was implemented with the idea to provide a new mechanism for supporting minority groups in the City of Trebinje, via a Minority Commissioner employed in the municipal administration.

The following activities have been implemented:

- Development of the position of Minority Commissioner within the municipal administration, providing training and the necessary equipment.
- Organisation of a workshop on "National minorities and their rights" with representatives of the Centre for Social Work, the Red Cross, Health Centre, primary and secondary schools and the municipal administration. The workshop resulted in an action plan for supporting minorities, including: establishing a database of vulnerable minorities, establishing a network of actors for a faster information flow, strengthening of the associations of national minorities and their support by the municipality, etc.
- Visit to the Roma settlement Volujac, handing food and hygiene packages.



What were the main results?

The City of Trebinje institutionalised the Minority Commissioner as a mechanism to increase informing and improve access to public services to minority groups, especially the most vulnerable ones. In addition, it integrated the Minority Commissioner within the Community Centre and improved the cooperation and coordination among the relevant institution, to provide faster and better response to the needs of the vulnerable minorities.

Useful tips

- Appointing the Minority Commissioner as part of the municipal administration was a double gain in the case of the City of Trebinje. Once a week this person will serve minorities in the Community Centre and during the remaining of the week will contribute to the implementation of other municipal competences.
- For designing appropriate measures, the municipality needs to identify the specific needs of the minority group.
- Engaging a staff from the minority group might ease the access to this target group, enhance trust and increase participation.





Testimonials

“I live with my 18 years old son, Petar, who attends the high school of Economics and receives monthly support from the Municipality. He is a very good student and plans to enrol a faculty in Novi Sad or Banja Luka.

I am unemployed and have benefited from the support of the Centre for Social Work, the Red Cross and the City Administration. Receiving the food and hygiene packages is always helpful, as I only occasionally work in the road management company and as an iron collector.”

Ms. Sanela Hadžović, Citizen of the Roma community

“The City Administration is dedicated to improve the position of minority groups in the local community and beyond, and our determination has resulted in the establishment of a new position of independent professional associate for providing assistance to national minorities and the establishment of a public institution, the Community Centre, which will be a service centre for providing assistance to all citizens in the area of the city of Trebinje. In this way, we established communication with vulnerable population groups, enabled their integration in the social community, and encouraged relevant actors in the society to better cooperate by networking in a common database (with prior social mapping) and providing effective services to all citizens, both from urban and from rural areas in order to solve their problems, leaving no one behind.”

Ms. Slađana Skočajić, Head of the Department for Culture, Family, Sports and Education

Contact

Vesna Škrivan, Project Coordinator, Centre for Social Welfare, City of Trebinje





Social Approach

Minority Inclusion Models - Social Dialogue Forum

People-oriented, bottom-up municipal approaches in shaping local policies and services to vulnerable groups enable municipalities to properly serve those left behind, at the same time empowering them to participate and benefit in the local development.

The Social Dialogue Forum is such participatory platform based on the premises of non-discrimination and acknowledgment that the citizens, including the vulnerable groups know best their problems and needs. It provides the municipalities with a framework to properly identify and shape long-term solutions to social inclusion, alleviating poverty and reducing inequalities, by engaging with the communities it aims to serve. The ultimate goal is to assist citizens to integrate into the community and exercise their full potentials.

This approach seeks for multidisciplinary, client-centred and evidence-based intervention, involving stakeholders from many different professions, organisations and sectors of the society. Depending on the type of the welfare system, the Social Dialogue Forum usually includes different health and social services, employment services, education services and social or private insurance. In addition, employers and trade unions are often involved as well as the individuals concerned.

The strategic approach to Social Dialogue Forum includes three key phases:

- Preparation;
- Implementation; and
- Monitoring and evaluation.



Municipality of Roskovec / Albania

Social dialogue with vulnerable groups for creating a new social strategy

What was the need?

The Municipality of Roskovec is a small municipality, with 32,763 inhabitants, which after the territorial reform has under its jurisdiction four administrative units: Roskovec, Kurjan, Kuman and Strum. The municipal Social Plan 2019-2022 identified children with disabilities, victims of domestic violence, Roma and Egyptian communities as the most vulnerable groups.

As the Social Plan expires in 2022, the Municipality of Roskovec committed to develop a new one, involving all relevant community stakeholders and the beneficiaries from the most vulnerable groups, by using the Social Dialogue Forum approach. The Municipality expects that this will help to identify, measure and advance local services for vulnerable groups through a multi-sectoral and comprehensive approach.

What did the municipality have in place?

The Social Plan 2019-2022, as well as the good cooperation with all relevant community stakeholders were a good starting point for the Municipality of Roskovec. Additionally, they have an employee in-charge of Roma and Egyptian communities, which eases their reach to these target groups.

How was the social approach implemented?

The Social Dialogue Forum social approach was implemented and coordinated by the municipal administration, in cooperation with all relevant community stakeholders. The following activities have been implemented:

- Identification of stakeholders and beneficiaries.
- Series of meetings with the key stakeholders to determine the needs and tasks.
- Trainings for municipal staff, City Council and community stakeholders in social dialogue approach and strategy development.
- Series of Social Dialogue Forums involving 400 beneficiaries from the identified vulnerable groups.



What were the main results?

With the help of the Social Dialogue Forum approach, the municipality reached vulnerable groups and all community stakeholders which are able to support them. The needs of the vulnerable groups have been identified and will set the basis of the new municipal Social Plan.

At the same time, the municipality created a local mechanism - a body that includes representatives of all relevant institutions (municipality, police, social protection, schools, NGOs, etc.) that will have an active role in creating and implementing local policies in the field of social protection. This body will enable timely identification and appropriate response to the issues vulnerable groups are faced with.

Useful tips

- Municipal strategies and plans are often created behind closed doors, by experts or municipal administration. As you can see from this example, Social Dialogue Forums can be a great way to reach out to all relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries, and transform them into active players in designing municipal strategies. This ownership will for sure influence a more successful implementation of the strategy in the future.
- Social Dialogue Forums should be a continuous body. They are very beneficial while new municipal strategies or plans are designed. But they play just as big of a role during the implementation of these set goals and their monitoring.
- The composition of Social Dialogue Forums is flexible and should be adjusted to the needs and challenges within a municipality. That said, municipalities should have a central role in coordination of the forum in order to ensure its sustainability.

Testimonials

“SDF implementation in the Municipality of Roskovec brought together all the main actors aiming to support the domestic violence victims and raise awareness not to be silent about the phenomenon”

Jonida Gjoka, Legal Expert

“Projects such as SoRi II, which aim to increase local capacities and improve social services for vulnerable groups, specifically for victims of domestic violence, with the aim of ensuring social inclusion, are among the main priorities of the municipality of Roskovec.”

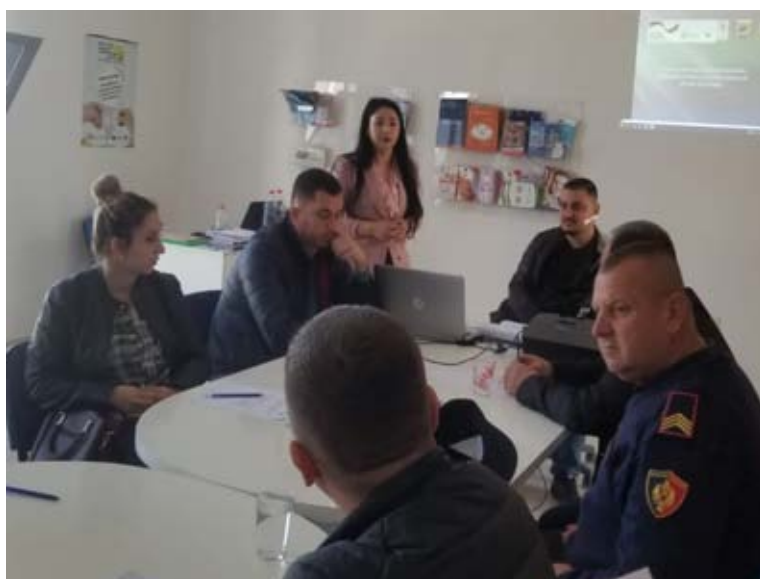
Majlinda Bufi, mayor of Roskovec Municipality

Learn more about this practice

[Facebook post](#)

Contact

Ms. Nertila Pelivani,
Social protection project management office,
Municipality of Roskovec,
nertilapelivani2019@gmail.com,
+ 355 68 23 14 530



NALAS Secretariat
Varshavska 36A,
Skopje 1000, North Macedonia
Tel: +389 2 3090818
info@nalas.eu
www.nalas.eu