SOCIAL INCLUSION

Best Practices of the
Swiss NGO Support Programme

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Foreword

Cooperation between the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues (IBHI) started in 1999, when SDC recognized the need for providing additional support to its NGO partners, not only of a financial nature but also through education in project management, thus contributing to their institutional development and sustainability.

Initial trainings were very well-accepted by the NGOs, resulting in expanding the education to other SDC projects and staff in the next round of IBHI-led trainings targeting the following topics: Planning, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

Long-term strategic planning and monitoring of the projects as a direct result of the education offered, contributed to intensive profiling of the organizations and therefore strengthening of the non-governmental sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina in general.

It is our great pleasure to present, through this Publication, the experiences and results of these organizations, stressing social inclusion as a very important aspect of their work.

Swiss NGO Support Programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Swiss NGO Support Programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is, as a part of the effort of the Swiss *Agency for Development and Cooperation* (SDC) on reconstructing the social sector of BiH, and is specifically focussed on the promotion of social entrepreneurship as a method for including all existing capacities in society when resolving social issues. Special attention is paid to creating a social consensus when prioritising problems and mobilising all available resources for their resolution, especially at the local community level. Inevitably, this approach to resolving problems assumes the development of a cooperation model that involves all stakeholders: state institutions, public institutes and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs). The aim of the *Programme* is defined as the professionalisation of NGOs and the role of state institutions within the framework of municipal social protection systems in the aim of securing adequate social and health protection of beneficiaries.

Within the framework of the *Programme,* the *Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues* (IBHI) has been engaged to provide administrative and technical support. IBHI is responsible for the operational management of the *Programme*, which involves carrying out tasks of an administrative nature, as well as providing technical assistance in strengthening the capacity of local NGOs and their qualifications within the field of social protection.

During 2004 and 2005, support focussed on three areas: strengthening youth, care for the elderly and psychosocial assistance/continued education through supporting 17 organisations, local NGO partners implementing their projects in a total of 21 municipalities. These are as follows:

- *Special Olympics BiH,* Sarajevo;
- *Foundation for Local Democracy*, Sarajevo;
- *Centre for Cultivating Dialogue*, Sarajevo;
- *Alter Art*, Travnik;
- *Zdravo da ste (Be Healthy)*, Banja Luka;
- *Youth Communication Centre* (OKC), Banja Luka;
- *Korak (Step)*, Srbac;
- *Korak dalje (Step Further)*, Kozarska Dubica;
- *Dom mladih (Youth House)*, Sanski Most;
- *Svjetionik (Lighthouse)*, Prijedor;
- *Alfa*, Bihać;
- *Prijateljice (Friends)*, Tuzla;
- *Red Cross of the Tuzla Canton*, Tuzla;
- *Zemlja djece (Land of Children)*, Tuzla;
- *Association for Social Inclusion of People with Mental Disabilities* (USU), Tuzla;
- *Reference Group*, Tuzla; and
- *Agency for Refugee Assistance (ARA), Bijeljina.*

In addition to including direct beneficiaries of 21 municipalities, project implementation embraced indirect beneficiaries in other municipalities of BiH. The total value of implemented projects was KM 3,054,890.00, of which SDC participated with 1,070,269.00 KM, i.e. 35%

Bearing in mind that most organisations, apart from providing direct services to beneficiaries, achieved significant results in creating specific, very successful work methodologies, and achieved significant cooperation with state institutions and public institutes, the Steering Committee of the *Programme* decided to promote the methods and results of local NGO partners through organising a Round Table on: *Social Inclusion – Best Practices of the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH*. The Round Table Programme included presentations and discussions dedicated to different topics within four working tables:

- Cooperation of NGOs and Public Institutions;
- Organisation of Activities for Children and Youth;
- The Role of NGOs in the Integration of Marginalized Groups Into the Education System; and
- Children with Special Needs.

This publication collates the conclusions of the presentations and discussions held at each working table. We appreciate that the methodologies presented and debated go beyond local consequence and can serve as a signpost for improving the work of other NGOs and other actors involved in providing services to people that are marginalized and in a state of social need

Working table *Cooperation of NGOs and Public Institutions* – presentations

Presenter	**Presentation Title**	**Organisation**
Azem Poljić	Presentation of the model of joint work of the state and NGO sectors and opportunities for further improving cooperation	Ministry for Labour and Social Policy of the Tuzla Canton
Tanja Bijedić	Presentation of the model of joint work of the state and NGO sectors and opportunities for further improving cooperation	Red Cross Tuzla
Željko Pauković	Development of volunteerism in public institutions	OKC Banja Luka
Jagoda Petrović	Cooperation of NGOs with public institutions: *Conditio sine qua non* of social work in the local community	ARA Bijeljina
Jasminka Tadić-Husanović	Partnership of NGOs and public institutions	Prijateljice
Ljuban Krnjajić	The necessity of cooperation between NGOs and centres for social work	Korak dalje
Lejla Ćebić	Partnership of NGOs and public institutions	Zemlja djece
Jasmina Mujezinović	Partnership models and opportunities (positive experiences of FLD)	FLD
Gordana Marin, Rajko Zgonjanin, Milan Burazor	Partnership of NGOs and public institutions	Korak, Kozarska Dubica
Jasna Zečević	Structuring cooperation with centres for social work and the police in the Tuzla Canton	Vive Žene

Working table *The Role of NGOs in the Integration of Marginalized Groups Into the Education System* – presentations

Presenter	Presentation Title	Organisation
Melika Smajić	Fulfilling the right to education of children from marginalized groups	USU
Sehaveta Srabović	NGOs and integration of marginalized groups into the education system	Prijateljice
Sanja Vlaisavljević	The role of NGOs in the integration of marginalized groups into the education system	Centre for Cultivating Dialogue

Working table *Youth Centres and Organisation of Activities* – presentations

Presenter	Presentation Title	Organisation
Darko Saračević	The importance of a strategic vision in the programme of a youth centre: Experiences of Alter Art	Alter art
Davorin Šikman	Experiences in creating horizontal and vertical youth structures	Svjetionik
Edis Halilović	Organising activities for youth	Zemlja djece
Sanela Ališić	Youth centres and the organisation of activities for youth	Dom mladih
Ranka Katalinski	Youth centres and the organisation of activities for youth	Centre for Cultivating Dialogue
Jelena Radivojević-Stupar	Open youth centres – from establishment to sustainability	Zdravo da ste

Working table *Children with Special Needs* – presentations

Presenter	Presentation Title	Organisation
Fata Ibralić	Barriers to the inclusion of children with special needs into the education system	USU
Ljubo Lepir	Children with special needs and their parents: A methodology for working with beneficiaries	Korak dalje
Azur Kuduzović	Inclusion of people with special needs into society through sports	Special Olympics BiH
Ajša Mahmutagić	Architectural barriers as a limiting factor to the integration of children with physical disabilities into the educational process	Koraci nade[1], Tuzla

[1] In addition to the local NGO partners within the *NGO Support Programme in BiH*, other NGOs indirectly linked to the Programme, specifically *Vive žene* and *Koraci nade*, also participated in the work of the Round Table.

Social Inclusion – A basic Human Right

By René Holenstein
Country Director, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation - SDC

The process of transformation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has produced some winners and a great number of losers so far. This is particularly the case in the area of economic development. As a result, the phenomenon of poverty has appeared in ways which have been widely unknown under the previous political and economic patters during the Yugoslav regime, and it is reaching segments of the population which have not suffered from poverty before.[2]

Neither the so called international community nor the respective populations have foreseen all the features and the importance of this phenomenon. That is why is has not yet been fully analysed, and that is also why it is having considerable psychological impact on directly affected people.

Like other transition countries BiH faces a widespread poverty and social hardship. Unemployment estimates range from 16% to 44% depending on methodologies but could worsen as privatisation accelerates. Popular perceptions on the economy and government are pessimistic and fuel anxiety. Official per capita GDP is about half of that in 1992. Some 20% of the population is estimated to live below the poverty line of whom the worst hit are pensioners, middle-aged unemployed, returnees and youth.[3]

The face of poverty – or rather impoverishment – is new for these large groups of people and is often experienced as a shock. Large parts of the population in BiH and Donor Agencies had imagined the transition process after the war as a relatively quick and swift change from centrally planned to market economy, from state control to people's participation in political decision-making. But the speed of transition and the expected progress have been slower than foreseen.[4]

What is social exclusion?

Social exclusion is a broader term than poverty. By social exclusion we mean "a set of processes, including within the labour market and the welfare system, by which individuals, households, communities or even whole social groups are pushed towards or kept within the margins of society".[5] It encompasses not only material deprivation but more broadly the denial of opportunities to participate fully in social life.

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[2] Cf. SDC, New Poverty in South Eastern Europe, Issue Paper, Berne 2003.

[3] United Nations, Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund, Country Programme Document for Bosnia and Herzegovina (2005-2009), p. 1.

[4] SDC/seco, Poverty assessment in Bosnia and Herzegovina and strategic recommendations for SDC/seco's follow-up program and alignment with Bosnia's Poverty Reduction Strategy, Sarajevo 2003.

[5] Paul Teague, Robin Wilson, Towards an inclusive society, in: Democratic Dialogue, Social Exclusion, Social Inclusion, Report No. 2. Cf. www.democraticdialogue.org/report2/report2m.htm

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Indeed social exclusion may not necessarily be poverty-based. Nonetheless, poor households are likely to endure many forms of exclusion. There is a diversity of experience of exclusion, depending on social perceptions of the excluded group and the attitude of the state. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, images of single parents, the young unemployed and homeless people, have been portrayed through the media as poor people. Other categories, such as the elderly, the returnees and people with disabilities may also be regarded as socially excluded.

Social exclusion, therefore, is not seen as one that can exhaustively be described in economic terms. Rather, it encompasses a series of aspects and is defined most adequately as the result of various factors – structural, individual, economic and social, historical and current – that add up to a condition labelled "new poverty". A possible formula that integrates different aspects of social exclusion stresses people's feeling of multiple exclusions, of being victim to structural and to psychological violence, of economic constraints, of powerlessness and of lacking perspectives.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, social exclusion evidently is mostly linked to the consequences of the War and the transition process, and to the exposure of the populations to new types of hazards of different kinds. Because social exclusion takes different forms and has multiple causes, it can and should be described from various angles. Lack of access to vital resources (economic, natural, political, social, cultural) combined to a multi-facetted syndrome that can adequately be called "poverty". In that sense most of the NGOs supported by the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH are dealing with people that suffer from social exclusion. Almost all of these NGOs deal with one of the four issues: Children without parental care, care of elderly, psychosocial health, community development.

Rights-based approach to the phenomenon of social exclusion

The approach chosen by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) to combat the phenomenon of social exclusion is to insist on people's rights by providing them an equal access to all resources. In 1997, the SDC committed itself to integrating human rights into its work and issued guidelines to assist its staff and partners. Since then, SDC has undertaken a wide range of activities. Together with its governmental and non-governmental partners, SDC will integrate human rights principles into the design, implementation and monitoring of development policies, programmes and projects at multilateral and bilateral level.[6]

Pursuing a policy of social inclusion nowadays means that development and people's rights have to work together. Economic, social, civil and political rights have to be integrated into a support to transition, poverty reduction, people-centred development and conflict prevention. This policy is coherent with the Millennium Declaration that re-emphasises the importance of human rights promotion and protection for poverty reduction.

In short, a policy of social inclusion means to pursue a policy that strives at realising a life in dignity for all people. Our vision is one of a world in which all people can live in prosperity, peace,

[6] SDC, Towards a Life in Dignity: Realising Rights for People, Berne, September 2005.

freedom, and security, and a world which will also provide future generations with sufficient resources for their own development. It is also a world in which the development of society unfolds on the basis of sustainable production and consumer behaviour, with a just distribution of material goods and resources and an equitable sharing of opportunities, knowledge, choices and power.[7] Social inclusion therefore requires a society that takes into account the links of solidarity and mechanisms of social inclusion that need to be reinforced to allow people living in poverty to be recognized in their dignity.

Fighting social exclusion means

- Empowering the disadvantaged and enhancing their capacity
- Establishing priorities in favour of the poor and disadvantaged
- Fostering organization operating in the interest of the poor
- Encouraging effective poverty-reduction policies (MDGs, PRSP)
- Having a personal attitude relying on compassion, solidarity and a sentiment of justice
- Combating all forms of violence against women

Translation into practice

The governments of partner countries are primarily responsible for implementing a policy based on the principles of social inclusion. SDC will continue to provide assistance to strengthen the capacity of various state authorities at national and local level in order to cope with the violation of basic human rights. Within its Medium Term Strategy 2004-2007 the Government of BiH should address these issues more prominently. SDC will also continue to strengthen civil society capacity so as to support vulnerable individuals and groups in realizing their rights, and to participate and cooperate constructively with the national and local institutions in designing development policies. SDC will empower rights-holders to realize their rights and strengthen duty bearers to comply with their obligations and duties. Activities will aim at empowering people to participate fully in decision-making processes that affect their lives – and making state institutions capable of responding to the needs expressed by socially excluded or/and poor people.

[7] Cf. SDC, Creating The Prospect of Living a Life in Dignity. Principles guiding the SDC in its commitment to fighting poverty, Berne 2003.

The Role of NGOs in the promotion of social inclusion principle

IBHI training "The role of primary and secondary prevention and alleviation of deviational behaviour and substance abuse", (Banja Luka, April 2005)

By Žarko Papić
Director of Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues - IBHI BiH

Social exclusion is the process where the certain groups have been pushed on margins of the society and prevented to participate in the social processes based upon their poverty, law level of education or inadequate social skills. Additionally, this removes them from employment, incomes and opportunities for employment and enables them to step into social connections. These groups have small influence on decision making processes toward policies by which are influenced and small opportunities to improve their living standards.

From Strategy on combating poverty-Government of Republic of Ireland

Significance of the social exclusion problem in BiH has its roots from interweaving of several factors: transition of the country's social-political system, social anomalies caused by the war, sudden increase of poverty followed by inadequate social protection system, and traditional prejudices toward certain social groups. At the same time, social exclusion can be viewed as the cause as well as the consequence of above mentioned factors. Social exclusion represents the factor which causes new or additionally increases already identified weaknesses in the social "tissue" of the country.

Although, the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina guarantees equality to all citizens, ability of government and public institutions to implement regulated principles of equality in all situations and towards all social groups is limited. This weakness could be related to the several factors:

- Lack of government institutions capacity – human and material;
- Lack of readiness to implement principles of equality in processes of social integration all groups impartially;
- Lack of the vision in social integration mechanisms strategic planning

Although, the role of government and public institution in its promotion and implementation should not and must not be minimized, the social inclusion is leaning on much wider society forces. In the situation of state institutions insufficiency, the responsibility of other actors is getting the new meaning. The role of non governmental organization should be viewed in this light also. Analyses of possibilities and role of NGOs in promoting the principle of social integration has to rest on several features, which determine its specificity in BiH circumstances:

- Principle of NGOs organization has experienced the significant transformation transition of social-political system in the country, but the potential of citizens initiatives is still partly used;
- The model of NGOs financing is mostly oriented towards international donors what fasten the growth of the NGO sector in the post-war period. But the danger of long term NGO orientation

towards this kind of financing is hidden in this kind of approach as well as neglecting of the local capacities;

- The number and diversity of persons and social groups that are in the condition of social need and/or bear the social exclusion is very disturbing. Poverty increase additionally stresses out the role of NGO sector but negatively influence on possibility of their financing from the local sources.

Performing in above mentioned circumstances, NGO sector in BiH has managed to achieve results in different areas and on different levels: from active participation in forming and implementation of the Law on all levels of the state system and offering concrete services to individual beneficiaries and jeopardized groups. The importance of the place which NGO sector is in the social life of BiH can be easily expressed and through measurable indicators: total number out of 4.629 non governmental organizations in BiH employ around 26.700 citizens (2, 3% economically active labour force) and through the volunteer activities engaged equivalently additional 63.000 citizens by which makes an income of around 4,5% GDP expenditures of 2,4% GDP[8]. Based on these information, it is evident that the NGO sector in BiH moves significant quantity of country resources. Direction in which these resources are directed is also significant: NGOs in average of 57% of the time spend on offering direct services, 27% on advocating and 16% on other activities. Mentioned proportions suggest that NGOs in their daily activities do not neglect opportunities that are achievable only with an intensive promotion of their goals to the community members.

Particular influence on the high level of social exclusion of the marginalized groups and individuals in BiH has a striking poverty. Economic Policy Planning Unit BiH (EPPU) and the World Bank give out almost identical picture of the certain population group's exposure to the poverty. According to these analyses, increased possibility of the exposure to the poverty particularly have households with three or more children (one third of poor persons is under 18 years old), households in which the carrier of the household is under 25 years old, refugees, displaced persons and returnees, unemployed persons and persons with inadequate and/or low level of education. It is evident that the big number of NGOs for the target population has exactly the mentioned categories of the population. Possibilities that NGOs, through their activities, improve the general social position of the beneficiary are not even closely to be irrelevant. Results which, for an example, gained by youth centers in providing additional education for youth, and mitigating an asocial behaviour of these members of the community can serve as an example on which way the NGO sector, with its flexible approach and capabilities to adapt the programme of activities to the real needs of the population, can have complementary role of public institutions attentions (schools, centers for social work, etc.).

Taking into the consideration complementarities of aims and capabilities of the government and non government sector, creating relations of the partnership approach in social relations building that will be based on social inclusion of all members in the society is actually the categorical imperative. Government institutions through their competence and financial and personal capacities and non governmental organizations through their flexibility and possibility of active involvement of wider groups of the population have much bigger capacity

[8] Source: IBHI/DFID – Employment, Social Service Provision and Nongovernmental Organizational Sector, – Qualitative Study 3

to promote the principle of the social inclusion for the marginalized groups and individuals. It is important to underline the need that these two sectors provide mechanisms of reciprocally control. Good example of this kind of interaction is monitoring of the implementation of the Mid-Term Development Strategy in BiH, in which the participation was taken by non governmental organizations too and the Strategy for the Roma problems solving of Council of Ministries in BiH[9] that are paying a good attention to the non governmental sector .

Taking into the consideration the importance of the social inclusion principle as well as possibilities and capacities of non governmental organizations in its implementation and promotion, it is possible to extract following features:

- Even the most often starting point of the NGO activity is providing direct services to beneficiaries, significant importance must be given to the development, systematization and dissemination of the successful models of work: from recognizing the most urgent needs of beneficiaries, identification and using of sources at the disposal within the capacities of the local community in order to conduct concrete activities until the evaluation and valorisation of results.
- Initiating force of the NGOS is (local) community. The level of support that NGOs are getting from members of the community is in the direct connection with the level of which the concrete NGO manage to satisfy needs of its members, local community and society as the whole. In that sense, the principle of social inclusion provides achieving of the organization's goals on the very high level but also presents the first-class possibility to increase the capacity of the organization by including marginalized groups in the process of services providing;
- Consistent implementation of the social inclusion principle, even on the first look it presents very demanding model of work, represents on the long term the basis for the future sustainability of the NGO sector as well as the society in general;
- Joint approach in policy defining, methodology and activities of the government institutions, public institutions and non governmental organizations presents the most optimal model for the society integration and mitigation of consequences of huge number of social groups exposed to the different ways of social exclusion.

Organize efforts for combating social exclusion, whether they come from governmental or non governmental sectors, must take into the consideration the wider context. Combat against different appearances of the social exclusion in the context of the BiH accession in the EU, must take into account the need to accommodate the national strategy to the EU strategy. Beside the significant effort that the EU is conducting against the social exclusion in countries members[10], important attention is given to synchronized national action plans for combating poverty and social exclusion in the candidate countries. In this matter, for BiH is particularly important that actions of all actors should be directed to the use of experiences from countries that are members of the EU and synchronizing action plans with key priorities identified by the EU. EU[11]:

- Promotion of investments and shaping up an active labour market in accordance of needs of those ones that must overcome the biggest obstacles on the same labour market,

[9] Official Gazette, 67/05

[10] EU efforts in social exclusion mitigation, beside others, subjects of contracts in Amsterdam (2000), Lisbon (2000), Nice (2000), Laekena (2001) i Nice (2002).

[11] Dimensions and priorities in poverty and social exclusion mitigation in EU are the part of the Report by Directorate of European Commission „Report on social inclusion (in 10 new members countries) for 2005.

- Ensuring that the social protection systems provide adequate income and dignity to all members in the society,
- Increase the access which the most vulnerable groups have in the area of housing, social and health protection and specially the access to opportunities for education.
- Focus on the poverty elimination and social inclusion of children,
- Focus on poverty reduction and social exclusion and participation on the

Taking into the consideration the presented context, importance of the experience of NGOs, local partners in the *Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH* supported by the *Swiss Department for Development and Cooperation*, is based upon the success of the model developed by these organizations. Even various by their target groups, work methodology, intern capacities and number of beneficiaries, the common characteristic of these NGOs is consistent implementation of the social inclusion principle:

- Beneficiaries are treated as partners not as the aid recipients,
- Resources needed for the implementation of projects are firstly looked for in the local community, and then in the international donors;
- Basis for the project activities planning includes the profiling of services towards achieving (at least partly) sustainability by using resources within the local community;
- Projects implementation is regularly (very often with enormous effort) implemented alongside with public and state institutions (municipalities, centers for social work, health centers, schools, etc.)

The success of these projects planned and implemented within this Programme, is before all based on mentioned principle. As the result, information that 42% of provided funds for the implementation of projects within local communities and with decrease of the international donors presence if the importance of organization has been recognized by the local community, regardless of which group has been chosen and recognized on the local level: children with special needs, returnees, youth, elderly people, victims of violence, national minorities, etc. Varieties of levels, on which, within the Programme and through projects of NGOs, the problems of social inclusion of marginalized groups were treated underlines the complexity of problem and the need for their multidisciplinary solution. Social inclusion is rarely problem "for itself". Inclusion process regularly means changing awareness, as well as the governing system and members of the community. Promotion of civil society's based upon equality and inclusion of all social groups means breaking up many obstacles and prejudices. Considering the long-term period that is required by these projects, it is very important to have in mind the necessity for finding models on which the sustainability is going to be based upon the internal capacities. The benefit that will be gained for BiH society, it is higher than efforts directed towards the social inclusion of deprived and marginalized groups and individuals.

Partnership of NGOs and Public Institutions

Round table: Social Inclusion: Best practices of the Swiss NGO Support Programme (Sarajevo, 25th and 26th of October 2005)

By Ana Abdelbasit
Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues - IBHI BiH

Introduction

Partnerships can take a variety of forms, ranging from informal initiatives to contractual or statutory accords regulating activities of two or more parties. They can be made between or within sectors, and are ultimately based on the mutual benefit of the partners involved. The Swiss Non-governmental (NGO) Support Programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) 2004-2006[12] has promoted partnerships between NGOs and public institutions, focussing specifically on NGOs providing social services. A number of these NGOs presented their results and experiences of the partnering process at the Round Table "Social Inclusion: Best Practices of the Swiss NGO Support Programme" held in Sarajevo, BiH on 25 September 2005. This paper will aim to analyse the currents trends in NGO-public sector partnerships, linking them to the experiences of the NGOs active within the Swiss Programme.

Partnerships can be informal and formal, and can take the form of consultations, joint implementation of activities and financial collaboration. They combine the resources, risks and rewards of all partners to ensure greater efficiency and range of service provision, better access to capital and improved compliance with standards and regulations. They can also encourage development and transfer of innovative approaches. Regular monitoring of service provision or any other activities set out in the contract must ensure that the needs of all stakeholders are met, those of public institutions, non governmental organisations and the general public.

Certain regions have a long-standing history of partnerships between NGOs and public institutions, where a participatory process is applied successfully in decision-making at the local level.[13] Consultations, ensuring NGO involvement in policy development, are a beneficial tool for diagnosing the state of affairs and gathering information at the local level, as well as for channelling feedback to the community.

The BiH Medium-Term Development Strategy (MTDS) clearly recognises the need for civil society inclusion in mitigating social inequality through providing inter-sectoral services and promoting dialogue. However, the development of a stable partnership process between the NGO and governmental sector is still relatively undeveloped in BiH. Nevertheless, increased social need is making it a more viable and efficient method for public institutions to share the burden of service provision.

The experiences of NGOs participating in the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH 2004-2006 can be used as illustrations of good practices and in certain cases can demonstrate the difficulties faced by NGOs in developing a dialogue and partnership with public institutions.

[12] A Project funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.
[13] The USA has a history of civil society involvement in policy initiatives, creating a favourable environment for NGO participation in service provision as well as policy consultations. The EU also strongly promotes social consultations and partnerships at all levels.

Purpose and Benefits of Partnership

The general purpose of partnerships in the social sector is to provide a higher level of services than any of the parties involved would be able to provide on their own. The rewards of partnerships are based on more effective service delivery, improved mechanisms of service delivery and cost-effectiveness, all of which are advantages for organisations seeking a niche in the service sector.

More effective service delivery

Through pooling resources, be they intellectual, material or financial, partnership-based initiatives can enhance the effectiveness of service delivery. An important factor that leads to greater effectiveness is information sharing.

Better knowledge of community needs and efficient targeting

One of the benefits for governments when partnering with NGOs is the possibility to capitalise on their knowledge of conditions at the local level. Due to their grass roots activities, NGOs are often better equipped to identify the most urgent needs in the community. Government entities can use this to their benefit and can use consultations as a means to target their activities to actual needs, while NGOs can rely on institutional knowledge to define the scope of their activities (e.g. with regards to beneficiary and service selection) and avoid duplication of activities.

The project "Reintegration of Old People - Returnees in Bijeljina Municipality"[14] implemented by the Agency for Refugee Assistance (ARA) demonstrates how cooperation between an NGO and the Centre for Social Work can be used to capitalise on already existing information and economise on time and resources. A survey carried out by ARA in 2003 indicated that 70% of displaced families returned to their pre-war place of residence in Bijeljina. Of this, 46% were aged over 60 and in a state of social need, requiring health and social care and support in reintegrating into the community. Social support provided by public institutions in the region was based on direct treatment of beneficiaries provided by the Bijeljina Centre for Social Work (CSW). Based on their knowledge that the vulnerable population was that of elderly returnees, ARA approached the Centre for Social Work for help in selecting beneficiaries from their existing list of people in social need that fall within this category. This collaboration saved ARA both time and resources that would have been required to identify beneficiaries, allowing for a more immediate and effective response to be targeted to those in need. In this specific example, information was shared between the Ministry for Refugees and Displaced Persons, Regional the Municipality Office for Return and the Centre for Social Work, ensuring that all public stakeholders also involved in returnee assistance are appraised of the selection process and provision of services.

The Red Cross Tuzla Project "Improvement of Living Conditions of Elderly in Municipality of Gračanica, Through Provision of Health and Social Care"[15][16] is a proposal that also relies on a joint effort of the NGO and public sectors in for identifying project beneficiaries. Identification and beneficiary selection was carried out through two procedures.

[14] A project implemented within the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH 2004-2006

[15] *ibid.*

[16] The project involves cooperation with the Centre for Social Work, the Ministry for Labour and Social Policy of the Tuzla Canton and the Tuzla Canton Employment Bureau.

The first involves the Centre for Social Work and health institutions filling out a form provided by the Red Cross about the type and scope of service required. This form, together with a proposal of measures, provided by a doctor, was then returned to the Red Cross for further action.

The second method of identification was carried out at the individual and local community level, whereby the CSW and Red Cross carry out the identification process and the CSW defines the type of assistance required.

This form of collaboration ensures that assistance is targeted towards real community needs as well as involving the combined knowledge available in the community.

The "Mobile Team" project[17] implemented by the Foundation of Local Democracy (FLD) in Sarajevo demonstrates how an NGO can apply its awareness of needs in the community to base its efforts on developing a partnership with public institutions. When faced with the need for providing information to victims of domestic violence on safety networks, FLD analysed the institutional services available and identified that the only service provided to victims at the time was psychological assistance. After the successful development of a shelter, their efforts were aimed at offering psychological rehabilitation to victims of domestic violence by establishing and educating a Mobile Team that would monitor the progress of beneficiaries that have left the shelter. An integral part of this activity revolved around identifying and involving the public institutions, in this case centres for social work and the police, that are also active in providing assistance to victims of domestic violence. This form of multi-institutional assistance supports alternative forms of care which are complementary to, and supplement, existing ones.

Through continual requests for collaboration and effective lobbying, the Sarajevo Canton Centre for Social Work was appraised of the fact that there was no follow-up support for victims once they left the shelter and that a trained Mobile Team consisting of FLD and CSW staff would be able to provide this service more effectively than placing additional strain solely on the CSW, which due to regular activities might not be able to address the issue adequately. The knowledge gained by FLD representatives of the individual cases during the victims stay in the shelter, would also be of benefit to social workers in providing follow-up support to victims that have left the shelter. The success of this partnership is reflected in the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation on 30 May 2005 which recognises the need for the "Mobile Team to respect, through joint coordination, the necessity for the implementation of field visits to families with records of violence…".

Some Round Table participants emphasised that memorandums such as this one might not always be the best foundation for establishing partnerships, and that if there was a need for formalising agreements in order to organise a partnership, detailed contracts outlining the aspects of the partnership might be a more useful option. However, in conditions where the overall public sector perspective of partnerships with NGOs is reserved, and contract-based collaboration is infrequent, it was acknowledged that memorandums can serve as a tool for formalising partnerships.

Initiatives such as these can be used to improve the public profile of partnerships in inhospitable environments. Following a successful period of collaboration, FLD and the CSW

[17] *ibid.*

jointly presented their efforts through the media. In addition to raising public awareness about the support network available for victims of domestic violence, this acted as a major contribution to enhancing the profile of partnerships between NGOs and public institutions. The rewards of promoting partnerships are manifold, shared between both sectors and such activities should not be underestimated. They increase citizen confidence that government's intentions to include them in decision-making processes are true, and they depict the NGO sector as a serious partner to the public sector.

Improved service provision

Partnerships can advance the provision of social services, improving the efficiency and professionalism of service delivery by providing a wider assortment of supporting services to beneficiaries. NGOs in BiH have been, through extensive international support, strengthening their professional capacity for service provision. During the post-war period, they have often been on the receiving end of training in the latest methodologies and trends. Public institutions can benefit from this knowledge, and can use it to complement valuable institutional knowledge and skills gained through years of experience.

In an effort to provide a multi-dimensional approach to its beneficiaries, the NGO Korak, from Kozarska Dubica has partnered with elementary schools from the city and the Kozarska Dubica Centre for Social Work in the project "Prevention of Disturbance of Behaviour of Teenagers"[18] to provide support to teenagers with behavioural disturbances. This joint approach was based on an analysis of needs that demonstrated a need for long-term support of social and healthcare services through individual and group therapy. In order to provide a holistic support programme it was established that teachers, parents, the CSW and the Centre for Mental Health needed to be involved in the project. In order to produce favourable results, it was agreed that all parties need to be involved in the process from its inception, i.e. participating in the development of the programme, service methodologies and their provision as well as monitoring and evaluation. An essential part of this work was consulting with clients. This is an often overlooked component of project development, and one which can lead to the project having the opposite effect from that desired. Apart from providing more efficient solutions to complex problems in the community, this approach to partnerships serves to increase awareness and community responsibility.

This all-inclusive approach to providing services draws on the institutional knowledge of public institutions but brings with it the danger of eliciting a purely formal engagement from their side rather than concrete participation in implementing the various projects activities.

Acknowledging this possible threat, NGO Korak recognised that one of the methods to prevent the involvement of partners on a purely formal basis was through proper monitoring of the different aspects of the partnership. These aspects included monitoring:

- records of professional practice;
- contacts with representatives of public institutions, the business sector and beneficiaries;
- the extent and opportunities for the use of previous experiences in the implementation of psychosocial programmes; and
- media-related activities aimed at awareness raising.

[18] *ibid.*

By providing useful feedback for evaluating the efficiency of service provision and allowing the contribution of all parties involved to be measured, this system recognises that flexibility based on changing needs and lessons learnt is one of the essential aspects of partnerships.

Improved mechanisms of service delivery

Mechanisms of service delivery can be advanced through partnerships of NGOs and public institutions. NGOs can often extend the coverage of beneficiaries in the field. An example of this are partnerships of NGOs with centres for social work. In cooperation with NGOs, centres for social work can expand the provision of non-cash services to their beneficiaries. This is an advantage that CSWs can use to their benefit in periods of transition, where there is a need to develop on their main role as providers of financial support, especially in conditions where finances for cash benefits are unstable or not regulated properly. The use of these methodologies needs to be taken into consideration at a point in time when CSWs in BiH are developing and structuring their new role in the community, and horizontal sharing of experiences between CSWs is of essence.

The use of volunteers in service delivery of NGOs is an important means for improving service delivery mechanisms. The Red Cross Tuzla Project "Improvement of Living Conditions of Elderly in Municipality of Gračanica, through Provision of Health and Social Care" adequately demonstrates how a substantial volunteer force, mobilised through the Red Cross can benefit public care providers (centres for social work, homes, health centres, etc.) and educational institutions. The benefit is multifaceted, not solely being concentrated on assistance to beneficiaries or easing the strain on public health care provision. It also provides the volunteers, many of whom are pensioners willing to invest their knowledge and time, with a sense of value, providing for the community and quality use of their time. Due to its broad network of offices, the Red Cross represents an efficient mechanism for channelling volunteers and transferring skills and services to the community.

The project "Development of Voluntarism Amongst Youth", implemented by the Youth Communication Centre (OKC) demonstrates how a partnership between an NGO and educational institutions can be used to develop skills in young people that the regular educational system might not provide them with. This is especially significant as employers rate general skills, such as good communication skills and team work as being of utmost importance when recruiting employees (skills which the education system in BiH does not promote in a systematic manner).[19] In addition to providing the community with an organised volunteer recruitment model, the capacity of the secondary schools involved in the project is strengthened through training of psychologists, pedagogues and representatives of school councils.

In BiH the main method for volunteer recruitment has been shown to be through building links with schools and colleges.[20] Both these projects, provide valuable support to the education system. The mixed-model of health and psychosocial care employed through the Red Cross Tuzla

[19] DFID Project, Labour and Social Policy in BiH (December 2003) "*Qualitative Study No. 2, Skills Gaps and Training Needs: Current Status and Policy Implications - Draft for Discussion*", IBHI/BSAL, Sarajevo and Banja Luka.

[20] DFID Projects, Labour and Social Policy in BiH and Reforming the Systems and Structures of Central and Local Social Policy Regimes in BiH (May 2005) "*Qualitative Study No. 3, Employment, Social Service Provision and The Non-Governmental Sector, Status and Prospects for BiH, Analysis and Policy Implications - Paper 4: Report on In-depth Survey of NGOs*", IBHI/BSAL, Sarajevo and Banja Luka.

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project in particular provides pupils of the secondary Medical School in Tuzla and students of the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation with an opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge in practice. The volunteers are coordinated through professional staff of the Red Cross, who are in turn supervised by relevant government institutions, while monitoring of the work of the pupils and students is carried out in agreement with the Ministry for Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Tuzla Canton. The significance of this approach is that both the public and NGO partner are made responsible for the successes and failures of the project.

An essential component of service provision is work on prevention. Partnerships with NGOs enable such work to be incorporated with institutional forms of support, that can more often only deal with consequences. The work of the Youth Centre "Pinkland"[21] in Banovići is an example of how an NGO can, through focussing its activities on providing young people with alternative forms of spending their leisure time, lessen the need for institutional support to young people.

The activities[22] of the Humanitarian Association "Prijateljice" from Tuzla on strengthening the Centre for Women Entrepreneurs, are part of the overall efforts in BiH on preventing and decreasing poverty, and are thus an important form of supplementing government activities in this area.

The cooperation of the Red Cross Tuzla with the Tuzla Canton Employment Bureau is also aimed at preventing social exclusion and poverty. One of the activities of the Employment Bureau was finding employment for 50 people with special needs, which was supported by the NGO sector through a campaign, beneficiary identification and providing employment opportunities.

Cost-effectiveness of service delivery

In times of economic instability the strain of providing social services on government budgets can be severe. One of the main motivators and benefits of partnerships between NGOs and public institutions is its cost-effectiveness.

The project "Reintegration of Old People - Returnees in Bijeljina Municipality Region" implemented by ARA aims to assist elderly returnees in social need who do not receive adequate support through institutional assistance. In addition to providing medical services, the project aims to encourage social integration of the elderly by providing those capable with a sustainable livelihood and microsocial support networks, which may in turn lead to a decrease in future demands for institutional support. It has already been mentioned that the CSW provides the list of beneficiaries from which the project selects its own beneficiaries, following which the project provides support to those beneficiaries the CSW cannot provide assistance to for objective reasons.

In the absence of a formal partnership with the CSW, but due to the need for additional services, ARA has initiated joint actions with the CSW and the Ministry for Refugees and Displaced Persons, Regional the Municipality Office for Return, whenever possible. Members of these institutions have been invited to participate in visits made to distribution donations (e.g.

[21] Supported within the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH 2004-2006 through the project of the Association "Zemlja djece".
[22] A project implemented within the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH 2004-2006.

firewood) to the beneficiaries. Their participation in such initiatives, albeit informal, serves to raise awareness among community members about the socially needy and can assist the process of changing the perceptions of the environment towards the returnees.

The Youth Centre "Pinkland" was created at the initiative of the Banovići Centre for Social Work in 1995 with the aim of helping the young population create a positive vision of the future. Apart from allowing them to structure their leisure time through involvement in cultural and awareness raising activities, the Youth Centre directs young people to social and health institutions if the need arises. In order to be able to do so, the Youth Centre has developed a collaboration with the CSW, health centre and local police whereby they are kept informed of the Centre's activities and the local institutions share information about the services they can provide to young people. The synergy of the Youth Centre and local institutions provides young people with an enhanced support network that can cater to their various needs. The serious approach of the public institutions to this project may in be part due to the fact that the Centre was established at the incentive of a public institution, while the respect is maintained through continuous lobbying.

Successful Partnerships

In order to develop a successful partnership, it is essential to clearly define the roles of the parties involved. This message was stressed by numerous NGOs presenting the results of their work within the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH. Prior to entering into an agreement, the roles and responsibilities of all partners need to be set out and approved by all partners. All partners need to develop a clear set of tasks, a joint vision and objectives at the development phase, which prevents purely formal participation.

To successfully implement the activities, the partners need to agree not only to monitor the project results but also evaluate their working methodologies. Indicators need to be developed at the start of implementation based on the division of responsibilities that will at regular intervals be used to assess the successful fulfilment of roles, ensuring that each partner is adhering to its responsibilities.

Thus, there are certain clear components that need to be fulfilled to achieve successful partnerships. Some of the key aspects that need to be involved in NGO-public partnerships are as follows[23]:

- There has to be a commitment from the leadership of public institutions, as well as a will for active involvement, as their support is invaluable in developing sustainability and legitimacy. One of the aims should be to create legal frameworks for the implementation of partnerships.
- The involvement of public institutions needs to be continuous and should contain a component of monitoring which should revolve around the various features of the partnership. Monitoring does not have to be carried out by the public institution but can be outsourced, to NGOs.
- The partnership needs to be planned out carefully. The roles and responsibilities can be defined within a detailed contract. One of the important issues to factor into the plan is a non-specific methodology for resolving conflicts.

[23] Factors outlined by The National Council for Public-Private Partnerships, some of which can apply to NGO-public partnerships. www.ncppp.org

- Consistent funding needs to be made available for the duration of the partnership, regardless of sources.
- The value of the partnership needs to be disseminated to the public, media, current and potential beneficiaries, other public institutions and all relevant interest groups since false impressions can exist as to the purpose and benefits of the partnership.
- Selection of partners needs to be based on experience in the area of partnerships, not only on financial considerations (e.g. the lowest bid).

The activities of the NGO Vive Žene[24] illustrates a structured approach to the development of a successful partnership, based on the initial recognition that assistance to victims of violence requires a multi-disciplinary approach of social institutions. The long-term process (initiated in 1998) was started by the establishment of a working group[25] made up of NGOs working on preventing violence. In order to involve public institutions in the initiative, continuous educational activities such as trainings, round tables and public discussions were organised, which by 2005 resulted in the development of a support programme for centres for social work in 5 municipalities, joint treatment of beneficiaries, a memorandum of cooperation with the Ministry for Labour and Social Policy of the Tuzla Canton, the adoption of a criminal law, family law and law on violence in the family and a protocol on cooperation with the police and centres for social work.

The significance of this initiative lies in the development of a structured process which can be replicated as a framework for developing partnerships. Its effectiveness is based on a number of key factors:

- the joint approach of NGOs in lobbying public institutions (related to their active participation and the adoption or amendment of existing laws);
- the use of the Reference Group Tuzla as a framework for the working group activities and a forum for encouraging dialogue between the NGO and governmental sectors;
- continuous education and exchange of experiences with public officials;
- the recognition that development of partnerships is a long-term, often difficult process that requires all parties involved to be prepared to adapt following a formal evaluation; and
- the recognition that the essence of information-sharing and educational activities needs to be founded on the principle of developing "institutional knowledge", i.e. that knowledge imparted is not lost as a result of staff changes in institutions.

Contracting Out Services to NGOs

In BiH there are no common legal mechanisms for contracting out social services to NGOs. However, there are a number of cases where this process has been initiated. Social protection plans have been developed in four pilot municipalities[26], in which the local authorities have set out a budget for tendering out services provided through inter-sectoral partnerships. This approach to encouraging partnerships has proven to be successful and is currently being replicated within the UNICEF Project "Improved Mechanisms of Child Protection" in 5 municipalities which are

[24] A partner organisation of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

[25] Working group "Stop nasilju" (End Violence), which is active within the Reference Group Tuzla.

[26] In Banja Luka, Gornji-Vakuf Uskoplje, Trebinje and Zenica within the DFID Project "Reforming the Systems and Structures of Central and Local Social Policy Regimes in BiH".

developing child protection plans which will use the same partnership methodology within service provision. Essentially, such initiatives have proven to be very useful mechanisms for encouraging joint planning of social services and resources available locally.

In order for this process to be successful, tendering procedures have to be developed based on equal opportunities and transparent criteria. They must also be advertised openly and on a timely basis. The length of tenders is also a key factor. When partnerships between public institutions and NGOs are in their embryonic phase, there is often a tendency to limit them to shorter time-periods. However, long-term contracts need to be offered as a possibility, particularly in cases where partnerships provide multiple benefits to the community.[27] The support provided by the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH recognises through its willingness to support a second round of projects for the same NGOs. This will allow most successful NGOs in the project to develop on their experiences and utilise the lessons learned during the first phase.

As already mentioned, an important segment of contracting out services is the monitoring of their implementation. Monitoring procedures have to be in place in order to ensure the effective delivery of services and there is no reason why monitoring cannot be contracted out to NGOs as a separate activity in cases where the partnership process is substantial and requires extensive input for evaluation. This is also a learning process for public institutions, who are given an opportunity to witness and evaluate the success of a wide range of services.

One of the projects the Youth Centre "Pinkland" implements in partnership with the municipality[28] includes a municipal staff member that acts as an external volunteer for monitoring and evaluation. This is an important step in recognising the responsibility of the local institutions in extending its efforts to community development through all viable actors and confirmation of the contribution of this project to the local development.

One step further in this process would be the development of service provision standards. The involvement of a large number of actors from different sectors in service provision brings with it the risk to the quality of services provided. Work in this area is still in its initial phases in BiH, but it is one where NGOs should play an important role in developing standards together with the government. Once unified regulations and standards are developed it will be possible for the government to organise a unified inspection system for all institutions providing social services.[29]

As mentioned above, partnerships between NGOs and public institutions provoked by tendering requirements are in their first phases, but are likely to become more frequent as both parties become aware of the benefits to this approach. The Tuzla Canton has started allocating a separate budget for supporting NGO sector activities[30]. The second phase of this support will be public tendering for projects. The Ministry has established the need for these tenders to be based on specific criteria: transparency, equal opportunities and a selection process based on the expertise of candidates. Experiences of such partnerships are starting to be shared between local

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[27] For example, government contracts for NGOs providing social services can be extended to a three-year period once the NGO has proven to be successful during implementation of a shorter-term project.

[28] The Project "Initiating New Cultural Activities".

[29] The Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia is an example of such an institution. Its department for the Inspection of Social Affairs develops systematic solutions for monitoring the work of all social service providers as part of its work, regardless of which sector they originate from.

[30] Through the Ministry for Labour and Social Policy of the Tuzla Canton.

communities, albeit slowly. There is still an intrinsic distrust by the public sector of the NGO sector as a serious partner in service provision. This is in part due to the fact that the NGO sector in BiH has until recently been lacking in work on creating a positive image in the public.

Some efforts are being made to rectify this; among them is the work of the Reference Group Tuzla aimed at informing and educating government structures, citizens and media on the importance of NGO sector and building civil society. Their objective to improve information flow does not only extend to NGOs, but also to officials and employees of government institutions and addresses the important issue of transparency, the lack of which is one of the reasons behind public sector mistrust of NGOs. This means that the large number of NGOs providing social services, that are members of the Reference Group, are provided with an organised system for exchanging information and experiences with governmental authorities as well as other NGOs and relevant stakeholders in the community. With proper targeting, this system can promote the establishment of partnerships based on common interests, as well as assist in avoiding the duplication of activities by different social institutions.

Partnership and Financing

Limitations to donor funding, which are becoming more evident in BiH as support from international sources decreases, are forcing NGOs to seek out more sustainable resources. International donations are most commonly project-specific and do not focus on institutional development, obliging NGOs to follow the donor agendas rather than fulfilling their long-term development plans. The demand for funding on the other hand increases as public sector activities are carried out by NGOs. NGOs have three main sources of funding: the general public, private and governmental sectors (which are externally generated and can either have international or local sources) and internal, self-generated sources.[31]

The desire to create a more sustainable source of funding and move away from donor dependency has encouraged many not-for-profit organisations to seek long-term funding solutions based on a "for-profit approach".[32] This has led certain NGOs to adopt an entrepreneurial approach, whereby they employ resource-generating "self-financing" activities that will provide a more stable source of income.

The Municipality of Banovići directly acknowledged the contribution of the Youth Centre "Pinkland" to the young population of Banovići and has participated in the purchase of the Centre's premises with 51%. However, the Youth Centre recognised the difficulties of receiving full financial support from municipal funding due to the difficult economic situation and within their development strategy planned numerous self-financing activities.

The role of donors and state and local authorities

International donors have played a major role in developing and financing partnerships between NGOs and public institutions in BiH. However, with the decrease of international donations, methodologies need to be developed to incorporate a legally regulated financing

[31] Davis, L.
[32] *ibid*.

process through governmental authorities. An example of this are the budgets for partner-led projects incorporated into the local social protection plans and child protection plans mentioned above.

The opportunity presented by VAT

The introduction of VAT in BiH in January 2006 may pose a paradox for the work of NGOs providing social services. As more funding might in theory become available in local budgets for social services, the introduction of a single rate might lead to increased social need among the most vulnerable groups. Although the development of social programmes in both entities is planned, in order to attempt to mitigate the effects of VAT on populations in greatest social need, the NGO sector needs to be considered as a serious partner to the government in providing additional services to the poorest populations. A consultation process, involving NGOs, can lead to a better understanding of the situation in the field, ensuring that the most needy are those that receive adequate support.

In order for NGOs to be an equal partner, an adequate legal framework for their operation needs to be adopted. Tax exemptions for NGOs would serve to encourage the work of the NGO sector, strengthening their position as service providers which might encourage public institution confidence.

Matching funds

One method of financing that is encouraged in the partnership system of service provision is that of "matching funds", whereby a condition for receiving funds from local authorities or donors is that a minimal amount of money or services-in-kind originate from the beneficiaries themselves. In a climate that may be hostile to the NGO sector, matching external funds with internal funds might serve to create a more receptive environment.

Korak dalje from Srbac implements the project "Support for Children with Special Needs and their Parents"[33] in partnership with the Centre for Social Work from Kozarska Dubica, the Centre for Social Work from Prnjavor and the Association of Parents and Children with Special Needs 'Izvor". The significance of this project does not only lie in the multi-dimensional approach to service provision, but also in the fact that the public institutions as well as providing professional assistance to children with special needs and their parents provide half of the funding for this project. This is partly due to the recognition of the benefits cooperation of NGOs can have for the community.

Promotion and Visibility

The future of NGO-public partnerships in BiH relies in part on the responsibility of NGOs to create a positive image of the NGO sector. The relative mistrust of the public sector can be reversed through awareness raising campaigns that NGOs need to incorporate into their long-term development strategies. Although a joint approach of the NGO sector would be most effective in raising its profile, as would regional or thematic campaigns aimed at specific regions or groups of

[33] A project implemented within the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH 2004-2006.

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institutions working in the same area, each individual NGO can make a move towards increasing its visibility among relevant local institutions.

The often praised efforts of the NGO sector in the Tuzla Canton is in part due to the structured efforts of the Reference Group Tuzla to increase visibility of the activities and results its NGO members among the governmental, international and NGO sectors. It acts as a toll for relaying thee message that NGOs are undertaking joint actions to improve the situation in the Tuzla Canton and are open to cooperation with other sectors. The message on cooperation becomes more believable due to the transparent dissemination of examples and experiences between all stakeholders.

Future Developments

Towards EU accession

The European Commission encourages civil society participation and partnering with other sectors. Although it is not mentioned directly in the Amsterdam treaty, the contribution of civil society organisations is emphasised in an annex through the declaration nº 38, which states that "the EU recognizes the important contribution made by voluntary service activities to developing social solidarity. The Community will encourage the European dimension of voluntary organizations with particular emphasis on the exchange of information and experiences as well as on the participation of the young and the elderly in voluntary work."[34]

The EC uses European Policy Forums as a method for encouraging inter-sectoral consultations. These forums include NGOs, social partners, member state governments, employers, regional and local authorities and research institutes from the EU countries, amongst others.[35] The involvement of NGOs in policy consultations serves to promote inter-sectoral service provision in Europe, which has shown to be cost-effective.

In addition to promoting consultations, the EC encourages partnership-based projects through making partnerships a funding criterion, which will lead to direct opportunities for new sources of funding in BiH (e.g., through EU community programmes and structural funds). In BiH, the DFID Project "Reforming the Systems and Structures of Central and Local Social Policy Regimes in BiH" introduced a methodology for Community Action Projects whereby the allocation of funds require the evidence of partnership between civil society organisations and public institutions as a financing criterion. Public institutions and NGOs had to apply for funding in partnership with each other. This prerequisite is based on the need to develop methodologies that draw on the different strengths of the two sectors. In regions where there is a general distrust of the NGO sector by the public sector and vice versa, this is a method that can "compel" them to acknowledge the specific contribution that each can make.

Although the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH 2004-2006 did not assign partnerships as the decisive feature when selecting projects, the NGOs involved recognised the benefit of collaborating with public institutions in service provision and placed a lot of effort into this aspect of their work.

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[34] Newman, C.L.
[35] *ibid.*

Service provision

As has been noted before, the EC supports the inclusion of NGOs in the provision of social services. In BiH NGOs provide a wide range of services including shelter for victims of domestic violence, care for the elderly and disabled. During the transition period, service providers have been heavily dependent on international donors, receiving little domestic support for these services. In order to function successfully it is necessary for service providers to be able to charge fees for their services, without being taxed like for-profit businesses and to be able to compete for government contracts.

Consultations and public hearings

Consultations with civil society organisations can be one of the best methods for governments to gain information about poor and marginalized groups. The global programme of Millennium Development Goals (MDG), whereby each country had to complete a national report by 2005 was a perfect example of how governments could benefit form partnering with NGOs on three accounts: using them as a tool for spreading the message about MDGs, gathering information for the reports and helping them to achieve the MDG targets.[36]

NGOs are the ones working with the marginal groups, while governments are only working for them, which is one of the reasons why EU policies promote public participation of an organized civil society. The EU's regional policy requires the establishment of consultative bodies related to various themes. Their membership needs to be based on the principle of partnership, so they include representatives of public institutions, trade unions, the private and NGO sectors. The formation of partnerships, social dialogue and other forms of civil society participation at all levels is promotes, increasing the potential for NGOs to become an active part of decision-making processes.[37]

In BiH, NGOs from different sectors have been actively involved the consultation process which led to the adoption of the BiH MTDS in March 2003. Since then they have been active in monitoring its implementation, producing a review report at the end of 2004 that provides a review of the implementation and measures in the social, education and environment sectors as well as providing recommendations for the future. This report acted as a supporting document enabling the informed lobbying by NGOs and has led to the development of a mechanism for organising formal consultation process with the Parliament through public hearings whose major significance is that it can be replicated in the future.[38]

Formalising the approach to partnerships in BiH

On 31 August 2005, the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly adopted a resolution requiring all levels of government to actively involve civil society in the process of formulating development priorities, policies and plans[39].

[36] Maca-Markar, M.
[37] Stulík, D.
[38] A project implemented by ICVA in cooperation with CRS, resulting in the guidebook "NGO - Parliament dialogue through Public Hearing".
[39] BiH Official Gazette nº 68

An initiative developed by the Coalition of BiH NGOs "Working and Succeeding Together"[40], produced two documents related to the development of NGO and governmental partnerships: the "Agreement on the Cooperation between the BiH Council of Ministers and the NGO sector in BiH" and "Standards of the Quality of Cooperation Between the Government and the NGO Sector in BiH". Both these documents aim to strengthen and formalise the partnership between the government and NGOs on the basis of mutual respect.

The BiH Strategy for Addressing Roma Issues[41] adopted by the BiH Council of Ministers on 21 July 2005 is a clear example of government sector recognition of the contribution NGOs can make in assisting marginalized groups, advocating for their rights and acting as a partner to the government. It states the need for "immediate involvement of Roma NGO leaders in public and political life, through information media…" and "the responsibility of public authorities and officials to promote and explain the advantages of networking among Roma NGOs… linking with non-Roma NGOs… and stimulating joint actions." This strategy indicated that awareness has been much advanced among government structures about the purpose of NGOs, and importantly the synergistic effect of their cooperation with the public sector in redressing social exclusion. What is needed is willingness on the part of both NGOs and public institutions to use the frameworks that are becoming more formal to support their work.

Activities such as these serve as confirmation of the work that is being done on the local or regional level to promote partnerships. As part of its project, which promotes and relies on a mixed-model of social service provision, the Red Cross Tuzla, held a round table to discuss how an the model of cooperation between NGOs and public institutions can be integrated into the municipal social policy strategy. Such activities, requiring not just formal participation of public officials but their commitment to follow-up activities are an important step towards formalising partnerships and fostering professional respect.

Conclusion

In order to establish successful partnerships, apart from a legal framework regulating their operation, specific adjustments need to be made. The public sector must overcome its suspicions of the NGO sector and, more specifically, of the ability of NGOs to provide adequate social services in collaboration with or instead of public institutions. In order to begin closing this void, the NGO sector needs to put a major effort into promoting its image. These activities will have a greater effect if this becomes a joint venture of the entire sector, or of groups of NGOs acting within a specific sector. Efforts need to be made on raising awareness about the responsibility in the local community through the inclusion of various actors.

The distribution of public resources needs to be structured (e.g. through particular funds) and effective, focusing on activities that can achieve results and benefit public institutions. In their search for more sustainable sources of funding and a release from the cycle of resource dependency, a new breed of "entrepreneurial NGOs" is developing that operates on a principle of steady income-generation. The tendency is to condemn such developments as one that encroaches into the private sector. However, this approach needs to be acknowledged as one that it developing on the

[40] The aim of the Coalition is to promote the sustainable development of the NGO sector in BiH and create a development strategy for the sector. The initiative includes over 300 NGOs, organised into 15 Reference Groups for NGOs organised through regions.

[41] BiH Official Gazette nº 67, year 9, Tuesday 27/09/05

basis of a realistic need, and as such must be addressed adequately. Incentives need to be provided which would minimise bureaucratic procedures for the NGO sector, which may prevent projects achieving their full potential, thus deterring from their value.

A major condition for successful cooperation between the public and NGO sectors is for NGOs to recognise the areas where they can support the work of public institutions and to adjust their approach to cooperation by complementing the capacities of the public sector with the aim of strengthening the key weaknesses of public sector performance.

The success of the project implemented by the Foundation of Local Democracy can be attributed to their acknowledgment that the main problem in the Sarajevo Canton CSW was the lack of knowledge of contemporary approaches to dealing with issues of domestic violence. Once the CSW became aware of the resources FLD would be able to contribute to their work in this area, the partnership achieved sound grounds for development.

In the project developed by the Red Cross Tuzla, the initial support from public institutions for partnering was gained on the basis that Gračanica, a city with 54,000 inhabitants, has 3 social workers, only 1 of whom is responsible for the urban area of the city (with 29,000 inhabitants). The work of the Red Cross was considered a welcome supplement to the work of the Centre for Social Work, which was unable to adequately cover the needs in the community due to a lack of human resources.

The NGO "Korak dalje" also based a successful partnership on the fact that any individual actor in the community did not have the capacity to provide the support required. The engagement of a speech therapist from Banja Luka, the association of parents, Centre for Social Work and other actors all contributed to create a multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional support programme.

What is evident from the work of NGOs involved in the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH is that CSWs can act as an important link between NGOs and other governmental institutions in promoting the idea that NGOs can become an additional limb for public institutions providing services.

All of the successful partnership initiatives within the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH had an essential, common factor, and that is that there was a clear definition of roles of all parties involved, and the consequences, both positive and negative were shared by all. This was particularly important in ensuring that participation was not "in name only".

The work of many NGOs within the Swiss NGO Support Programme in BiH can serve as an example of mechanisms for developing partnerships. By learning about beneficiary needs and public services provided, the NGOs were able to offer the specific type of expertise needed to supplement activities of local institutions. They also worked around the lack of a structured legal framework that would encourage public-NGO sector partnerships and turned it into an advantage by developing instruments that they found useful for supporting their work, e.g. memorandums of cooperation. The lack of regulations often provides organisations ready for cooperation with greater flexibility in establishing their own methods for supporting partnerships.

The BiH MTDS requires a participatory process in decision-making, encouraging civil society involvement, and the EU encourages social dialogue, consultations and the establishment of partnerships, emphasising that public-NGO partnerships are important and essential. However, the development of a framework for partnerships between the NGO and public sector in BiH is still in its initial and formative phase, making it possible to base future developments in this area on experiences gained at the local, state, regional and European level. For those NGOs that have begun this process, the skills gained will be valuable in preparing for EU accession and applying for new sources of funding.

Youth Centers and Organization of Activities for Children and Youth

Alter Art Travnik, Quisling Artists. Announcement of the IDEAL STATE established in accordance with the "State or On Justice" protocol, prepared in Greece (today's European Union) and signed by Plato.

By Jan Zlatan Kulenović
Youth Information Agency - OIA

Introduction

Within the Swiss NGO Support Programme 2004-2006 in BiH (SDC) implemented by the Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues (IBHI) at the end of 2005, a round table on social inclusion and examples of good practice of some organizations who, at the same time, are granters of the programme, has been organized. NGOs dealing with young people, i.e. offering services to young people in their free time and which we can call youth centers, had a special segment of the programme.

The round table was based on presentations of the local NGO partners and following discussion. One of the results of the Round table is this analytical report describing the achievements of six projects/organizations supported by SDC/IBHI. The main purpose of this document is to point out strong sides of certain programmes in the field of youth, especially in relation to social inclusion of this population. This means that the report should reveal "the secret of their success" and, also, to define opened areas and questions, i.e. to offer clear challenges and recommendations for their further development together with possibilities of strengthening.

The main areas analyzed in this report, often supported with individual examples are: analysis of the needs and resources available in local community, creation of influence with a special focus on the importance of goals, processes and institutional strengthening, a question of cooperation with public institutions and other state institutions together with their relations with international donors and promotion of the project activities and results.

Those six programmes/organizations are:

- Alter Art Travnik
- Centre for Cultivating Dialogue (CKD) Sarajevo
- Youth Center Sanski Most
- Youth Center Kastel (NGO Hi, Neighbor) Banja Luka
- Youth Center Pinkland Banovići (NGO Zemlja djece, Tuzla)
- Svjetionik Prijedor

Profile of organizations

The basic definition for all six organizations that are mentioned in this report[42] would be that those are **non-governmental organizations for young people.** That means that organizations are lead by professionals (mainly adults, to which we will refer later in this report), who provide certain services (activities) FOR the youth. When we say "youth", we mean persons age 15 to 30[43], and the focus of organizations lies towards even younger population (teenagers, adolescents),

[42] Alter Art Travnik, Centre for Cultural Dialogue (CKD) Sarajevo, Youth Center Sanski Most, Youth Center Kastel (Zdravo da ste) Banja Luka, Youth Center Pinkland Banovići and Svjetionik Prijedor.

[43] The most common definition in Europe and Balkan states, including BiH, although UN, World Bank and some other institutions put young people in the frame of 15-24 years-of-age.

involving youngsters: school age (from 10 years and above) and young people mainly up to mid 20ees.

Following the usual European practice in working with youth, these organizations were classified as **centers for youth's free time/youth clubs**, i.e. as associations that offer extracurricular activities for the target group we have already defined, such as language courses, computer courses, music sections, free space for associating, playing games, debate clubs etc. Looking at those activities, it is obvious that these organizations have purpose and offer benefit with their programmes, which is defined as "putting young people away from the street", offering some alternative for their free time and, also, development of special skills among young people, development of different values and competencies such as responsibility, team work, voluntarism, creative expression, critical and logical thinking, rhetoric and improvement of the relationship among ethnic groups through meetings and association of young people in BiH.

Another common thing for these organizations is a **long-standing work**: practically, all of them were established in the post-Dayton period (until the end of 90ees), which means that they have been working over 6 or 7 years. Besides, a strong initiative of an individual or group of individuals who are, most commonly, **founders** and manager until today is obvious. When we mention the genesis, it is important to emphasize that all 6 organizations were founded with a financial support from **foreign donors** (Swiss organization Terre de Hommes, Soros Foundation etc.).

In short, those organizations are in the group of most developed and strongest organizations in BiH of such profile, which is extremely important for the report itself and analysis of their work because it can help organizations, other non-governmental organizations, especially new initiatives, local communities and other international organizations.

What is different about them is the different method of work, type of activity, approach and relations with other actors with a different environment, i.e. location where they operate (which part of BiH they cover – territorial administration, some of them are in the Federation of BiH, some in RS, urban-rural area, university centers like one in Banja Luka and Sarajevo, economically stronger and weaker environments, size of the population etc.).

In addition, differences exists in areas such as internal management, participation of young people in decision making, different capacities in some areas (e.g., providing funds, knowledge of foreign languages, international cooperation)

Another important difference is that, in spite of their strength and good practice in working with youth, which is their common characteristic, relations with authorities are different (in some cases we are talking about partnership and in some it doesn't exist at all) so good practice of some organizations within that area will be stressed in this report.

Analysis of needs and available resources in local community

Good and precise evaluation of the target group needs is primary precondition for the development of quality and adequate services for the beneficiaries. Since those organizations have been working for a long time, methods have been changing as well. Today we can recognize different approaches in those organizations. Most of them do not conduct special researches, i.e. do not go "out" to find answers for young people's needs but, instead, those answers come from young people to their organizations. Maybe, the exception is Svjetionik which performed special researches of the public opinion on some topics, while CCD analyzes the opinion of young people on issues that are dealt with in TV debates.

For example, one group made of ten young members of Alter Art proposes, certain projects and activities to the management of the organization, through certain facilitation (which has the shape of strategic planning) and which is based on their experience and contacts with young people.

In Pinkland, when a beneficiary comes for the first time he/she talks to a councillor and pedagogue and fills in a special questionnaire where he/she encircles or suggests activities of interest. Based on that, certain sections within organization are created. Debate clubs in BiH, coordinated by the Center for Cultivating Dialogue have a clear working methodology, i.e. they use a debate as the central activity and young debaters actively participate in the shaping of issues to be discussed, i.e. their interests dictate a topic of a debate. Here, we are talking about 40 debating clubs and a few hundreds of young people.

In principle, no matter if it is a special questionnaire, evaluation paper of previous activities, a young group meeting (which, sometimes, looks like the focus group) or questionnaire, all these organizations pay attention to the research and analysis of the youth's needs and, mainly, it is their beneficiaries who reflect interests of young people from the local community where organizations are working.

On one hand, their practice confirms the importance of the research of youth's needs, and, on the other hand, having in mind the way they do it, it raises a question whether it is enough to be focused only on those who were already attracted by activities – are they any other groups of youngsters whose needs were not evaluated and included in the programmes. For certain, those organizations don't want to cover a complete population of youth and they are aware that it is important to perform the analysis of needs regularly and they have a developed methodology in that field.

When we talk about investigation of the existing resources in local community, it is obvious that it is the question of key principles of work of all six organizations. Under resources, it is not only financial resources that are meant here but an engagement of experts or influential people in Executive Boards of organizations (e.g., *Kastel* or *Hi, Neighbour*) in creation of partnerships with others who may help the implementation of projects (e.g., partnerships in Debating FTV shows, Foundations for creative development and CKD), using help from Centers for social work, schools and other institutions not as beneficiaries but as partners, associates or as a space for work.

A special example is the headquarter of organizations – Alter Art, in cooperation with the local authorities and theatre, got the opportunity to be located in the Bosnian cultural centre and maybe soon in the House of Army, while Pinkland is located in the building which used to be a supermarket and which was bought with a financial support of the municipality and donors. The location of the Youth Center Sanski Most and Svjetionik is also based on the cooperation with other organizations, having an adequate facilities in those cities.

Achieving the influence

Achieving an influence is a complex issue and, in some way, connected to other principles in other chapters. Here, we will specially emphasize the methodology and way of work, i.e. analysis of the quality of work and institutional development and their correlation with the result of the work, i.e. the influence those organizations achieve.

The first indicator of an influence is beneficiaries themselves and a number of interventions produced by those organizations. Indeed, a relevant number of beneficiaries is noticeable among all organizations, i.e. relatively high number of young people. We are talking about several hundreds of

persons that they are working with, i.e. for whom special activities are organized. In the case of CKD, the number of direct beneficiaries is even higher because, except for debaters and audience, TV viewers are included in the category of beneficiaries. A concrete influence can be seen in the case of the Youth Center Sanski Most where few members of journalist section discovered their affinity for that area so they continued studying journalism at the University in Sarajevo. A great number of CKD debaters is actively involved in electronic media, as leaders of NGOs with a skill for public appearance. Some professional bands were created in a way that their members started being engaged or they had a chance to develop through the work in youth organizations (for example, Kice in Banovići, Časpa from Vuneny bend with Alter Art etc.). There are plenty of such individual examples in all organizations but an empiric research that would show that those young people who have used services from these organizations are more competent and skilled compared to young people from the same environment who were not involved, is missing.

One of the special methods in the work is peer education. Kastel or CKD train young people to lead beforehand designed workshops, programmes or debates and, in that way, to educate their peers. Commonly, such activities are conducted in schools, which makes this method even more important because it widely influences other young people who are not actively involved in the work of centers/organizations.

It is interesting that the concept of action and methodologies possessed by these organizations creates that influence and certain changes. Still, there is a difference in the level of professionalism and expertise in the methodological sense among some organizations, i.e. improvisation and resourcefulness are obvious.

Actually, for some sections and activities there are animators who, in some cases, are not educated for those fields. The organization has evaluated that there is a need for some topic, section is created and animator is involved but there is no professional help so that this person becomes equipped in order to lead that section. There are many reasons for that, from a lack of staff in some communities (e.g., professional actors, dramaturges and other professions in the field of theatre/stage appearance) to the lack of attention for such issues. In order for young people to achieve greater influence and better results, a parameter of expertise in the performance of activities will be relevant. Children trained by a non-professional animator in journalist section and children trained by a professional journalist with experience will not have the same knowledge in this field. On the other hand, organizations like, for example, CKD regularly conduct special trainings for a debating trainers and referees who, without such additional education, can not work in a debating clubs.

A special topic in the analysis of achieving an influence is evaluation of work, i.e. evaluation of quality. That field is an integral part of every organization and, mainly, different evaluation questionnaires and direct conversations with beneficiaries are used. What is questionable is the whether beneficiaries, in this case – young people, can make difference between things they like and quality they received or, at final instance, whether they received accurate information about something (journalism, working on computers, music and similar). A lack of mechanisms for ensuring the quality is something that is missing in general in the NGO sector and, especially, in youth organizations. Later we will discuss systematization of this activity, which raises the issue of working standards and methods of evaluation.

A conclusion that can be drawn is that every organization pays attention to the evaluation of work and additional education for their employees, which influences the achievement of influence but the level of the quality is questionable having in mind that there are no standards in this field and that adequate method for investigation of the work quality is insufficient.

A separate field within this chapter is institutional development and management. Actually, all these organizations are linked and practically depend on one individual or few of them who, in the majority of cases, are founders of the organization. In some way, that is normal and positive because these people have gained important experience, which means that people with a long experience in this field are leading them but, on the other hand, it can have negative influence on a long-term sustainability. This is not only a characteristic of those organizations or youth organizations in BiH but the most common practice of the non-governmental sector. What represents the advantage of certain organizations in this report is the fact that during years those organizations changed their structure, developed and improved. It is especially obvious in the case of Kastel who adjusted their structure to the work, decentralized some segments, creating positions of coordinators for some programmes and leaving more space for managers to deal with a development of organization. Internal procedures, regulations and clearly defined job descriptions exist to a certain extent in these organizations but additional external professional support would be desirable because improved organizational structure would significantly help actions and strengthen influence which was experienced by organizations that were changing during years.

In a wider organizational sense, the future of such organizations is in networking and creating opportunities for the exchange of experiences with similar organizations, not only in BiH and Balkan region but especially with those in transitional countries (10 countries who joined European Union in 2004), as well as with other developed countries. In that process, CKD is involved in the work of International Debate Education Association (IDEA)[44] from the beginning, working with about 30 member countries which contribute to the creation of stronger organizations. For example, this year IDEA has produced written standards for all debating formats and criteria for evaluation of trainers and referees which also helps CKD in improving the quality of work. Other organizations have certain cooperation with similar organizations and networks in Europe, and membership in some of them would be extremely useful (for example, European Confederation of Youth Clubs – ECYC, a roofing European organization of youth clubs).

Those organizations could become more efficient through more active executive boards where representatives of local authorities could be found, businessmen, "important" people from the life of certain local community. Formally, the opening of the organization toward local community creates new possibilities for a wider influence and better positioning in the society.

Openness and transparency of NGOs are important but in a current phase of the development of civil society in BiH that could be very painful. One of those organizations has experienced it in practice (Alter Art) putting transparently, on their web site, the amount of all donations. Soon after, a financial police was sent to check the work of organization in detail. In spite of that, it was only a confirmation of their good work because the police found no irregularities. It also increased their credibility and reliability with a fact that they don't hide anything from the public.

An indicator of the influence of these organizations is their transparency, identification and utilization by other actors and institutions. Example of that is when municipality of Banovići uses equipment from Pinkland youth centre and engages them in some celebrations, or when Alter Art, together with other organizations, initiates public discussion and a campaign about the problem of garbage disposal in Travnik, or when FTV gives all freedom to CKD to create and broadcast their debating show. Another example is when Svjetionik has a leadership in creating new, special bodies for young people in Prijedor municipality, a municipality which accepts new advices and implements them in practice. Such influence can be characterized as the institutional change in the system of local community's care for children and youth.

[44] International Debate Education Association, with its headquarters in New York and Holland – www.idebate.org

Cooperation with public institutions and governmental agencies

The level of cooperation with public institutions and governmental agencies falls into the category of indicators of NGO influence. But, one should be careful there because when we talk about NGOs in the field of youth one should bear in mind that a natural partner within government sector is needed. That natural partner is some organ, body or institutional frame within municipality, canton, entity or state which, in this case, deals with young people. It is exactly that segment that is almost missing in BiH and a product of their work, i.e. comprehensive policy for young people with concrete projects, actions and budgets is also missing in BiH.

In some way, to make it more absurd, NGOs in the field of youth had a substitute role during past years, i.e. they were the one to change the state care for young people, they performed a job for the government and public institutions and generated certain funds for issues concerning youth from international organizations. Over a period of years, those organizations were growing, developing, increased the scope of their expertise in working with young people while, since 1991, government organizations kept quiet. [45]

Such a lack of youth policy, as well as the lack of institutional frame for youth issues is a bad starting position for greater cooperation or support from the foreign state institution. Still, by the action of certain organizations (local ones like OIA BiH and international ones like OSCE, GTZ, Council of Europe, Italian Consortium CISP, UNV etc.) in advocating and promoting elements of the youth policy and European standards during last 3 or 4 years, authorities from all levels were forced to do something – i.e. to establish positions of administrators in municipalities[46], to create commissions for youth issues[47] or counselling boards of young people[48] and, then, to create special budgets for young people and, even, to adopt laws[49] that will open a way for systematic solving of youth issues.

In such atmosphere, local youth organizations became especially attractive for local authorities because they possessed a good practice in the field of working with youth and, in some, way, became a main support or resource, sometimes even an alibi, for local authorities. Some of those 6 organizations have used this, receiving first funds from municipal budgets.

In spite of those external influences, those 6 organizations have been building their image for years, together with their relationship with local authorities. Every year, Alter Art used to send their work report to the Head of municipality and didn't ask for any support until, one year, the authorities noticed their good results and decided to support Alter Art on their own. At the beginning of their work, Pinkland got a 1000 square meters space which they bought from the funds they received from the Swiss government and, partly, from Banovići municipality. The manager of Kastel was one of the 4 experts who worked on preparations of the government document Youth policy in RS which, today, is in the parliamentary procedure.

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[45] "After the collapse of communist system, a vacuum in politics and appropriate programs for youth followed." From the World Bank Report on Youth in South-East Europe From risk to strengthening, 2004.

[46] According to the OIA research, in the summer of 2005 20% of municipalities in BiH, in their management, had a contact person in charge of youth issues.

[47] According to the OIA research, in the summer of 2005 35% of municipalities in BiH had established a Commission for young people within the municipal council /assembly of the municipality as a permanent working body.

[48] In over 20 municipalities in BiH, there are special councils of young people within municipality, both as a body created by the Head of municipality or as a body created by a non-governmental youth organizations for the link with local authorities.

[49] Law on youth organizing in the Republic of Slovenia, which suggests a development of youth policies in all municipalities, adopted at the end of 2004.

Today, we can talk about cooperation and partnership between local authorities and those organizations but if go to a higher level of the authority – contacts and relationships are weaker; there is almost no cooperation or support for their work. So these organizations have mutual projects with authorities (Days of adolescents Alter Art and Travnik municipality, some courses and campaigns on drug addiction, delinquency, mines etc.).

Except for the financial support or the space for participating in the decision making, those organizations recognized state organs and public institutions as being useful for other segments of work as well. For example, in their debating shows, CKD brings special guests and experts from different institutions (e.g., Ministry of education, Pedagogic institute, Ministry of internal affairs, court, state Council for children etc.). When organizing important meetings, Svjetionik brings representatives of authorities, either as participants or as people who open their meetings.[50]

Sometimes, those authorities are the subject of advocating like, for example, when Alter Art organizes a public discussions with them about garbage disposal problem in Travnik (November, 2005) or when Kastel in Banja luka organizes a campaign and petition for changing the law on protection of minors.

By changing their administrative procedures, especially in those jobs that relate to the opening of bidding for projects, establishing the criteria, creation of application forms and evaluation of projects, local authorities often involved NGOs, among which were some of those 6, as educators, councillors or experts.

In any case, it is obvious that there is an interaction caused by different reasons, initiated from both sides. It can be concluded that, on one hand, those organizations were initiators of different types of cooperation and, on the other side, they were recognized as useful resources which can be used by local authorities.

Although the cooperation with authorities is obvious, even some projects with them, all six organizations could improve their advocating skills, especially in the field of using a greater number of techniques, mobilizing wider public and networking with groups of interest, depending on certain topics. The primary role of youth centers is not in advocating but in a situation in which there is a lack of care for young people and its sustainability is questionable, adequate readiness for advocating becomes necessity.

The role of international donors

In the majority of NGOS in BiH, the role of international organizations was of crucial significance, both in the creation of organizations and/or support given to basic projects and activities. The same case was with those 6 organizations. The majority of them were created either from the Swiss government funds or from Soros Foundation and those were continuous and longstanding funds. But the difference between those organizations and many other organizations is that first ones invested their funds in a clever way with better transparency and possessed good skills for writing of projects and raising funds. At the beginning, Pinkland invested their fund in a space, which reduced their administrative expenses. Using their funds, Alter Art bought good music

[50] Conference on young people in rural areas and youth politics, 27.04.2005, organized by Svjetionik, was officially opened by the President of the Municipal Assembly with a representative for youth and representative of the Local development association being present.

equipment due to what a part of their programme can sustain on its own, i.e. it is a profitable activity through which other activities are financed as well.

The role of international donors wasn't only in financing organizations and certain projects but in the building of their capacities through different training programmes on NVO topics (project and organization management, strategic planning, public advocacy etc.).

A joint characteristic for all 6 organizations is that they have a bigger number of donors which provides them with better options for sustainability and easier life of organizations (less stress, great stability). During years, those organizations have changed their approach to searching for funds; their focus wasn't always on the financial support but also on partnership. For example, Svjetionik became one of the permanent partners to UNICEF, being an organization which implements projects, takes part in consultations, UNICEF's programme designing etc. Similar relationship with much stronger relationship than just donor-granter is present in SDC/IBHI NGO Support programme.

Promotion of project activities and results

Promotion of work is necessary both because of the mobilization of new beneficiaries and because of the support from other institutions, i.e. entire local community.

There are different approaches among different organizations in this field. CKD is in a special position because the project itself represents a great opportunity for the promotion of a debate and participation of young people through TV shows on FTV. Youth Center Sanski Most also had a direct cooperation with local radio and TV stations, who broadcasted a show created by the journalist section.

All organizations have basic elements of the visual identity (logo, symbol, promotion material). The majority has active web sites which can be improved and translated to English language.

It is interesting that not a single organization has appointed PR person but it is a job performed by managers of organizations or by a greater number of people. In any case, it would be useful for those organizations to have such person with enough capacity to deal with such task because those are not only contacts with media and preparations of a press material – that person should be a link between the public and certain organization. All organizations are trying to promote their activities "off and on", mainly through a local media but due to the lack of permanent PR person it seems that there are no regular contacts with some journalists and correspondents.

Some of organizations have prepared their video material and some pay special attention to the preparation of reports and their distribution. Alter Art is one of the organizations who regularly prepare their material for local authorities and informs them about their work, results and the benefit the society has from it.

One of the ways of work promotion is public activities, i.e. cultural and music performance and concerts, performed publicly as special events or as a part of some festivals, meetings, celebrations. Those organizations who practice such activities (e.g., dance and music sections) often use them for public performances which is a reward for young people who participate in those activities and good promotion in the public, among parents, other potential participants/ beneficiaries and wider.

Instead of the conclusion – the secret of success

Based on long-term activities of NGOs like Alter Art Travnik, Center for Cultural Dialogue (CKD) Sarajevo, Youth Center Sanski Most, Youth Center Kastel (Zdravo da ste) Banja Luka, Youth Center Pinkland Banovići and Youth Center Svjetionik Prijedor, it is obvious that they represent examples of good practice in the field of youth. Although they are acting in different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and have different approaches to work with young people (at the beginning of this report their profile, similarities and differences were described), instead of the conclusion we can briefly define what makes those organizations successful:

1. These are organizations that based their activities on clearly defined needs and interest of young people (their target groups) in some local communities;
2. From the beginning of their work, those organizations knew how to recognize other resources, actors and institutions that have complementary activities and who could be used as a support and/or partners in their work;
3. Organizations have relevant number of beneficiaries, which rose by years, with services that were adjusted to certain groups;
4. Participation of young people in project evaluation, creation of new projects and participation in decision making shows up as a concept of acting of all organizations with different ways of its implementation;
5. Organizations have carefully designed programmes and methodology which, during years, were modified and adjusted. As part of that, an important process was evaluation of work that organizations performed in different ways;
6. Institutional development and investment in their own capacities was one of the priorities of organizations during the whole period of their work. A skill of project writing and project management, reporting, financial management, raising funds, presentations etc. increased by time and enabled them to run their organizations more efficiently and successfully;
7. Organizations have leading people in management, who are entirely devoted to the idea of organization; they are motivated, responsible and extremely engaged in all aspects of work;
8. Because of the above mentioned and because of good programmes, all organizations have bigger number of donors which makes their work easier and creates stability;
9. Their approach toward international organizations was not only aimed toward financial support but to many other things like partnership, consultations, mentorship, cooperation and other;
10. Cooperation with public institutions and government bodies was recognized by those organizations as an important element in the implementation of activities. With more or less success, organizations had interaction with those governmental institutions and, in individual cases, joint projects were created;
11. Additional effort from most organizations was aimed toward the creation of a climate for better relations between government and young people, i.e. on creating youth policies which changes the atmosphere and helps organizations to integrate into the system with their programmes;

12. Readiness for cooperation, avoiding any isolation within their own community and participating in the life of civil society on the level of a wider region or state, which was one of mutual principles of all organizations;
13. Their work was public and their transparency in local community increased constantly, which helped them build their image and credibility in public;
14. Promotion of their programmes and activities is a significant aspect of their work and attention was paid to it during creation of all activities.

Challenges and recommendations

Although we are talking about good practice and although these six organizations are very successful in the implementation of their mission and support to young people, there are certain areas where some things could be improved; there are challenges and dilemmas in the future development and work. The goal of this chapter is to mark those areas and opened questions and, in a shape of recommendations, to give instructions how to increase their success and ensure better conditions for the sustainability of organizations, especially in the coming period when organizations of the civil society will have to rely on local resources and mainly on local sources of financing.

1. To make e revision of internal procedures and rules of organizations in cooperation with professionals and to modify or create new documents that will improve the way organizations are ran.
2. To design methods and procedures for the evaluation of quality of work of the staff who directly work with young people in order to see what they are doing and to make it easier to find space for additional education for staff.
3. To make a plan for additional education of staff, especially in the field of methodology of work with young people and other skills of the staff. This includes education of animators by pedagogues, through university programmes, ForumSyd and similar organizations and institutions.
4. To strengthen capacities of organizations in the field of advocacy (lobbying techniques, political system, mapping of stakeholders etc.), not as basic education but in a shape of counselling and mentor work by professionals in that field.
5. To maintain strategic planning of organization with participation of different groups and actors (from management to beneficiaries).
6. To create precise mechanisms for participation of young people in decision making (at the level of projects and organization) in order to adjust their work with young people's needs and developing additional competencies among them.
7. To invest certain time for establishing stronger and better cooperation with local authorities, in order to promote their work and receive certain funds but still with a purpose of creating joint projects.
8. To establish an active executive board within which there will be representatives of local community (e.g., local authority, school, tourist agency, private sector, lawyers) who can be an important support both in lobbying and in counselling for the development of organization.

9. In order to achieve better transparency, to establish the position for PR officer, who will be additionally trained and represent a focal point for the work with media, other organizations in cooperation with a manager, and to be active, especially in creating promotional activities or ways to make other activities have the component of promotion.
10. To use the existing free-of-charge resources for informing young people and promotion (youth radio and TV shows, magazines, web portal www.mladi.info etc.).
11. To be more active (and to educate ourselves) in the promotion and advocating the development of youth policy in our local communities because that is how we can create the atmosphere and the system into which organization itself will be integrated.
12. To be present and active in happenings that relate to the development of youth policy on higher levels (e.g., during creation of the Commission for coordination of issues that deal with young people in BiH within the Council of Ministries or Department for Youth BiH, adopting of the document Youth Policy in RS etc.).
13. To be additionally informed about possibilities of international cooperation (e.g., YOUTH Program of European Union) in order to participate in such programmes and exchange experiences with other similar organizations, to receive additional education, to increase motivation among staff and beneficiaries (travels), as well as to receive additional support in their work (one-year volunteers through EVS[51]).
14. To establish at least informal coordination of centers for the free time of young people (similar organizations with clearly defined criteria) or formal Association of centers and organizations for the free time of young people in BiH, which will be in charge for lobbying toward entity and state level, for organizing better and cheaper trainings (e.g., on financial management for all directors of the members of that association).
15. It would be necessary to have such BH association because of international cooperation and networking and because of joining the European Confederation of Youth Clubs (ECYC[52]) who has already documented practice of similar organizations, sources of financing, resources etc.

[51] European Voluntary Service, financed by the YOUTH program.
[52] European Confederation of Youth Clubs – www.ecyc.org

The Role of NGOs in the Integration of Marginalized Groups into the Education System

Alfa, Bihać: workshop

Pinkland, Banovići: street drawing

By Dženana Trbić
Open Society Fund - OSF BiH

Introduction

The projects of three nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) were presented at the working table "The Role of NGOs in the Integration of Marginalized Groups Into the Education System": the Centre for Cultivating Dialogue from Sarajevo, Prijatejice from Tuzla and the Association for Social Inclusion of People with Mental Disabilities from Tuzla. An additional presentation entitled the "Inclusion of Roma Children and Youth Into the Education System: The Role of NGOs in the Battle Against Prejudice, Discrimination and the Lack of Care" was made by the organisation Alfra from Bihać.

A number of representatives from other NGOs and public institutions were involved in the working table, among which were representatives of the Red Cross from Tuzla, the Centre for Social Work Zenica, ARA Bijeljina and "Bolja budućnost" (Better Future) from Tuzla.

Good examples from practice within presented projects on television debates, overcoming segregation in the work of schools in both entities and a project aiming to ensure the right to education of children from marginalized groups, served as foundations for discussion.

It was agreed that the central place in the discussion on the dynamics of social inclusion in society is held by formal education, that can serve as an efficient weapon for overcoming marginalization and strengthening inclusion in society. However, the education system itself often contributes to extending socio-economic inequality, as well as forms of discrimination based on factors such as gender, age, health condition or minority status.

Apart from formal education, different forms of informal education, such as education and prequalification programmes for adults, different extra-curricular activities, education in the local community and similar forms, also play an important role in the process of social inclusion. Informal education and the form it takes is particularly linked to the work of NGOs, whose role is not to become the direct bearers of the education system, but rather to highlight and promote discussion on the topic, introduce new methods and forms of work, open schools to the local community or strengthen cooperation with parents.

The role of NGOs is significant, and this has been proven in practice within the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), and the strengthening of the capacities of the education system. In addition, programmes for additional training and continued education of teachers and school management are examples of good practices of a series of organisations that are profiled for specialised training programmes for work with children with special needs, the introduction of child-centred methodologies or a participative method of managing the education process.

NGOs as actors of civil society are particularly sensitive to the identification of groups or individuals that are excluded from the education system and whose basic right to quality education has been withheld. They highlight these cases, and through advocacy activities, public debates and campaigns aim to influence the change of opinions in society towards marginalized groups.

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During the presentations and discussions, the following aspects of the process of including marginalized groups into the education system were specifically emphasised. These are: the identification, itself, of marginalized groups and their specific needs in the given environment, the characteristics of the education system and its preparedness and capacity for the inclusion of vulnerable groups, and the opinions and value system within the wider social community which affect the education process.

This report presents a compilation of presentations of the organisations listed above, examples of good practices and working table discussions, and is structurally divided into the following chapters:

- Social inclusion and the role of education – framework for discussion
- The context of BiH society
- Marginalized groups in education in BiH
- Ethnic minorities
- Pupils returning from abroad and internally displaced pupils
- The role of NGOs in the process of social inclusion
- Conclusion

Social Inclusion and the Role of Education – Framework for Discussion

Social inclusion has, as a movement which advocates a specific social model, appeared as a response to the challenges posed by constant and ever increasing marginalization, discrimination and exclusion of vulnerable groups in today's societies. Formal education, with its complex and sometimes contradictory role, holds a central position in the discussion on the dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion. On the one hand, the education system can serve as an efficient weapon for overcoming marginalization and strengthening inclusion in society. On the other hand, however, education systems often contribute to amplifying socio-economic inequalities, as well as forms of discrimination based on factors such as gender, age, health condition and minority belonging.

While the traditional concept of inclusive education intends to increase participation of pupils with special educational needs, the concept of social inclusion is focussed on ALL pupils or every individual pupil. Thus, it includes different vulnerable youth groups, ranging from displaced persons and refugees, those that belong to different language, cultural and religious minorities, to those social groups that live in conditions of extreme poverty. Heterogeneous groups, which are in a specific society or local community excluded from education, are the focus here. Herein, education means education of good quality, not only with regards to access and initial school enrolment, but also in relation to regular attendance and success. Moreover, from the perspective of social inclusion, quality education needs to ensure efficient inclusion of the individual and groups into the wider socio-economic context of a society. Therefore, this model, although emphasising the rights of the individual, in the long-term aims to reconstruct the society as a whole.

Equally, the principle of equality in education does not only correspond to equal opportunities, but also to guaranteeing conditions required for everyone to achieve their educational maximum. As ever higher levels of education are becoming a duty for each individual, so the state becomes responsible for securing conditions for each individual to achieve their full educational potential.

In order to achieve this, each strategy for the inclusion of marginalized groups needs to take into consideration three levels:

- The structure and policies of the wider social community;
- The education system and its capacities, support structures and values it promotes; and
- The characteristics of the marginalized groups and its specific needs.

The value promoted by a specific society is reflected through the education system and its structures. That is how vulnerable groups in societies, which do not work actively on promoting equality and the affirmation of pluralism, are faced with discrimination already at the early stages of growing up. These are children deprived of their rights, whose needs are not met, which is reflected in the weak foundations of the community they live in. It is forgotten that marginalized children later create marginalized groups, since inclusion in childhood is a prerequisite for inclusion in future life.

The Context of BiH Society

During the post-war period, BiH has demonstrated a significant breakdown in the value system and has lost its ability and sense for prioritising. It seems that a large number of issues, which need to be answered before others do, remain unanswered, or the answer arrives late, once the "damage" has already been done. So it can rightly be said that a large amount of resources is spent on correcting mistakes we have made ourselves, rather than on the prevention of the same.

Even though the Constitution of BiH regulates the issue of non-discrimination, through Article II, Item 4: …"All people in Bosnia and Herzegovina shall be free from discrimination on any basis, such as gender, race, language, faith, political or other opinions, ethnic and social origin…", there is much violation, particularly in areas where the majority population, in ethnically clean areas, is preventing the return of refugees.

Examples of discrimination and segregation in the BiH education system, in addition to the dilemma of achieving the basic right to education, the issue of language in education, religious education – are abundant. They most often arise from the tendency to make the life of returnees and their children impossible in their hometown. For example:

- Discriminatory treatment in conditions where children of "the others" are enabled to attend school with children of the predominant population, through curricula, language, religious education, etc.;
- The names of schools and other school emblems, that not only do not agree with all the children, bearing in mind their tradition, culture, faith and other, but are also frequently insulting;
- Cultural differences that are not treated as an asset or being of value, but more often as a problem and issue of separation, derision, mockery and insult;
- Insulting terminology or insulting and false interpretation of certain events, values, symbols or cultural traits;
- Promoting ethnic segregation under the banner "each to his own" or "separate but equal" and obscuring it through constitutional rights and freedoms, has influenced the establishment of the phenomenon of BiH education – two schools under one roof; and
- Propagating confining oneself in ones culture, ones language and ones surroundings, in order to accentuate the differences and devalue the similarities.

The Constitution of BiH, as all other constitutions in BiH, does not specify regulations based on which citizens can protect themselves from these and similar forms of discrimination. It is for the same reason that education laws do not have adequate foundations in the constitution, and these issues are regulated depending on the area and its majority structure of responses.

Fulfilling the responsibility of acquiring education is a specific issue in itself, as data exist which indicate that it is not fulfilled equally in all parts of the state, that examples of discrimination exist, and that violations of this right are not sanctioned adequately. Attendance of primary school in BiH, in accordance with the regulations provided in the national and international documents, is treated as the universal right of each child and each individual. All the same, a slight increase in the percentage of pupils not attending primary education has been noted (it has been calculated at 4% at this point in time). This tendency appeared in 1997, and a large number of causes has been noted for this situation, of which poverty comes in first place; schools are often not prepared, in any sense, to accept minority children and to meet their individual, group and cultural needs (Human Development Report BiH, 2003).

All of this contributes to creating a barrier between school and children:

- before they start their schooling;
- barriers within curricula once they reach school and the classroom; and finally
- barriers which arise when the children need to pass their exams that will demonstrate how successful they will be in life.

Marginalized Groups in Education in BiH

Research entitled "Fulfilling the Right to Education of Children of Marginalized Groups", carried out by the Association for Social Inclusion of People with Mental Disabilities from Tuzla, indicates that marginalized groups in our country are varied, and that causes for their existence are:

1. primarily poverty; followed by
2. the lack of unification and negligence of the education policy, in which three separate, mostly ethnically coloured education systems cannot satisfy the needs of every child in the education system. An education system separated in this way cannot, in the same way as one unified system, contribute to mutual familiarisation, mutual understanding and respect of differences in education and society; and
3. the lack of educational legislation, the lack of acknowledgment of special needs of pupils and not fulfilling the fundamental requirements of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the World Declaration on Education For All and the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action from 1994, which specifically insists on the education of all children, in their closest environment, in the least restrictive environment and in conditions which will meet their needs.

The research also indicated that schools are unprepared for accepting minority children and meet their individual, group and cultural needs. The reason primarily being the lack of qualified staff, but also school programmes, and buildings for the residence and education of these children that are not adapted, as well as the lack of links between schools, parents and the local community.

Conditions in which they live, and the difficulties they are faced with, can prevent their successful and first-rate development and progress, and can turn them into unhappy and dissatisfied children and youth. These are:

- Children and youth that develop without positive personal support;
- Children that are not stimulated to develop;
- Children that live with people that are very ill;
- Children that live in highly superstitious families;
- Children that live in conditions lacking the basic existential needs, etc.;
- Traumatised children;
- Neglected and abused children;
- Street children;
- Children that are forced to work;
- Children in exile;
- Orphans;
- Children infected with the HIV virus; and
- Child "victims" of inadequate parenting strategies.

Ethnic Minorities

Educational authorities in BiH have committed themselves to ensuring that all children will have the opportunity to receive good quality education in integrated, multicultural schools at all levels, free from political, religious, cultural and other prejudice and discrimination, where the rights of all children are respected[53]. The obligation to ensure that children belonging to ethnic minorities (particularly Roma children) are adequately included in the educational system throughout the country, has been specifically highlighted. Based on this, in February 2004, education ministers adopted the Action Plan on Educational Needs of the Roma and Other Ethnic Minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The plan foresees concrete measures for overcoming social and economic obstacles which the predominant ethnic minority in BiH, the Roma, is often faced with; it encourages the authorities to provide financial support for school books and transport, and increases the awareness of parents of Roma children and the community about the significance of education. Measures for preserving the language and culture of all ethnic minorities in the schools in BiH have also been proposed, and it has been proposed that ministries include the cultural, historic and literary aspects of ethnic minorities into the existing curriculum.

Even so, the presence of Roma in schools is down to sporadic cases, while in the higher grades of primary school and in secondary there are almost no Roma children. The reasons for this continued exclusion of Roma children from the regular education system are as follows:

- difficult living conditions and desperate economic state of Roma families;
- tradition and customs;
- insufficient education of Roma parents;
- lack of an educated leader;
- testing Roma children for enrolment in school is not adapted to their social characteristics;

[53] Message to the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Education Reform, 2002

- inadequate knowledge of Roma culture by the non-Roma;
- parents that do not enrol children are not sanctioned;
- no school programme for overcoming discrimination through extra-curricular activities;
- there is no obligatory and compact cooperation between the municipality, school and NGOs;
- no state programme that deals with the education of the Roma.

Identifying this problem in the recent period, the organisation "Alfa" from Bihać implemented the project "I Laugh and Cry Just Like You". The main aim of the project is strengthening the Roma community in the Municipality of Bihać and the sensitisation of the Roma about their equal status in society.

Sub-aims include:

- the improvement of the quality of life of the Roma in the Municipality of Bihać – recognition of the needs and opportunities of the beneficiaries to help themselves;
- the development of an active and positive relationship of the local community towards the Roma;
- connecting young people that have until now not been in contact, and providing them with an opportunity to turn their differences into advantages;
- removing financial and administrative obstacles to the enrolment of children in school and class attendance of Roma children;
- preparing preschool children for school through educational and creative workshops;
- support for school-going children to integrate more easily into the regular school system –educational and creative workshops and the improvement of school success; and
- organising leisure time of children and youth with the aim of preventing and fighting smoking, alcohol and narcotic consumption and underage delinquency.

Project beneficiaries are the Roma – children, youth, parents and other inhabitants of the local community. In total, the project included 142 children and young people as well as 153 adults. The project provides educational, advisory and material assistance to Roma children and families through the following activities:

- preparing preschool children for attending school;
- support for the easier integration of school children into the school system;
- work with young people;
- work with women; and
- organising gatherings.

These activities developed cooperation with the Local Community, the Ministry of Education, municipal bodies, schools, the Centre for Social Work and other NGOs.

Achieved aims and results:

- the number of Roma children, youth and adults in the Municipality of Bihać was recorded;
- improved life of Roma families;
- more children enrolled in primary and secondary schools;
- regular attendance;
- improved success of pupils in school;
- no single child has ceased to attend school;

- well organised leisure time of children and youth;
- improved interpersonal relations within Roma families;
- greater care of parents for the upbringing and education of their children;
- youth have acquired new knowledge and skills that will help them integrate more easily into the wider social community;
- empowered woman – mother, through establishing and the work of the Roma women's association "Romsko srce" (Roma Heart);
- improved relations among the inhabitants of the Ružica Local Community;
- the Roma population recorded in the Registry books; and
- Roma refugees extended their refugee status.

This project demonstrates the key to multi-sectoral cooperation – between state and nongovernmental organisations and public institutions – in including minority children into the regular education process. Capacities of schools in BiH are limited, and therefore great commitment not only of the state and its management structures is required, but also strengthening partnerships of all social actors at the local and central levels. In addition, as can be seen from the method of project implementation, it is particularly important to focus attention at the local environment, from parents of minority children and other parents, schools, centres for social work and local communities on the whole. Only in this way is it possible to truly include marginalized groups into the education system and achieve their complete socialisation.

Pupils Returning From Abroad and Internally Displaced Pupils

Bearing in mind the increasing need of returnee families for fulfilling educational needs, the Federal Ministry for Education and Science and the Republika Srpska (RS) Ministry for Education signed a Temporary Agreement on Fulfilling the Special Needs and Rights of Returnee Children in 2002. Bearing in mind the ever increasing number of returnee families, their constitutional right and the right of their children to adequate education, and bearing in mind the lack of adequate education, the aim of the Temporary Agreement was the establishment of conditions for increasing the number of returnee children in schools throughout BiH and securing, albeit temporary, solutions that would guarantee the rights of all constitutional peoples.

Besides the significant progress achieved in ensuring the enrolment of children in schools that are located within their enrolment area, there are still cases where certain parents continue to send their children to schools outside their enrolment area.

A good example of the participation of an NGO in the integration of returnees are the project activities of the Humanitarian Association Prijateljice, which in 1997 started to implement a school project in schools within the Tuzla Canton area with the aim of providing assistance to children returning from abroad in mastering the school curriculum.

In time, the returnee population decreased, but soon intense prerequisites for two-sided return of refugees and displaced people on the territory of BiH, were created.

Since 2002, the project "Support to Children in Adapting to the School System in Both Entities" has been implemented in eight schools, four each in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and the RS.

The general project aim: Influence the implementation of a unified school system in BiH.

Specific aims:

- Reducing prejudice, accepting differences, reducing aggressive behaviour of pupils;
- Linking children, parents, teachers and school management in both entities;
- Forming centres for pupils as a legal part of the schools;
- The development of ecological awareness and education with the aim of protecting the environment.

The project defines two target groups: pupils of primary and secondary schools (360 in total) and their parents.

Cooperation was achieved and the following resources used in the community:

- Ministry for Education in the RS and the Tuzla Canton;
- Pedagogy Institutes in Tuzla;
- Pedagogy Institute of the RS with a central office in Banja Luka and regional offices in Bijeljina, Doboj and Zvornik;
- Management of 8 schools within which the Project is being implemented; and
- OSCE Mission to BiH.

All schools established stable groups of pupils, who, together with their parents, teachers and a number of directors, participated in joint workshops on different topics: communication, cooperation and the development of critical thought, feelings, prejudice, developing solidarity groups, etc. In total, 16 workshops, in which 420 children participated, were held during the year.

A cycle of educating leaders among pupils was also initiated, consisting of nine phases, as well as the education of teachers, which was two-way through topics held together with leaders and topics specifically intended for pedagogues and teachers, held through interactive classes and communication.

It is particularly important to emphasise the successful cooperation of ministries responsible for education in the RS and the FBiH, as well as the partnership developed with the institutes for education and pedagogy in both entities.

Some of the activities received media coverage (radio, television, printed press), while the local TV station promoted the Project and results achieved through a TV programme.

The long-term plan for achieving sustainability foresees that the financing of these activities would be taken over by the Ministries for Education of the RS and the Tuzla Canton, through incorporating a large part of the Project into the curricula as extra-curricular activities for pupils.

The Role of NGOs in the Process of Social Inclusion

As voluntary citizens' associations, NGOs belong to civil society, as "there is no liberal theory of civil society that differs from the theory of voluntary association" (Majkl Valcer). "Determined in this way, civil society would encompass all forms of social linking in the broad field of non-obligatory cooperation and free initiative." (Ugo Vlaisavljević) This, however, in no way means that civil society is an ideal field in which conflict is nonexistent and in which an established reality

of goods is created once and for all time. On the contrary, "in it, no association can count on permanent, and particularly unconditional trust of its members". (Ugo Vlaisavljević) Therefore, bearing in mind the multitude of different NGOs that deal with the same problem, the existence of others is not a weakness, but rather is a strength. Although, often NGOs themselves are in open or smouldering conflict, and in fear of dominance of one over the other. The essence of the existence of NGOs is not to be better or stronger, but rather their political role. "The political role of civil society is in turn not directly aimed at acquiring power, but towards achieving influence through the life of democratic association and non-obligatory discussion in the cultural public sphere." (Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato)

In the context of BiH society, the role of NGOs is not in becoming the bearers of the education system, but rather associations that will through numerous campaigns specify and promote discussion on relevant issues. Within the fragile field of the education system, the identification of the problem in itself is enough.

In one of its strategic aims, the Centre for Cultivating Dialogue intends to actively include perhaps the most neglected group – young people in the education system, enabling them to become bearers of positive changes, above all in the education system, and in the aim of fostering liberally democratic models of communication and decision-making. This may sound contradictory, since the education system exists because of young people and for young people, but in the BiH education system, young people are more of an object rather than a subject of the system. This is witnessed by numerous research examples carried out by the Centre for Cultivating Dialogue.

Young people in BiH are dissatisfied with their status in society, their treatment in schools and faculties, prejudice that exist due to the fact that they are young, and are immediately considered to be unqualified for carrying out any task that brings with it responsibility.

Young people in rural areas, who do not have an opportunity to travel and socialize with their peers, are faced with even greater problems. These environments are characterised by an even greater lack of understanding, by adults, for the problems of youth. During project implementation, an insufficient level of education among young people with regards to human rights, as well as the rights of youth, was noted. Inadequate education on human rights in secondary schools leads to an inability for young people to take a stand on social issues: or they do not know enough to fight for their rights or even if they are familiar with this field in theory, they do not know of mechanisms for protecting human rights, and are thus powerless and automatically unequal members of society in comparison to "older people".

Therefore, a good example of guiding the work of NGOs in the field of education, is the priority of the Centre for Cultivating Dialogue for educating young people in critical thought, decision-making based on a democratic approach to problems in schools and society in general, supporting the democratisation processes and reforms of secondary education, development of civil society through its fundamentals – democratic and open education.

The Centre implements a programme of television debates entitled "Name a Good Reason", whose executors are young people.

Some of the topics covered in the TV debates:

BiH needs to send soldiers to Iraq within a peace mission

Youth houses need to be put into function/returned to the youth

Segregation in BiH schools exists – YES or NO

Does corruption exist in BiH universities?

Humour at the expense of politicians is unacceptable

Are young people engaged politically in order to aid society or because of their own ambitions?

Should homosexuality be condemned and is it harmful to the general morality of society?

Mixed marriages jeopardise ethnic identity

The rights of young people in schools are respected (schools, faculties…)

Does discrimination exist in BiH (when grading) based on gender, ethnic, religious, etc. belonging?

Is religious education in primary and secondary schools necessary?

Persons of the female sex are endangered in BiH?

Homophobia exists in BiH

Domestic violence exists in BiH

Schools in BiH should be divided along ethnic lines

The aim of this series of debates is to break down prejudice on taboo topics. Topics such as homophobia, mixed marriages and domestic violence, are still unfortunately taboos in our society. This is confirmed by the reactions of the public that the Centre for Cultivating Dialogue receives upon airing. Thus, although the project primarily aimed to emancipate young people through the development of a democratic process, it also contributes to the development of civil society in BiH as whole.

Conclusion

A modern education system needs to be founded on precise and clear constitutional directives, which can clearly contribute to the vision of an open democratic society, wherein the individual, citizen, regardless of ability, need, ethnic, cultural, religious, class, language and other belonging, has an equal opportunity to participate and succeed. Educational problems of marginalized groups in BiH are varied and widespread. It is therefore necessary to:

- Pay attention to strategic redirection and planning of resource expenditure at the state level for issues of education and support to children;
- Invest all available resources into creating a unified educational policy that will be based on mutual acquaintance, understanding, respect and acceptance (regardless of all differences);

- Ensure that educational legislation places particular emphasis on achieving complete inclusion of all children in preschool and primary education and that all children should be treated equally during schooling;
- Work on restructuring schools to accept and adapt to the needs of all children that attend the school;
- Secure conditions for inclusive education of adequate qualified teams in schools (by employing pedagogues, psychologists, special education teachers (defectologists), etc.), who can provide qualified help in achieving adequate education and development of all categories of children that attend school;
- Carry out systematic and multidisciplinary education of teachers with respect to children's rights, regardless of the ability, ethnic, religious, gender or other identity of the child;
- Familiarise children and parents with the rights from the Convention on the Rights of the Child and work continuously on the protection of these rights in school and the living environment;
- Work on the development of tolerance at different levels (children, parents, teachers, local community, wider region) – through an adequate approach that acts in the name of the "beauty" of differences;
- Present and apply an holistic approach to children in schools;
- Apply guided planning to the child;
- Ensure adequate support through individual education programmes, adequate instruction procedures, and individualised grading methods;
- Ensure simulative programmes and approaches to children with special needs (in this case marginalized children).

Examples of NGO work on the inclusion of marginalized groups in the education system provided in this document are guidelines and indicators for the way the NGO sector can contribute to improvement in the areas listed.

In cooperation with schools, public institutions and the media, NGOs in BiH work on identifying and social inclusion of marginalized groups, highlight social prejudice towards minorities, implement different forms of informal education and extra-curricular activities, and advocate for a complete change of values within the education system.

The role of NGOs is significant in strengthening the capacity of the education system, which is corroborated by practice in BiH. Specialization programmes and programmes for continued education of teachers and school management are examples of good practices of a series of organisations that have become profiled for specialized training programmes for children with special needs, the introduction of child-centred methodologies or a participative method for managing the education process.

NGOs as civil society actors are particularly sensitive to the identification of groups or individuals that are excluded from the educational system and who are deprived of the basic human right to receive education of good quality. They highlight these cases, and through advocacy actions, public debates and campaigns aim to influence the change of society's opinions of marginalized groups. Their role is of great significance for the development of a democratic society that takes into consideration new economic and cultural conditions in the era of decentralization.

Children with special needs

Referent group, Tuzla: public campaign

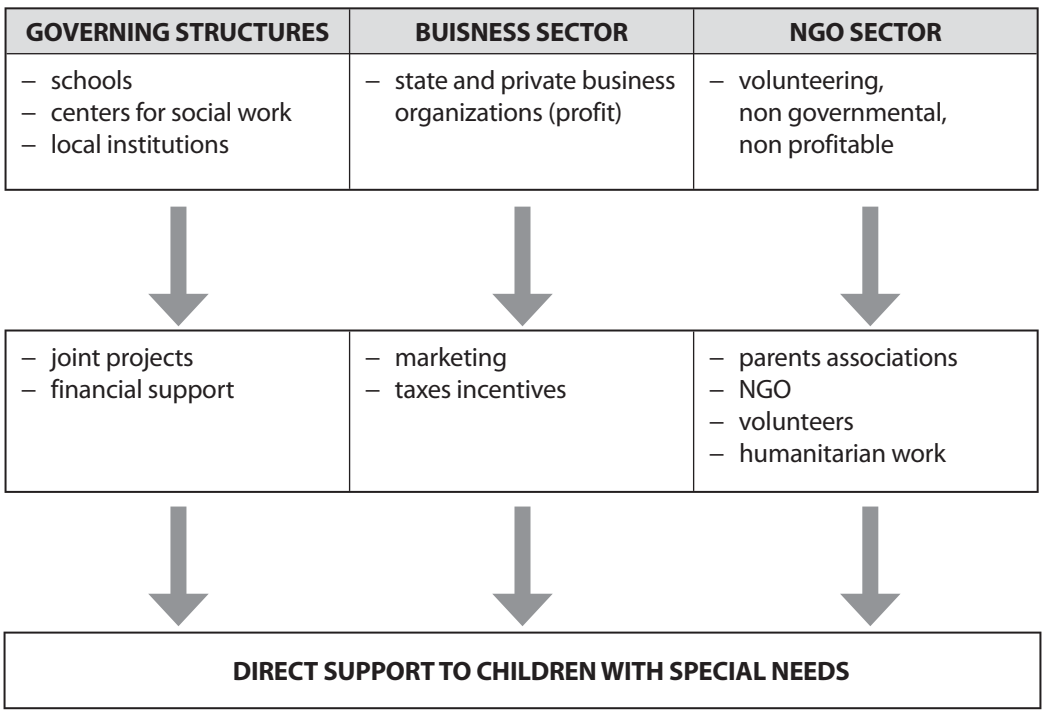
By Jasna Rebac
Center for children with special needs "Los Rosales"

The aim and expected results

The aim of this working table was for participants to exchange opinions and examples of good praxis regarding to:

- Barriers concepts in the area of education and upbringing,
- Establishing partnership relations among parents, associations and public government institutions,
- Contribution of sport as the method of inclusion of children with special needs, equally, respecting individuality of each person.

Results aimed to be achieved are: lightened by good examples, confirm by good results of these NGOs, that problems related to educations, upbringing, habilitation, rehabilitation, socialization, communication, deinstitutionalization, could be successfully solved. By good results achieved by these NGOs is much easier to establish the partnership among all "links in the chain", related to children with special needs.



Introductory

"When wind of changes is
blowing, some build walls and some windmills"

Chinese proverb

Aim: Breaking up prejudices and building up the positive attitude on the necessity of rising up capacities of children with special needs.

On the working table "Children with special needs", through presentations (as basis) and discussion of other participants, as the working method in the exchange of positive experiences and good results, it was managed to focus on the positive solutions. Children with special needs throughout the associations of parents (*Korak dalje* and *Izvor*) and other NGOs (*USU* Tuzla, *Specijalna Olimpijada* Sarajevo, *Koraci nade, etc*) achieve better social inclusion, more dignified life, while local and wider community has no enough understanding in the areas of education, healthcare, employment, democracy, etc.

Results of the UNICEF's research are pointing out that the population up to 16 years is the most jeopardized in the area of social and health protection. It is not difficult to conclude that this kind of problem is bigger for the children with special needs.

In current praxis there was not much attention to the respect of interests and capabilities of the children with special needs what has caused consequences on studying but on the development of personality in general.

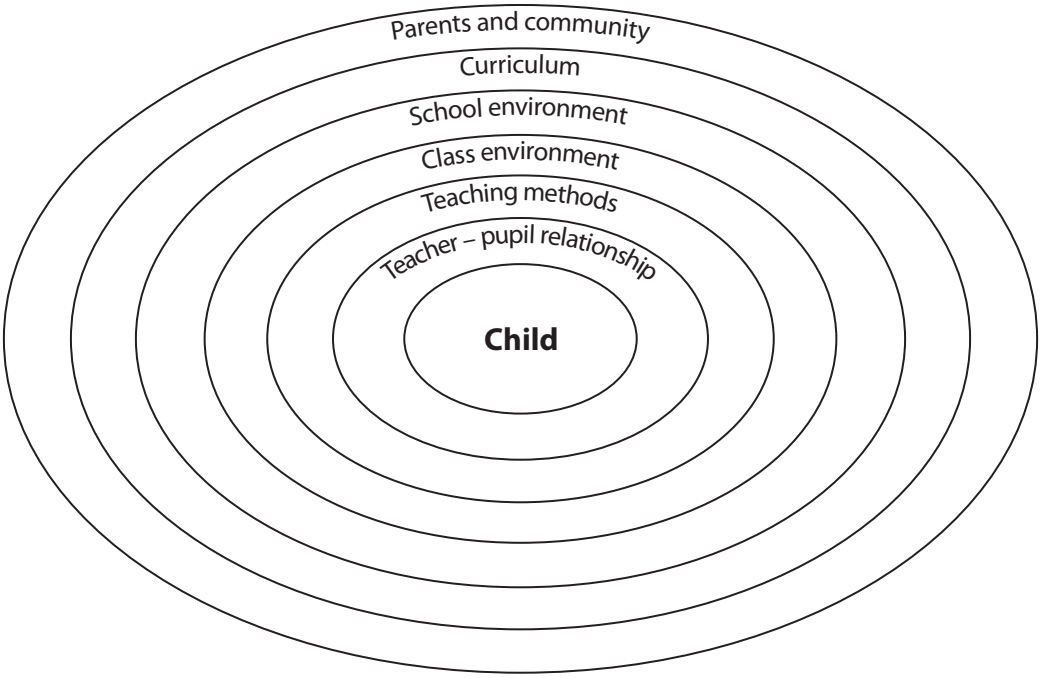
Reasons for failure of these pupils were the most lack of adaptation in the classes, capabilities and personalities, hard and huge learning material, weak pre-knowledge and low level of working habits. The pupil with failures is regularly in conflict with surrounding and him/her self. All these matters, above mentioned, require changes in the education system, changes of attitudes towards the pupil, school and teaching methods.

These difficulties could be overcome by organization of contemporary teaching methods in which the methodology directed to the child must be regular praxis, and the role of the teacher must be changed.

Basic characteristics of this methodology are:

- individual approach;
- balance between the work in huge group;
- small groups, pairs and individually;
- motivating surrounding adapted to active learning;
- topic planning;
- regular follow up, evaluation and rating;
- balanced activities;
- pupil is active, makes decisions, has choices; and
- partnership with parents.

In order to make these goals possible, changes in the education of all levels are necessary what can be seen from this schematic illustration.



Pupils with special needs in regular schools in a contemporary world are normal occurrence, what was not the case before. Education of these persons went through many changes. Approach towards the children with special needs was segregating for centuries. Old pedagogic methods in this region were more directed to the categorization and separation of the children on capable and incapable, on lazy and active ones, etc.

On this way, pedagogical praxis has created to itself an alibi for the case that upbringing results with some children are not satisfying. But, in the post-war period, pedagogical, followed by arrival of humanitarian organizations, an idea of fair and humanitarian treatment has been promoted, an approach towards the children who were not lucky like their age-fellows has changed.

When we talk about the society care on persons with special needs from the historical aspect, it is important to underline that persons with special needs were not always in similar situation like today. Until the middle age, they were the subject of harassment, excluded from the community even physically exterminated. Yet, in middle age, there are first institutions of separated and secretive type. With first influences of modern science there were attempts for protection of persons with special needs.

Until twentieth years of the last century, in the world, there were not many special education teachers. Later, this number increased, but in the thirties their number drastically decreased. Person with special needs were enclosed by the segregation educational system until the middle of the last century. In sixties, medical approach was present, when the society directs its activities towards difficulties", "incapability" and took up measures in order to establish special services,

departments or treatments where the consequences of this kind of status could be removed or minimized. Model of deficit presents the transfer from the medical to the social model.

In this period, the whole process is aimed toward findings of what the persons disturbed in the development can not do and what are her/his difficulties. Rehab process is based on the decreasing of found difficulties or their removal. The social model appears in the nineties, and starts from the possibility that person with difficulties and their discrimination are society based and conditioned. The social model underlines the rights of an individual, and solution is seek in the restructuring of the society and accepting differences as the challenge towards the development of society. In the strong post-war development of education, since 1945, in BiH, there were formed the first basis of organizational society development of special education and upbringing. This is how and when the new area of education and upbringing is developed-the special education. It did not have ay roots in the past, so it can be freely said that the beginning was hard, with many obstacles. It supposed to move from the start and solve basic theoretical and practical questions, especially:

- To organize the system of special education,
- To create and confirm the content of upbringing-educational activities, and
- To organize classes.

The first Law on homes and schools for children with mental and physical disturbances is published in "Official Gazette NR BiH" no. 13/47. The Law on special schools from 1960 has legislated the right of children with mental and physical difficulties to gain the basic and special education in order to provide them with capability for independent life and work in specified institutions. Another fact that that was underlined by this aw is the system of education through special pre-school institutions, special schools, special departments within the regular schools and departments in the system of health and social institutions. Special elementary schools are specially organized educational institutions where children with mental and physical difficulties get their education and upbringing.

By special education and upbringing for children with mental and physical difficulties, the level of education and upbringing is provided in accordance to their mental and physical capabilities, particularly in:

- Development of existing not disturbed capabilities and interests,
- Mitigation or decreasing disturbances, difficulties, anomalies and their consequences,
- Preparation and building capabilities for profession and job that is suitable to their capabilities and interests, including special methods and special organizations of upbringing-education work, teaching, technical and other assistance.

Even the special education in BiH has started systematically and organized to be developed just after the II world war, in our country there is no much authentically data or documents, particularly regarding the first post-war years, when the first specialized institutions were established in the history of special education and upbringing. From very vital document on special education in BiH, we can find out that the first institution for slightly mental disturbed children was opened in Petrićevac near Banja Luka in Franciscan's monastery.

Bureau for special education and upbringing of children in Sarajevo , as the Institution for special primary education and upbringing of slightly mentally and physically disturbed children,

is established on 01/04/1947, by the decision of Ministry for National Health and Social Care NR BiH no. 6028/47 dated from 01.04.1947 . Decision on establishing the schools within the Home is brought by the Ministry of Education NR BiH, no 7326/47 dated on 05/04/1947. Opening of additional departments within the regular elementary schools has changed the understanding of possibilities for education and upbringing of these kind of children and youth. It also changed an attitude on necessity of society involvement in education and work with this category of children and youth in BiH. Beside this Bureau, there are Bureaus in Pazarić, Prijedor, Višegrad, Fojnica, Mostar, Mjedenica.

After special schools and departments/classes there was a need for the integration of these children on contemporary way of education. Integration is mutual educational of all, under the same conditions regardless differences. From 1980 until 1990 in Croatia, integration has been introduced as the new model of education of children and youth with special needs. In this period, the new terminology has been introduced also in the world: "children with special needs".

Being involved in education of children with special needs in BiH and considering all aspects of it, as mechanisms of their better inclusion, this report consider some specific issues (in the line of several examples): difficulties regarding inclusion, role of parents-partners, and key role of NGOs in this process.

Identification of children with special needs

Do not look at my disturbances as my defect.
You are the one who sees me deviant and helpless.
Koontz & Emma Van der Klift

Aim: Pointing out an importance of good perception of children with special needs.

In all recent terminological determination, person with difficulties in the development, existing difficulty has been always underlined. In marking these persons, there was an issue where their difficulty is underlined and pointed out, very often like in insulting way. In accordance to better understanding of difficulties within the development, terminology in marking these persons was changing. Acceptance of terminology "special needs" and "difficulties in development" has won over already used terminology such as "abnormality, handicap, invalidity, defectiveness, deviancy, and disturbances", which have negative and not human connotations.

In contemporary pedagogic and psychological literature, but also in praxis, there are expressions "children with special needs" and "children with difficulties in their development". When we talk about the "children with difficulties in their development", we often think on children with difficulties in their mental, motor, sensor and emotional-social development. Expression "children with special needs" is much wider and enclose also the children with obstacles in their development, that appeared due to the environment too (society, family, age-fellows, media, etc) but also gifted and talented children.

According to an assessment of the World Health Organization, in general population there is 7-8% of children with development difficulties. Under the terminology of pupil with special

needs, enclosed are children very gifted/talented, pupils with difficulties in their development and pupils with learning difficulties. Here is the following structure of children with special needs:

- Children with mental disorders,
- Children with hearing difficulties
- Children with sight difficulties
- Children with speech-language disturbances
- Children with specific learning difficulties
- Children with emotional disturbances
- Children with physical invalidity
- Children with behaviour disturbances

Children with special needs are actively involved in the realization of individual educational programme. They are animated to participate in efforts of their social inclusion, acceptance and education.

During identification of children with special needs, we have to be very careful in order not to misuse that information. What is important to underline is that each child with special needs should not put in any categorization but in certain circumstances must be provided with suitable programme.

Adaptation in educational process of regular programme in accordance of pupil's individuality with special needs, in most cases depends on type and the level of difficulties. This must be adapted towards capabilities and difficulties which pupil is faced with. The role of teacher and professor is to choose adequate procedures and educational content that will contribute to the pupil's understanding and easier reception of subjects and by it achieving an adequate level of knowledge.

Each child with special needs has something to show and this child can teach us a lot. These children are waiting for us to do something, and themselves together with their parents certainly deserve it.

Do not look at my difficulties as a problem,
understand my difficulties as an attribute!

Inclusion

Do not try to fix me because I am broken.
Support me. I can make contribution to the community on my own way.

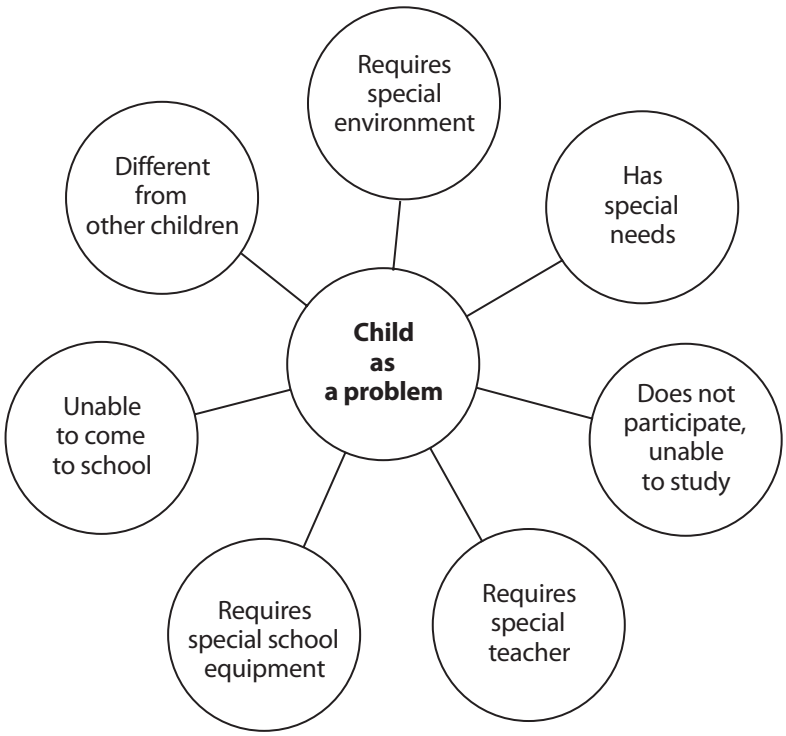
Norman Koontz & Emma Van der Klift

Aim: Introducing with basic terminology connected with inclusive education

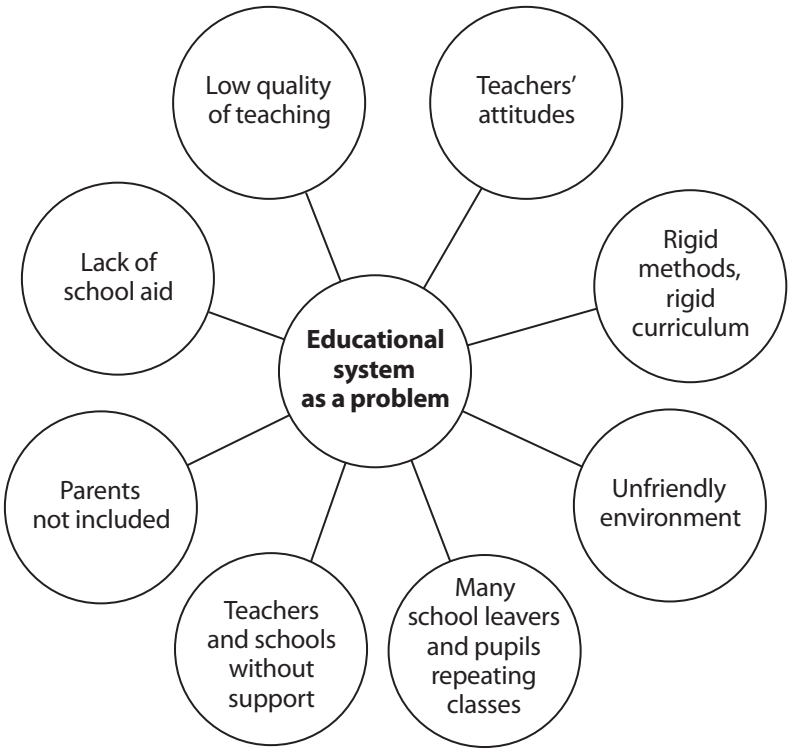
Integration presents creation of certain conditions for children with difficulties in their development that will ensure in each concrete case the smallest restrictive surrounding for their development, opening various alternatives on upbringing and education continuum. Integration is upbringing and education of children with difficulties in their development in regular school.

Movement of integration is based upon the process of individualization, individual programming and individual approach in meeting with specific needs, in order to ensure the best way of optimal child's development.

Inclusion is a respect of pupils with difficulties in the development as equal actors of upbringing and educational system, without their exclusion to specific institutions but ensuring the specialized assistance that will be provided to the pupils whenever needed. It is not that special programme has been made for these pupils, it is that learning is developing in the flexible programme with an accent to an individual adaptation of content, methods and forms of work to each pupil i.e. equally towards the ones without difficulties and the ones with difficulties and according to their individual needs. Inclusion is overcoming simple human integration. Achieving the basic human rights is also the right for including children with special needs into the regular schools so they can, together with their age-fellows play and learn as equal. As it can be seen from the picture, within integrated education, there is a child as a problem, where the child must be changed in order to be adapted to the system



Inclusion is related to all children, not only to ones with difficulties in development. It presents a wide field of activities. Before all, it is a way of thinking, that is smoothing not static, not the condition but action. Well, that is the whole life process that includes present, future, but also the past too. Because the inclusion is implicating an involvement, it is necessary to change educational system, which will be suitable for child's capabilities, according to the following picture:



In order to make the process of inclusion alive in upbringing and educational system, it is important to have a legal regulation of the purpose and character of the process. Actually, the non existence of legal regulation for children with special needs in our society and in upbringing and educational system, has for it consequence various problems that children with special needs, their parents, teachers and others involved in this process of integration are facing with. Beside the legal regulation, for successful implementation of integration process it is necessary to ensure the following conditions:

- subjective,
- objective,
- organizational.

Subjective integration conditions are related to attitudes, opinions and believe of all subjects involved in the process of upbringing, education and re-habilitation of pupils with special needs. Subjects within the process of integration are pupils with special needs, pupils without difficulties in their development, pupils/subject teachers, and parents of pupils with difficulties in the development, school directors and experts.

It is important to stress out that all subjective factors of integration should be intensively involved in the process of integration and give maximum contributions to it. In this purpose we can adapt on time informing of teachers, parents and pupils but the population of local community in general. Team work has a great contribution for the process of integration for children and youth with special needs. This multidiscipline approach of all experts can contribute the better integration.

Objective integration conditions refer to an adequacy of school space, building and lightening of the space. Great importance for the integration is equipping with didactical materials, other tools and assistances and school environment. Objective conditions also refer to an adequate approach to the building and moving in it regardless architectural barriers

Organizational integration conditions are organizations of diagnostic treatments and following up of these and organization of additional re-habitat ional treatments. Good organization of educational integration, before all estimates, that regular school will be maximally used for the upbringing, educational and individualization process of children and youth with special needs. Creating good organizational conditions should solve the problem of early discovering these children and assessment of their capabilities, needs and interests, in ensuring additional assistance to them, selecting the least restrictive conditions of education, systematic work, everything in accordance with their real needs and requirements. When the number of pupils is in question, it was often even bigger than 25, and 25 pupils present an optimal number within the conditions that in these classes are not integrated more than 3 pupils with special needs.

If all above mentioned conditions are not ensured, there will appear the physical integration; the one that makes these children more stigmatized that classical segregation educational system in special upbringing and education institutions.

What needs to be done is the creation of conditions that will provide higher levels of integrations, which means:

- *Functional connection* in which children with special needs are part of the educational programme followed in regular schools, but partly in separate classes with suitable tools, and with an expert's assistance
- *social connection*, as the highest level of integrations implementation, in which children with special needs are placed in the regular classes and participate in all activities, with provided individual assistance if needed.

Inclusion in BiH

Respect me because the respect requires equality.

Norman Koontz & Emma Van der Klift

Aim: Underling an importance of reforming the system of education and problems due to the reform.

In BiH, inclusion has found the support in the «Draft Law on Elementary and Secondary Education» 2003, by which it was ordered to balance all entities Laws on elementary and secondary education. But, this process requires a lot of compromises, balancing of opinions and approaches, but the most of a all good will, which will make this legislation fully respected.

Segregation way of education of children with special needs is still dominant in BiH, meaning the existence of special classes in regular schools or "special" schools. What is common in these two dominant models is that we have a special education programme and plan. For successful introduction of integration in regular school system from all mentioned conditions, it is needed

to extract subjective conditions. Importance of these conditions in the process of integration is vital.

Integration of children with special needs in regular school system in BiH is in the phase of creating conditions for this integration which presents the significant achievement in the transformation of the school system in general. This reformed school system will be very good base for the bigger social integration of children with special needs and their families in BiH (possibilities for an employment, etc.

Upbringing and educational system in BiH has not yet basic conditions and foundations for the development of integration process of children with special needs. There is always a question of process of education. To count insurance costs for the special education which is still largely spread in upbringing and education system in BiH, is very hard, but it estimated that an amount is very high. OECD Study from 1999, shows that the main costs of special education is higher than within the regular one, and that an integrative conditioning of education is far more expensive compared to the segregation. All this means that urgent and necessary conditions are required to be made in order to create better picture and realization of integration these children with special needs, not only in regular schools but in all levels of upbringing and education system in BiH.

Current efforts related to the reforming o upbringing and education system in BiH are directed towards misbalance between our opinions, approaches, attitudes, traditional understandings, prejudices about the schools and upbringing educational praxis that should be oriented towards the special needs of the children. There are more than several reasons for respecting these special needs.

Some of the most important ones are:

- *changes within children's population* – schools in BiH are currently characterized by enlargement of number of children with difficulties in their physical and emotional development, traumatized children, abandoned children, invalid children, children with displaced parents in the country, children of returnees from abroad that are coming back to the country and integrating in the upbringing and education system, children with criminal behaviour, smoking, alcoholism, drugs and prostitution problems, etc
- *avoidance of classes, weak success in the school, learning problems* – even children's population is always changing, strategy, goals of education and upbringing, school plans and programmes, upbringing basis and education basis, particularly education technology, education system for teachers and methodologies are still the same. Elementary lacks of this praxis are: domination of the same approach towards the children regardless differences among them and their special needs in the development, upbringing and education: lack of direction, stimulation, communication, interaction and cooperation among children, their teachers and experts. Well, the basic characteristics of upbringing and education praxis, which would respect special needs of children are:
- enclosure, which means, children of the same age regardless of their specificities in their development, upbringing and education, go to schools
- integration of parents
- choosing the self-definition and autonomy
- teams for instructive an consulting work
- changing an assessment process
- systematic and individualized approach towards the child.

OECD Study on the integration process functioning of children with special needs, conducted in eight countries with different education systems and political structures (Italy, Germany, Denmark, Australia, Island, Canada, USA; Great Britain, 1999.), shows that education of all pupils in regular schools, regardless the level of difficulty is possible, but following conditions are needed:

- School, teachers and school administrators, as well as others in the school system, must understand that their task is to educate children;
- School personal must be adapted to the new requirements of pupils' differences, develop capabilities for daily routine in order to respond to individual needs of pupils;
- Teachers in the classroom must accommodate their own methods of teaching and modify the curriculum in order to provide learning to all pupils, and this represents the key in recognizing needs of all pupils as individuals;
- Training of teachers, which imperative is the development of suitable attitudes, capabilities and competencies during the long-term training;
- Personal must see the boundaries of their competency, and learn how to cooperate with other specialized teachers in the school, to develop team methods of teaching and to cooperate with outside experts;
- Specialists with relevant experiences should assist to teachers in schools in order to learn how to manage in the process of integration and pass over their experiences;
- Parents and the community must be completely involved. The success of child's education and socialization depends a lot on parents and the community;
- It is important to publicly present the process of integration on different levels of public and social life in order to get the feed back on different levels and on well system functioning;
- Financing is very important question;
- In the development of suitable governing policy, leadership is required as well as in the policy implementation on the state and local level.

Good praxis examples

"Yesterday I was clever and wanted to change the world.
Today I am wise and that is why I am changing my self."

Š. Činmoj

Aim: Creating more realistic picture on possibilities for better progress of the children with special needs in their inclusion to normal flows of living

The best is to talk about good praxis examples. They prove that this theory has cover up and that is not a dead letter on the paper. Regardless of all objective and subjective problems that exist due to the surrounding we live in, we can underline that there are certain people, institutions, NGOs, who are building one new system of good education praxis. From the research conducted in 2003, we found out that upbringing-educational institutions starting from pre-schools up to high schools are not in most cases accessible for the persons in invalid wheels. The most

devastating is a information that in the are of Tuzla Canton, we have 31 children with physical invalidity at school age, which is not included I the process of upbringing and education or they actually stopped their education because of the lack of support in the society in finding the best models for their education and upbringing. These children, due to their immobility are closed in four walls and mostly illiterate. Positive examples of these children's integration are individual and mostly present the result of individual engagement of their parents that are ready to make an additional efforts and funds for their children's transport to schools.

Centre for children with multiply difficulties "Koraci nade" in Tuzla, has, in its trying to find efficient models of upbringing and education, made a programme for their preparation to pass exams nonregulary within the elementary schools in Tuzla. Efficiency of this kind of exams passing is confirmed by many examples, children were passing exams with excellent marks and, in some cases, showed better knowledge than the children of regular schools.

It is very lucky circumstance that the Centre "Koraci nade" present educational-scientific base of Faculty for Education and rehabilitation in Tuzla, which creates an opportunity for the personal of the Centre to cooperate with students of this Faculty when they perform their exercises within their study. Center "Koraci nade" has proud with the fact that giving their contribution to an idea of inclusion, they successfully prepared and included 16 of their beneficiaries in elementary and secondary schools with different physical difficulties, and they still offer the regular support in fulfilling all school requirements and tasks. It all results in great success of all. Their problem solution in building and fully equipping one school in Tuzla Canton for children with special needs is not confirming the statement on inclusion benefits, because in this way, children would go again to one school. And segregation would continue.

Association USU from Tuzla works on inclusion promotion in this area, due to the fact that there is enormous need for the support to children with mental difficulties. By active inclusion of these children in the local community, basic human rights can be achieved. Important assumption for changing this situation is actually involvement of the whole local community. Specificity of inclusion is also the responsibility for meeting all special needs (that are direct or indirect consequences of individual pupil's characteristics) is transferring to the society in general, particularly on the level of local community, in which individual must fulfil own needs and give the maximum contribution. Inclusive schools are following the flexible school programmes that should meet different needs of children. Obstacles for an approach and success can be considered in physical and structural sense. But more than that, school programmes, pedagogy, exams and approach to the school are creating barriers-obstacles. If not visible obstacles get recognized and removed, ensured success and approach to these children will be unavoidable.

It is important to underline that results of their work are visible in the deinstitutionalization of responsibilities of certain structures, institutions, as well as progressive cooperation with NGOs and institutions, such as Centre for social work, Faculty of Education and rehabilitation, etc. All this is for the welfare of the population.

Within the refusal of terminology such as "handicapped" it is also important to refuse the **categorization** of "handicapped persons", because with this kind of approach "differences among the groups of children are deeper and strengthen".

Positive examples of work with children with special needs are also the sport methodology, socialization through sport.

Task of Special Olympics is to ensure to persons with difficulties in intellectual development in the age from eight years and more, following:

- Trainings that take the whole year and sports competitions in different sport disciplines
- Ensuring possibilities for physical skills
- Showing courage
- Sharing happiness because of awards
- Creating friendships among competitors, their families and the local community

Special Olympics as the world organization has very developed plan of inclusion for people with difficulties in intellectual development through sport activities and activities related to sport. All efforts that are undertaken for the work with persons with difficulties in intellectual development, through sport, methodologically, have for an aim to get closer these persons to all spheres of life.

Some of their activities are following:

- Holding meetings with competitors, parents and care providers about competitions
- Holding meetings with trainers, referees, volunteers that are working with persons with difficulties in intellectual development
- Development of under programme of Special Olympics BiH (work with families, medical programme, work with media…) which includes persons with difficulties in intellectual development as active members
- Delivering awards

Role of parents – partners

"If teachers want to encourage successful participation of parents, it is necessary to try to initiate, active, personal, regular, flexible and good communication. Teachers must be convinced that parents are an integral part of education and that they expect from parents to participate."

(Holland)

Aim: Creating adequate climate for contemporary form of parents and school cooperation in order to improve general upbringing and education process

To be a parent is a pleasure, an honour and great responsibility what requires physical and psychological readiness in order to be adequately received. To be a parent of a child with special needs requires even more. It means that a parent of a child with special needs should be skilful, persistent and determinate to solve difficulties that appear in and out of the family during the whole time of child's development. Parent needs to find a way to recognize and meets needs of a child and to help in child's individual development and inclusion in life of the surrounding. Before all, parents need to underline to the society that to have a child with special needs is not a tragedy, but it is a challenge

The most vital is an involvement of parents from the beginning in education system, and this kind of involvement means first of all successfully shaped cooperation between parents and

teachers. We need to be aware of the fact that child of school age develops in interaction with various factors, that are in most cases contrary, what disturbs parents and the school to direct the development of child in desirable direction. In order to eliminate an influence of negative factors or put on the reasonable measure, cooperation between parents and school must be well planned and based on efficient communication.

Of course, in the centre of all interactions must be a child. Participation of parents in the work of school must be the time imperative, because the scope of upbringing and education tasks of school is wider, and in many areas, parents can participate as experts, instructors, advisers, members of school management and bodies, volunteers and creators.

That is why, parents of children have a right, and schools have a obligation to have netter organization and to establish the Council of Parents in schools. According to legal regulations, Council of Parents and schools are bringing out the Work Programme with following activities:

- Popularization and promotion of school interests in the community,
- Meeting the School Board with important activities of the Council of Parents,
- Motivating parents for the volunteer participation in school and,
- Participation of parents in the framework and realization of various projects in the school.

Well, organized cooperation between school and parents is characterized by:

- Creating quality both directions communication,
- Participating in the team work,
- Mutual decisions making,
- Organizing different activities in the school,
- Conducting and solving problems and issues.

Project of practical work in the community (Srbac, Prnjavor, Dubica), is implemented by the organization *Korak dalje* and it is a good example of successful cooperation with parents. Methodology of work: "To place philosophy on practical level", has shown as well. This association confirmed that the local community did not use enough already existing capacities in human resources, institutions and finances. Without additional costs, they have created great cooperation with Centre for social work (Prnjavor, Dubica), business sector of the local community and partner organization NGO "Izvor" (Srbac). They are working together for three years. Beneficiaries are: children, parents and community.

Due to the new methodology of work, it came to the signing of Memorandum in Banja Luka, on the city level, on inserting activities of association in activities of the municipal bodies. It is necessary that the government institutions use even more experiences of NGOs and associations, because, very often there is disharmony between what is said and what is real.

Strategic aim of the project was to gain sensible and educated population of parents, which will know and be able to help their children in their development and who will have the strength to influence on the creation of local social policy, related to children with special needs protection

On a way of achieving these aims, certain problems appeared:

- Uninformed parents
- Individualization of the problem
- Psychological barriers among parents (fear, shame, aggressiveness, self-pithiness…)
- Difficulties caused by valuable-moral clichés of the surrounding where parents and children are living in

- Lack of interests of institutional system for specific needs of parents with children with special needs – administrative obstacles
- Disharmony between what is said and what is the real
- Lack of objective conditions in the local community: lack of an adequate institutions, experts, finances, inadequate legal regulation

Gained experiences through the project's implementation:

- Key of the success is in an adequate inclusion of parents
- Motivation of parents associating
- Role of experts in the association of parents must be kept on the level of service providers
- Necessity of exchange of experiences among parents
- Importance of providing vital and on time information to parents
- Success depends of the level of involvement in activities of the association

Recommendations for step further in improving the work with beneficiaries are:

- Further engagement on "discovering new cases"
- Using already existing conditions and capacities
- Involvement in activities of the association in regular activities of municipal bodies (annual plans, reporting of assemblies)
- Necessity for forming the municipal body on these issues
- Improve cooperation with local Centre for social work
- Intensify activities on informing and education of parents of children with special needs.
- To keep a high level of public participation in the process of improving the condition of children with difficulties and their protection.

Work of parents and work with parents is very important. Positive attitude is very important (regardless of having a child with or without special needs). This kind of positive attitude means to:

- Understand difficulties, exchange experiences
- Have dreams (motivated)
- Difficulty do not consider as tragedy
- Cooperate with team (appreciate the team work)
- Respect an expert's opinions (volunteers)
- Continue to work at home, at picnic, etc.
- Believe in child

All this provides that the role of parents – partners become more qualitative (qualitatively and quantitative).

Something of the most vital issues with parents and what need an attention is that parents must remove the feeling of worthless (of themselves or their child) because it is a pupil with special needs. On the other hand, we are also coming into contact with parents of children without difficulties in their development. They are often afraid that pupils with special needs can "badly" influence on their children. Experiences have showed that with these parents too, must be worked too and work on acceptance of integration of children with special needs.

Reporting on results of activities is the best way to ensure parents getting information on the success in work.

Conclusion

Attitudes of the local communities are still mostly negative, in the best cases, indifferent towards children and youth with special needs. On the BiH level, there is no unique legal regulation, which defines and exactly specifies persons with special needs and what are actually their special needs. In Tuzla Canton, the process of deinstitutionalization of persons with special needs is conducted thanking to the cooperation and connection among the government and non government sector. By partnership among parents, NGOs and government institutions the need for further capacity building development can be confirmed and beneficiaries are children, parents and local community

It is important to gain sensible and educated population of parents, which will know and be able to help their child's development and have strength to influence on creation local social policy. To gain complete involvement of children with physical invalidity in regular schools, it is recommended to have schools in houses, with participation of an expert team. Opportunity for improving current praxis is visible in promotion of positive experiences due to positive affects of sport and involvement of children with special needs in all spheres of life. Experiences of organization the development of personal skills, development of thinking, feeling, interests, skills, keeping own identity and development of autonomy, are very significant and all in the aim of social inclusion of persons with special needs in normal life (employment), mitigation of poverty and misery. Inclusion can not be avoided in the frame of education reforms

Interests of citizens must be placed on the first place, and more money from the budget must be used for educational, health and social funds, as well as in the development of civil sector. Methodology of disseminating the positive experiences can motivate organized and continued cooperation among government and non government institutions, which would able mutual solutions of problems or, to use these solutions in work with children with special needs.

"Listen! Support and follow! Do not work on me! Work together with me!"

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