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HandiKOS
CBR - KOSOVA

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1. BACKGRUOND

HandiKOS is a Non-Governmental Organization of and for the persons with disability, established since 1983 as association of paraplegics and children paralyses later named as HandiKOS with the aim of organizing people with disability.

Due to the changes that happened in ex Yugoslavia in the beginning of 90's as the other entire NGO sector HandiKOS needed to change its way of functioning. With the arrival of HI in 1994 followed by OXFAM in 1995, and their combine support, we started to diversify our activities combining emergency, service provision and political interest. Due to the fact that at that time Kosova was under severe occupation of Serbian regime, all the activities were developed in an extremely insecure environment, in very limited conditions and the work was focused on fulfilling the immediate needs of PWD.

Due to the political-economical situation in 1995 our activities started to follow the strategy of CBR as we can see from the activities that where implemented.

In the end of 1997, there was a war and the work of HandiKOS was focused on helping the PWD that were stranded in the war areas. During the NATO bombing, HandiKOS was completely disabled from functioning owing to aggression by the Serbian regime and majority of the workers where expelled from Kosova.

During 1994 -1999 the activities of HandiKOS where carried out by hundreds of volunteers.

After the war, through support from its International partners, Finish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, OXFAM, HI and DSI it has re-established its network in 25 municipalities of the 30 throughout Kosova. There was and still is a need for our functioning.

From June 1999 until the end of 2001 during the emergency period after the war, HandiKOS activities where based on fulfilling emergency needs of PWD (relief activities). The war has created a situation making our work very crucial with PWDs becoming more helpless.

From post war emergency help, we have moved on to lobbying for disabled friendly policies, respect for the human rights of the PWDs.

Our service provision for the PWDs continues. There is an absolute lack of service provision from the Government making it necessary for organisations like us to intervene.

2. ACTUAL SITUATION

VISION – MISSION - STRATEGY

HandiKOS as all Kosova is in the transition from the emergency period to the develop and after hard work to day has a well define Vision, Mission and Strategy.

VISION STATEMET

Inclusive society, with full recognition of the rights and Opportunities of the PWD in Kosova

MISSION STATEMENT

*HandiKOS is an NGO that works on:
Promotion, Prevention, service Provision as well as
Full recognition and participation of PWD in Kosova*

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

*Political development and self-representation
Service provision for PWD
Economical independency of PWD*

3. ACTIVITIES

A) IN AND WITH THE COMMUNITY

- Registration of the PWD after the war, all the persons registered before were register again, to confirm their actual situation and needs. Today there are 12.000 PWD registered from all Kosova
- Support with orthopedic and medical aids: crutches, wheelchairs, material for decubit and incontinence. During the crises/emergency we distributed also the Hygiene packs, clothes, food and other necessary thing to overcome this period.
- Information about the disability, advise how to prevent orthopedic deformities and improve living conditions.
- Motivating and encouraging the parents to send the children to school.
- Motivation and Promotion among teachers to accept the children with disabilities.
- Awareness about disability and accessibility among the community and authorities.
- Promotion of sports of PWD (wheelchair basketball, table tennis, athletics etc)
- Participating and organizing cultural events as concerts, theatre.

- Organization of summer- active rehabilitation camp in the seaside, for adults and children with disability.
- Promote the participation of PWD in the electoral process through direct participation in the Central Electoral committee. And provide different support to PWD during the elections as transport and mobile teams.
- Peer support program for the spinal cord Injured persons. From September 2002 four persons with spinal cord injury were trained to visit and give support to other spinal cord injured persons. Especial brochures were translated to Albanian language about “Life after Spinal Cord Injury” to give to their peers.
- Organizing different media campaigns to promote the inclusion of PWD in the society and show the abilities of many PWD.
- Organizing different trainings for PWD, their families, representatives of institutions, NGOs and other members of society about the rights of PWD
- Promote the organization of different groups of interest such as Women with disability, Muscular Dystrophy, Parents of children with disability.
- Promotion of disability issues during the election campaigns through round table discussion, posters.
- Promote the inclusion of disability issues in the legislation through lobbying and advocacy.
- Child to child activities, about disability in some primary schools.
- Illiteracy courses for PWD’s

B) ACTIVITIES ON THE COMMUNITY CENTERS

- Evaluation of each child, using especial protocol.
- Primary physical rehabilitation by two workers in each community center. Promote and training in the daily life activities (DLA)
- One of the parents or care givers attend the sessions to learn the exercises and repeat at home the days in which the child does not come to the center.
- Psychosocial and sensorial stimulation by one worker in each center. They do activities related to improve the communication, attention, creativity of the children, to each child and in-group.
- Meetings with the parents of the children with the same disability, to promote the sharing of experiences, successes, failures and expectations among them.
- Promote socialization and creative activities among the children.
- Motivate the parents and prepare the children who could be included in regular education.
- Refer the children to the orthopedic surgeon when is necessary.
- Advice the use of special aids to improve the living conditions of the children with cerebral palsy at home

Beneficiaries:

The average of children attending HandiKOS community centers is 45 per week.

Some children come to the center for physic activities, others for psychosocial and others for both.

Age group:

The age of the children are between 2 years to 16 years. The group is bigger between 3 and 12 years of age.

Types of Disability:

The children who attend the centers have physical or/and intellectual impairments as hemi paresis after fever and convulsion in early childhood, Erb s' palsy (elongation of the brachial plexus), Cerebral palsy with tetraparesa spastic or paraparesis, outcomes of poliomyelitis, Mental retardation, Down's syndrome, spine-bifida, hydrocephalus, Congenital dislocation of the hip, dystrophy muscular.

4. INSERVICE TRAININGS

From 1996 to 2000 Handicap International provide an expatriate Physiotherapist who teach and follow up the workers of the centers.

From 2001 a local Special Educator and an up graduated physiotherapist from HI, who attend the course of Don Gnocchi, follow up the work in the centers. From January 2003 they are HandiKOS workers

From July 1999 several seminars were organize for the workers regarding the different disabilities.

The Queen's University from Canada gave a five weeks course on CBR to all the worker of the network of HandiKOS. They were divided in four groups, two in 2000 and two in 2001.

The team of the Onlus Don Gnocchi, one doctor specialist in physical rehabilitation, one psychiatrist pediatrician, one physiotherapist and one psycho-motorist gave one year course to the 30 workers of the 10 centers, from the 21 April 2001 - 17 March 2002.

Training in Human Right for the workers and PWD in 1996-1998, supported by OXFAM.

With the support of the Finish Human Right project in Kosova we organized several trainings in the field of Human Rights for our workers, PWD's and others

Training in Management and Administration (five modules) for the workers and PWD supported by FIDIDA

5. INFRASTRUCTURE

From the ten centers four are property of HK: Prishtina, Peje, Drenas and Ferizaj the others, Prizren, Gjakova, Gjilan, Vushtrri, Mitrovica and Besiana are property of the respective Municipalities

All the centers have two rooms, one for the physic activities and other for psychosocial activities that are equipped with different needed equipments.

Each center has a vehicle to bring the children to the center and back home.

6. ACHIEVEMENTS

- HandiKOS initiated and actively participated on the work of the UNMIK Task Force Group on Disability that after one year of work produced the “Comprehensive Disability Policy Frame work” document that was launched on the 3 December 2001. This document contain the guidelines for the development of a comprehensive legislation (education, labor, social welfare, health, sport, culture, CBR)
- HandiKOS is part of the Government Task Force Group for Education
- HandiKOS last year started the negotiation with the Ministry of Health for the recognition of the CBR by the health system at the primary level. As a result was established the working group on the CBR by the Ministry of Health.
- HandiKOS achieved with the help of different donors to initiate and promote the construction of ramps in many public buildings, primary schools, health institutions. Some are already done and many more are projected in each municipality.
- Marking places for the parking of the vehicles of PWD near the public services.
- Education of the parents about the impairment of their children.
- Together with the parents discover the abilities of the children and how to develop them.
- Rise awareness about disability issues among the families, representatives of institutions and community in general.
- An important achievement of the centers is that some children join the regular school in all the municipalities.

- Working together with the Finish Special Education Group and Government special attached classes in several primary schools started from September last year

7. CONSTRAINS

The principal constrain is the financial.

After the war, as we said before, Humanitarian Aid arrive to Kosova, and was a excellent opportunity to improve the network and do capacity building of the workers and PWD, but from the last trimester of 2002 this support is grossly decreased and the continuation of our work is seriously threaten.

The economical situation of the families with children with disability that attend our centers is very precarious and the service, including the transport are free of charge

At the moment there are not rehabilitation in the public services due to lack policies, infrastructure, personnel and financial resources

8. CONCERNS

Our main concerns are:

1. The sustainability of the full program that is why we are in negotiations with the government to recognize the CBR as part of their policy and give a financial support to the network.
This can be possible with the contribution from the budget of different ministries, health, education and social welfare.
2. Lack of the legislation taking under the consideration that Kosova is under UNMIK administration and we are in the process of institution building.

9. DONORS / SUPPORTERS / PARTNERS

During the first nine years the work was done by professionals, PWD, parents, families and friends all voluntaries and local supporters.

From 1994 external aids arrive to support us and make possible the establishment of the network in all Kosova.

- Association of Mother Theresa.
- Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- FIDIDA
- OXFAM

- Vluchteling – Netherlands
- Handicap International
- Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- World Vision
- Finnish Human Rights Project
- UNICEF
- Onlus R. Bazzoni (Italy)
- Concern (R. Ireland)
- Save the Children (UK)
- CIMIC – German
- DSI
- OSCE Dept of Elections and Democratization
- Caritas Sardegna
- Caritas Austria from
- EAR
- Mercy corps
- Pharmacy sans Frontiers
- IRC
- IMC
- United Arabs Emirates
- CRS
- CCF
- CRIC
- VVF
- MDRI
- CDF
- Queen's University
- Danish Red Cross

*We apologies if somebody is forgotten

HandiKOS in the name of the PWD of Kosova express the most profound gratitude to all the organizations mention above, because without their financial aid but especially without their moral support all this work will not be possible.

There are many persons that give us advices, support, encouragement and overall their friendship. We keep all of them in our hearts.

Especially thanks to Mr. Kale Konkkola from Finland for all his advise, support and inspiration.

Prishtinë – Kosova
May 24, 2003