



Taking Action on Social Inclusion of Older People

Successes and lessons learned

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Taking Action on Social Inclusion of Older People – is a three year project supported by European Union, Austrian Development Agency and Austrian Red Cross, implemented in five countries of the Western Balkans: Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of North Macedonia and Montenegro, coordinated by the Red Cross of Serbia. The objective of the project is building capacity of civil society organisations working on different aspects of demographic ageing (research, public advocacy, promotional campaigns, community based services...) as well as motivating older people themselves to take part in the processes of decision making and policy creation in relation to social inclusion of older women and men at regional and local level in the Western Balkans countries.

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Social inclusion

Social inclusion is an important element of the quality of life and ageing with dignity. It permeates different segments of life and includes different dimensions and layers. One of its main features is that it changes.

Social inclusion is a multidimensional phenomenon that consists of important aspects of one's inclusion in the community, so in addition to poverty and objective aspects it also includes subjective aspects, that is one's perception of social inclusion or deprivation in satisfying one's needs. The methodology of monitoring poverty and social exclusion in the European Union is defined through many dimensions: financial poverty and material deprivation, denial in satisfying one's needs, inclusion in education, inclusion in the labour market, access to healthcare services, inclusion in the community, relationships with other people, the sense of meaning to life and satisfaction with different aspects of life (Atkinson, Cantillon, Marlier & Nolan, 2002).

“Social exclusion” refers to a separation of the individual or a group from the society. When this exclusion is combined with one's age then it includes special relations between risk factors, processes and outcomes at many different levels. Different forms and degrees of exclusion during the life course and its complexity, as well as cumulated inequality of some groups increase the risk of exclusion in the older age and limit the opportunities for its mitigation. Social exclusion in the older age leads to unequal position when it comes to choices and control of resources and relationships, power and rights in accessing services and support, and creates barriers in accessing material and financial resources, socio-cultural aspects of the society, and makes citizens' participation that much more difficult. Exclusion in the older age implicates states, societies, communities and individuals (Kieran, Thomas & Norah, 2016).

Indicators of Social Inclusion of older people in the Western Balkans Countries

The level of social inclusion of older people was measured using the following indicators:

1. life expectancy at birth and at 65;
2. self-perceived medical status;
3. rate of non-coverage by health insurance;
4. access to healthcare;
5. persons with a chronic illness limiting them for a long term in daily activities;
6. functional literacy of adults;
7. coverage by university education;
8. electronic literacy;
9. incidence of family violence and self-perceived assessment of social exclusion.

We also looked into share of older men and women in the population with projections for the following decades, coverage with the pension system, material deprivation of older people, access to healthcare services and access to services of social welfare

1. Life expectancy at birth and at 65

In 2014-2016 in **Serbia**, life expectancy at birth for men was 73.01 and for women 77.98 (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2017). As for the life expectancy at 65, in 2016 in Serbia it was 13.9 for men and 16.8 for women (Hirose, Czepulis-Rutkowska, 2016).

For **Albania**, in 2016 life expectancy at birth was 77 for men and 80.1 for women (INSTAT, 2017) while life expectancy at 65 in 2014 was 17.2 (INSTAT, 2015).

For **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, life expectancy at birth in 2017 was 77.4 (75 for men and 79.7 for women) while life expectancy at 65 was 17.41 for women and 15 for men (WHO).

For **Republic of North Macedonia**, in 2017 life expectancy at birth was 75.57 (77.52 for women and 73.66 for men) (Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Macedonia, 2018) while in 2011 life expectancy at 65 was 13.9 for men and 15.9 for women (State Statistical Office of Republic of North Macedonia).

In **Montenegro** in 2017 life expectancy at birth was 76.7 – 74.1 for men and 79.4 for women (MONSTAT, 2017).

2. Self-perceived medical status

In **Serbia** 40.2% of people over 65 in Serbia perceive their medical status as bad or very bad (Institute for Public Health of Serbia “Dr Milan Jovanović Batut”, 2013).

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina** the 65+ population reports the highest share of bad or very bad health (37%) and the lowest share of good or very good health (25%) in comparison to other age groups (Agencija za statistiku Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2015).

In **Republic of North Macedonia** the TASIOP research (InkluzivaM, 2017) shows that 8.2% of the respondents perceive their health status as bad and 27.8 as very bad (p.21).

In **Montenegro** the TASIOP research (Dignitas, 2019) shows that of the 300 respondents in the socially vulnerable category, 41.4% of them describe their health as relatively good or good, while most of them (58.6%) describe it as poor or relatively poor. In the sample of 600 randomly selected older people, the overall health status is perceived as poor or relatively poor only by 21%, while the majority reports relatively good health (49.6%) and good health 29.4%.

3. Rate of non-coverage by health insurance

In **Serbia**, turning 65 automatically provides a person with health insurance, although it is still necessary to have a health insurance card issued which may create administrative barriers for some older people (Law on Health Insurance, 2015).

In **Albania**, all pensioners (including social pensions) are automatically covered by health insurance.

As for **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, 3.16% of the 65+ population is outside of the health care system (3.62% for Republic of Srpska and 2.71% for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), and is unable to meet the health and welfare needs. Furthermore, the right to emergency medical intervention cannot still be accessed for 15 % of returnees in their place of return. The reasons for that may lie in a higher share of population engaged in agriculture, commonly not included in the public health care system through payment of compulsory contributions (Federal Insurance and Reinsurance Fund).

For **Republic of North Macedonia** the TASIOP research data (InkluzivaM, 2017) shows that 1.5% of the population over 65 covered by the research are not covered by the healthcare. Moreover, according to the data of the Health Insurance Fund of the Republic of Macedonia, in December 2017, 3,302 persons over 65 out of 279,106 in total had no health insurance – approximately 0.16 percent in the overall population.

For **Montenegro**, the TASIOP research (Dignitas, 2019) data shows that on a sample of 900 older persons, 98.8% have health insurance and 1.2% do not have it.

4. Access to health care (visits to doctors and dentists)

According to Eurostat, in 2015 13% older men and 18% of older women in **Serbia** had unmet healthcare need in the past 12 months (they needed examination or treatment but did not get it). The most frequently cited reason for this is lack of finances.

For **Albania**, according to the TASIOP research (MOSHA, 2017), approximately 16% older people had not been able to access medical care/services when needed. It was higher for women than for men (17% vs. 14%) and in rural compared to urban areas (25% vs 14%). Difficulties to afford medical treatment (17.6%), long distance to medical facilities (12.3%) and the inability to attend medical services due to severe illness/pains (11.4%) were the main hindering factors. 24.7% of participants reported that they could not receive prescribed drugs, mainly because they could not afford them. The level of inability to pay for drugs was higher in rural areas and informal areas (about 28% and 31%, respectively). Applying the WHO-5 index, the overall prevalence of any mental health problems in the sample was almost 70%.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, the TASIOP research (For Ageing with Dignity, 2019) showed that one of the reasons for the increase in the mortality and morbidity rate is associated with inaccessible adequate health services and lack of money. More than 50% of older people participating in the research (MOSHA, 2017) stated that they had given up visits to the doctor, dentist, diagnostic treatments or therapy minimum 10 times during the previous year due to lack of money.

According to the TASIOP research in **Republic of North Macedonia** (InkluzivaM, 2017), 9% of respondents stated they had unmet need for social and health services due to lack of financial resources for participation and medication.

In **Montenegro** the TASIOP research (Dignitas, 2019) showed that 1.2% of respondents do not have health insurance and the largest group among them (45.5%) are those who have not paid contributions to the insurance fund/ have not qualified for pension.

5. Persons with a chronic illness limiting them for a long term in daily activities

37.6% of 65+ population in **Serbia** reports serious difficulties in activities of daily life (food preparation, lighter and more demanding house chores, shopping for groceries etc.) and 11% of them reports difficulties in the activities of personal care (dressing and undressing, using toilets, bathing, showering etc.) (Institute for Public Health of Serbia "Dr Milan Jovanović Batut", 2013).

In **Albania** 25% of women and 20% of men aged over 65 report a disease or disability preventing them in daily activities. The proportion is as high as 38% of men and 44% of women over 80 years old (Population and Housing Census, 2011).

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina** the share of persons aged over 65 who have an official diagnose that is limiting them in performance of activities of daily life is 27.1 % (Agencija za statistiku Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2015)

In **Republic of North Macedonia**, according to the TASIOP research (InkluzivaM, 2017). 59% of the respondents stated that they have a chronic illness, 64.6% women and 52.6% men (p.22).

In **Montenegro** 11% of the total population has difficulties in performing daily activities because of chronic illness, disability or age. This percentage increases with age up to 40% of the population in the age group of 65-84, and 61% of the population over 85 (National Census in Montenegro, 2011).

6. Functional literacy of adults

According to the 2011 national census in **Serbia**, 7.19% of the 65+ population is functionally illiterate (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2011).

In **Albania** 8% of people of 65 never attended school (Population and Housing Census, 2011).

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina** 11.10% of the 65+ population are unable to read half the page of text on a topic from everyday life. Looking at Entity levels and the Brcko District it can be seen that women are generally 5-6 times more illiterate than men (National Census, 2013).

In **Republic of North Macedonia** the Law on Adult Education offers education in the third age. This refers to the possibilities for creating forms for education of older people, in line with their needs and intellectual capacities. There is an increasing number of older people who, after retirement, still feel capable of performing professional activities and need to stay active. For this population, it is necessary to organize professional education on various topics (gardening, floriculture, beekeeping, knitting, sewing etc.). By doing so, they feel active and fulfilled, doing activities that during their working life may have had a desire, but not time to pursue. The involvement of older people in lifelong education is, however very modest.

In **Montenegro** in the 65+ group, 9% have not completed first four grades of primary school education, 30% have not completed primary school. In group 65+ 6% are illiterate (National Census in Montenegro, 2011).

7. Coverage by university education

In **Serbia**, according to the 2011 national census, 12.6% of the 65+ population has completed college or university education (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2011).

In **Albania** 11.8% of men and 4% of women over 65 have completed tertiary (university) education (INSTAT, 2017).

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina** approximately 19% persons 65+ have completed college or university education (National Census, 2013).

In **Montenegro** approximately 13% persons 65+ have completed college or university education, postgraduate master studies or PhD studies, as well as basic academic studies, basic applied studies, postgraduate specialist studies and postgraduate master studies (National Census in Montenegro, 2011).

8. Electronic literacy

In **Serbia** and according to the 2011 national census, 5.6% of the 65+ population have partial or full knowledge of working on a computer (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2011). According to the TASIOP research (HumanaS, 2018), in 2018 17% of the 65+ population used a computer in the preceding 12 months and over the same period 18% of the 65+ population used Internet. Only 3% of the 65+ population accessed the Internet on their mobile telephone (Ibid).

In **Albania** 15% of people over 65 can use a computer and 9% can use the internet (INSTAT, 2015).

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina** the total number of persons over 65 capable of independently using one computer programme is 1.5 % (1.22 % in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 1.9% in the Republic of Srpska) (National Census, 2013).

In **Republic of North Macedonia** the digital literacy index is 0.7 in the age group 55-64, and 0.38 in the age group 65-74 (National Strategy for e-Inclusion 2011-2014).

In **Montenegro** in the 65+ group (79,337) there are 1,454 computer literate persons while additional 2,320 have partial knowledge of computer work making for respectively 1.8% and 2.9% (National Census, 2011).

9. Incidence of family violence

In **Serbia**, according to the research done in 2015, 19.8% of older people reported having been targeted by some form of abuse in their older age. According to the 2017 report of the Republic Institute for Social Protection 13% of all reported cases of family violence are perpetrated against older people (Janković, Todorović & Vračević, 2015).

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina** in 2014, 1,459 cases of violence were reported to the Ministries of Interior, where the detailed analysis showed that in 1% of the cases the perpetrators were the grandchildren, while in 13% of cases the perpetrators were the sons. Furthermore, victims of violence are mothers in 6% of cases, grandmothers in 1% of cases and fathers in 7% of the cases (Gender Centre of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2014).

In **Republic of North Macedonia**, according to the Institute for Social Sciences and Humanities, Skopje and its electronic database LIRIKUS, in the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 January 2018, 43 persons aged 65 and over were registered as victims of domestic violence, of which 18 were men and 25 women. They reported various types of violence (emotional, physical and financial abuse).

10. Self-perceived assessment of social exclusion

According to the TASIOP research study on social inclusion of older people in **Serbia** the greatest sense of loneliness can be identified among older people living in single households, in rural areas or among older people who are not active in any associations and organisations. The perception of discrimination is frequently related to treatment in institutions, including when receiving healthcare services. It is also frequently mentioned that older people feel others see them as being at the end of their lives and therefore unimportant, worthless of attention and care. One of the widest spread prejudices is that older people are passive and do not contribute anything to the society (HumanaS, 2018).

In **Albania** 8% of older people reported to have no contacts at all with their family members and/or friends (MOSHA, 2017). Additionally, 24.6% of older people 65-75 years old showed signs of depression in the two years preceding the research (16.1% women 32.4% men) (IMIAS Study, 2016).

As for **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, persons over 65 are 64% of all the population living in single households. 76% of them are women. Through focus group interviews during the TASIOP research (For Ageing with Dignity, 2019) it was established that every second person from this population feels helpless and is afraid of winters. Due to adverse weather conditions, older people, especially in rural areas are often snowbound in their homes, thus they are not able to visit grocery stores, go to a doctor, or even buy themselves some firewood.

Bearing in mind that every other person participating in the research in Bosnia and Herzegovina is socially inactive, that every fifth person is without the support of family and friends, that any older person who is over 80 is unable function independently, it can be estimated that more than 30% of older people are at risk from social exclusion. According to the respondents in focus groups, 90% of older people believe that the society discriminates them, show no respect and does not recognise their contributions and merits to the society. Discrimination of older people is perceived and based on real

experience: the long waiting lists in scheduling medical examinations; poor nutrition and treatment in hospitals; unkindness of the medical staff; denial to provide healthcare services to individuals who live in another entity or canton; denial of health information; waiting for appointments for specialist examinations, surgical interventions etc. Every fifth person states that they are unfairly prevented from exercising their healthcare rights. Older people state that they often need to wait for a few months just to get a term for consultations with the specialist, or diagnostic examination and surgical procedure, and what is more, for such services, they have to travel several kilometres. Finally, more than 80% of people aged 65+ declare that they have very little impact on important decisions about the life of the community (Focus group discussion, 2018).

As for **Montenegro**, the TASIOP research (Dignitas, 2019) asked the respondents to point out their biggest problem and they listed: solitude (19.4%) and poverty (16.8%) as the most common answers, as well as the lack of support and assistance services (16.2%). Socially vulnerable respondents reported the highest percentage of poverty (33.8%), solitude (27.4%) and lack of care (11.5%). These data as well show differences in the problems faced by the socially vulnerable older people in comparison to those living in better conditions. Thus, the respondents from the random sample of respondents in the largest percentage (21.3%) choose the lack of services and support services, and in a lesser percentage named solitude as their problem (15.3%). They mostly opted for the “other” option, where they gave different answers, from illnesses, financial problems, solitude, to the answer that they had no problems.

Share of older men and women in the population with projections for the following decades

According to the Statistical Office of **Serbia** in 2017 the share of people over 65 in Serbian population was 19.6% with the estimation that it will increase to 23.6% by 2030 (Statistical Yearbook, 2018).

In **Albania**, according to INSTAT, in 2016 men over 65 were 7% of total male population, with estimations that this share will grow to 20% in 2031. Women over 65 were 14% of total female population in 2016 and are expected to increase the share to 23% by 2031 (INSTAT, 2017).

According to the 2013 census in **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, 12.9% of the population belongs to the 65+ age group, where 10.9% are older men and 14.8% are older women (National Census, 2013). On the other hand, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) estimates that in 2060 persons 65 years of age and older will represent more than 30% of the overall population in Bosnia and Herzegovina, compared to 15% in 2010 (UNECE, 2017).

In **Republic of North Macedonia**, according to the 2016 Statistical Review estimation, the share of older people in total population is 12.82% (State Statistical Office of Republic of Macedonia, 2016).

According to the 2011 census, 12.8% of **Montenegro** population is aged 65 or over (42.4% are men and 57.6% are women). According to the results of the low-fertility projection variant, the number of people older than 65 years will more than double by 2061 (from 79 thousand in 2011 to 176 thousand in 2061), which on average would represent an annual increase of almost 2 thousand persons. So, at the end of the projection period, more than every fourth inhabitant of Montenegro (28.5%) would be over 65 (MONSTAT).

Coverage with the pension system

According to the data of the 2011 national census in **Serbia**, the coverage of older people with pensions is 84%. Therefore, 16% of the population over the age limit (65 for men, 60 for women) has no pension income with more than 85% of this population being women.

In **Albania** less than 5% of the over 65 population do not have state pension. Since 2015 the members of this population are covered by social pensions once they turn 70.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina** 27% of older people (65+) (11.40% in the Republic of Srpska and 15.60% in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) are not entitled to pension, which indicates an unfavourable position of this population in the society, thus making it economically dependent (National Census, 2013).

In **Macedonia**, research on social exclusion from 2009 targeting a representative sample of 1,339 older people, showed that 31.9% of the population over 64 are not pension beneficiaries. Majority of them are women or belong to ethnic minorities, with lowest educational levels (Bornarova, Gerovska-Mitev, 2009:15). According to EC experts, more than 70,000 (or 31.1%) people over 65 are not covered with pensions (European Commission, 2007:122).

In **Montenegro**, according to the Pension Fund data for December 2016 there were 50,005 beneficiaries of the old age and disability pension which is approximately 63% of the total 65+ population.

Material deprivation of older people

According to the Second National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in the republic of **Serbia** from 2014, 26.9% of the 65+ population was exposed to severe material deprivation (22.9% for older men and 26.9% for older women) which is in line with the overall percentage of the population living in severe material deprivation but the percentage increases with age.

In **Albania**, on subjective perception of poverty, according to the TASIOP research 2017-2018, 37% of older people reported to be living in poverty. The prevalence of self-perceived poverty increased with age (MOSHA, 2017). Objective poverty: 10% of over 65 years old in Albania are poor and can not meet the basic standards of living (Living Standards Measurement Study 2012). According to the 2011 national census, 20% of population over 65 possessed a car, 93% a refrigerator 92% a TV set, 83% a mobile phone and 83% a washing machine (National Census in Albania, 2011).

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, according to the TASIOP research results (InkluzivaM, 2017), on a month-to-month basis, older people put aside more than 60 % of their funds for the expenses they cannot avoid. There remains on average only 1.5 Euro for food per day. This amount is far below the parameter set as a border of the international poverty line.

Access to healthcare services

For **Serbia** and according to Eurostat, in 2017 self-reported unmet need for medical examination in the 65+ population was 3.2%, with the most frequently cited reason being lack of finances.

For **Albania**, according to the TASIOP research 2017-2018, approximately 16% of older people had not been able to access medical care/services when needed. It was higher for women than men (17% vs. 14%) and in rural compared to urban areas (25% vs 14%). Difficulties to afford medical treatment (17.6%), long distance to medical facilities (12.3%) and the inability to attend medical services due to severe illness/pains (11.4%) were the main hindering factors. 24.7% of participants reported that they could not receive prescribed drugs, mainly because they could not afford them. The level of inability to pay for drugs was higher in rural areas and informal areas (approximately 28% and 31%, respectively). Applying the WHO-5 index, the overall prevalence of any mental health problems in the sample was almost 70% (MOSHA, 2017).

For **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and according to Household Budget Surveys in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2015, 2.6% of the population, (2.1% in the Republic of Srpska) is out of the health care system and is unable to meet the health and welfare needs. Furthermore, the right to emergency medical intervention cannot still be realized for 15% of returnees in their place of return (Household Budget Surveys in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2015).

For **Republic of North Macedonia**, according to the TASIOP research: 24.7% of the respondents stated that they have difficulties accessing healthcare services, and as reasons they cited mobility difficulties and distance to the institutions (InkluzivaM, 2017:40-41).

Access to services of social welfare

In **Serbia**, older persons are 15% of all the beneficiaries of services of social welfare (lower than their share in the overall population). The most frequent service used by older people is home based assistance (69%), followed by retirement homes (Babović et al., 2018).

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, during 2017, the centres for social work in the Federation registered 47,344 beneficiaries over 65 years old, of which only 8.44% acquired the right to some type of social assistance. In the Republic of Srpska, 29,000 rights are registered for social assistance, out of which only 6.9 % are older persons receiving some type of social assistance (Annual report from Centers for social work in the Federation BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA and Republic of Srpska, 2017).

Background and objectives of the project

Taking Action on Social Inclusion of Older People (TASIOP) is a project created to harness the power of the civil sector in five western Balkans countries in response to demographic ageing. The ageing of population is a prominent phenomenon across most of Europe: 24% of the European population was over the age of 60 in 2017 with estimated share of older people by 2050 climbing to 35% (UNDESA, 2017). The effects of population ageing are however different from country to country in terms of how the society accommodates to changing demographic structure. Majority of the countries is in the demographic bonus.

Global AgeWatch Index, a tool developed by HelpAge International to gauge and compare the quality of life of older people across the world and covering 96 countries as of 2015, ranks Albania as 53rd, Serbia as 66th and Montenegro as 68th (with data for Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as yet being incomplete) which clearly indicates that Balkans' societies are underprepared to face demographic ageing.

The implementation of the project started in February 2016 and lasted for 40 months, until May 2019. The project was supported by European Union through its IPA fund, the Austrian Development Agency and the Austrian Red Cross. Its primary aim was to strengthen the networks of civil society organisations in Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Republic of Montenegro to improve social inclusion of older people in local communities and the society at large across the region. The project was focused on improving inclusion of older people by motivating them to take part in decision making processes related to ageing and older age as well as on reinforcing the positive image of older people in the project countries by changing the discourse and showing older people not as mere receivers of support and care but as important developmental factor. Another important component was providing support to grassroots organisations in each country to come up with small, efficient local level initiatives for social inclusion of older people with a view to identifying effective and easy to replicate models that can be used as blueprints elsewhere. Additionally, the work was done directly with older people focusing on human rights and citizens' activism, supporting their local and community based advocacy activities.

The countries selected for the project share a lot of institutional history and practices in relation to social and health protection of older people and the partner organisations in each country have years of experience in implementing projects and programmes focused on older persons and improving the quality of life in the older age. Of course, all the countries in the project are also on some of the stages of EU Accession process and all this created opportunities for sharing relevant experience across the region. One of the main priorities within and beyond the project is ensuring that civil sector plays a significant role in assisting the decision makers in all of the countries undergoing transition and preparing for EU membership.

Partners on the project

The Red Cross of Serbia was the leading partner and coordinator of the project. Other partners were: Albanian Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics, Osmijeh NGO, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Red Cross of Montenegro, Macedonian Red Cross and Humanost, NGO from **Republic of North Macedonia**. These partners were, each in their respective country, coordinating the existing or establishing new civil society networks focusing on ageing and older people, leading the research and strategic planning activities and facilitating the capacity building for network members. Austrian Red Cross was responsible for providing technical assistance on grant management to all partners and the Red Cross of Serbia, the midterm-evaluation and the training on EU accession and acquis. Slovene Philanthropy, association for promotion of volunteering from Ljubljana, Slovenia, acted as associate partner using their experience in empowerment of older people in the region.

Network partnership or rivalry

It was demonstrated that the project contributed to strengthening of civil society organisations by encouraging them to work through networks on advocating for improved quality of life of older people as well as improved access to rights of older women and men in all the five countries.

Networks HumanaS in Serbia, MOSHA in Albania and For Ageing with Dignity in Bosnia have existed for a number of years and have had a lot of experience in advocacy so the activities and goals in the project enabled them to expand the networks by adding new members but also to expand the scope of their work related to ageing and the older age. These networks expanded, gained new members, became more visible and influential. In the first phase of the project, two new networks were established: Dignitas in Montenegro and InkluzivaM in Republic of North Macedonia. These two new networks gained visibility and influence during the course of the project.

At the beginning of project implementation, we asked ourselves the following questions:

Are we ready to face demographic change?

Are we ready to look at ageing throughout the life course perspective?

Are we ready to challenge widespread ageist stereotypes and recognise that what constitutes old age varies between different cultures as well as between different epochs, which ultimately means that old age is a social construct

Are we ready to join the processes on making decisions and creating public policy? Are we ready to motivate older people to participate?

Are we ready to look at older people as a heterogeneous group or will our efforts be focused only on poverty and chronically ill older people? Are we ready to widen the focus?

Are we ready for partnerships?

During project implementation all the main objectives were reached but we also managed to do more than originally planned which shows that partnership and networking create opportunities to work even more on improving the quality of life of older people and to ensure that demographic ageing is not viewed as a problem but a challenge on the road to building a society in which all generations will have equal opportunities.

Achievements

- **Situation analysis:** Situation analysis was one of the first activities in the project related to networks of civil society organisations: analysis of current policies relevant to ageing and social inclusion of older people, mapping of gaps and creating recommendations to bridge them. An emphasis was on policies related to EU accession processes considering all the countries covered by the project are in this process. Situation analysis reports also contained the recommendations how to address the gaps in the policies in line with the EU standards and legislation. The situation analysis reports were also used as starting points for the subsequent strategic planning exercises.
- **Strategic planning:** In order for advocacy activities to be successful, strategic planning is necessary to set priorities, outline directions for action and set appropriate timeframes. Strategic planning in each of the national civil society networks helped create realistic plans of future activities and plan new partnerships to improve the work of the networks. This included expanding in two directions, (one is partnerships with independent bodies, and the other partnerships with relevant institutions and ministries). The strategic plans were created to take into consideration the needs of every network in their particular national context which includes the legal and social frameworks developments in the pipeline along the lines of EU accession process. The exercise helped the networks in each country outline their action in the next five years but also strengthened the individual network members by building their capacity to plan and enabling them to learn the tools. Strategic planning process also established the vision in each of the networks that period strategic planning exercises are necessary to take place every five years at least in order to realign the strategic priorities with the changing national context.
- **Study visit to Slovenia:** With a view to strengthening the cooperation between the networks in the region, a working visit to Slovenia was organised. The purpose of the visit was to facilitate exchange of experiences and learning from examples of good practice from an EU country on different aspects of social inclusion and protection of older people. Slovenia as destination was chosen because of the similar experiences in the area of social and health policies to the project countries, but also because Slovenian decision-makers recognised the importance of including older people in policy creation and because they also realised the importance and urgency of putting the rights of older people on public agenda. During the visit, following the invitation by Dr Anja Kopač Mrak the Slovenian Minister of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, and Ms. Vlasta Nussdorfer, the Slovenian Ombudsman, the delegations of project countries participated at the 16th Festival of the Third Age in Ljubljana and presented the project in general and per country. The project partners also visited the Intergenerational Centre in the town of Zalec. In this centre, the partners were able to see activities for children as well as older people that are done in the same space as it hosts a kindergarten, yoga lessons, sewing courses and cooking lessons and through these activities members of different generations learn from each other and this strengthens intergenerational ties and solidarity. When the community recognises the significance of joint work of different organisations and different generations of people and provides the space and support for it to happen, it contributes not only to sustainability of such activities but also to increased social cohesion. This in turn allows for a wider reach, broader spectrum of relevant activities and continuing exchange of knowledge and experience. Following the visit to the Zalec centre, all the national partners in the project have included in their advocacy activities with the decision makers the example set by this centre as a model for successful and efficient social inclusion initiative for older people funded by public funds.

- **Training session on EU accession/ acquis and proposal writing:** An important activity in strengthening the national networks and their members was increasing their capacity through training. A workshop “Writing Successful Proposals for European Union Projects” was organised in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina with participation of civil society organisations from the five project countries, members of the five national civil society networks. The work was facilitated by Austrian Red Cross experts and the impact of this workshop is reflected in enhanced possibilities to create and implement successful projects aiming to improve the quality of life of older people across the region. It is important to have in mind that representatives of older people also participated in the workshop. The workshop provided an overview of European Union institutions as well as calls for proposals and the work focused on important skills and knowledge related to preparing successful projects for EU funding.
- **Newsletter:** During the project implementation a quarterly newsletter was published in English and local languages, covering the important activities and other topics relevant to ageing and social inclusion of older people. Through the newsletter we tried to cover all the important topics influencing social inclusion of older people such as improving access to services of healthcare and social welfare, combating and preventing ageism, discrimination and elder abuse, lifelong learning, human rights of older people, digital and informational participation in the society, poverty and sexuality, UN Agenda 2030 and recognising older people in each of the Sustainable Development Goals. The newsletter also featured written contributions by experts on ageing from different countries from across Europe and different institutions and organisations – representatives of governments, independent bodies, universities, and different agencies of the United Nations. The newsletter was published on websites of partner networks in the project and sent via email to more than 200 addresses across the world and it helped establish new contacts and strengthen ties with different professionals and organisations working in ageing in many different countries.
- **Websites:** The project got its own website and linked to it are the websites of each individual network presenting the activities and achievements in local languages and contributing to the visibility of the project and the network’s activities in general.
 - tasiop.org (project website)
 - humanas.rs (Network in Serbia)
 - mosha-network.org (Network in Albania)
 - dostojanstvenostarenje.org (Network in Bosnia and Herzegovina)
 - inkluzivam.org (Network in Macedonia)
 - dignitas-network.org (Network in Montenegro)
- **Actions for citizen education and participation:** Working on development of policies and making decisions that affect older people’s lives without participation of older people never produces good results. Therefore one of the important elements of the project was direct work with older people through education related to their participation in the society. Based on the work done in the previous IPA projects in Serbia, Bosnia Herzegovina and Albania with forming and supporting self-help groups for older people at local level, this project used the experiences, expertise and examples of good practice as well as the existing activists/ self-help groups to go several steps further. Through these activities older people in local communities were identified and motivated to become active in local level advocacy and mobilization of their peers. Through community level workshops more than 5,000 older women and men from across the five countries learned about volunteering, community activism, human rights of older persons at local, national, regional and global level, and access to these rights, local level advocacy and examples of good practices from previous projects.

- **Media:** As media are crucial factor in breaking stereotypes about ageing and older people as well as the related taboos, and building the image of older people as equal members of the society who contribute to their families, communities and the society, in each country workshops were organised with media representatives to improve reporting related to ageing and older people and establish relationships between the civil society representatives and journalists. The goal was also to establish longer term cooperation on ensuring image of ageing and older people in public is expanded, its focus widened with acknowledgement of the diversity of this age group as well as all the contributions older people make to the society. These workshops and the subsequent work contributed to better visibility of the activities and better quality of reporting about ageing and older people, as confirmed by the representatives of independent bodies focusing on discrimination who report fewer discriminatory reporting on older people. Additionally, workshops for network members on how to communicate with the media were organised in each country to enhance the ties between the civil society and journalists and improve the quality of messages.
- **Research:** In order to collect relevant information on specific areas related to ageing and social inclusion of older people where there are data gaps nation-wide research studies were conducted in each of the five project countries. Each country had its own research objective tailored to the specific national context and, based on the results partners in the project compiled recommendations for decision makers as well as the public. Also, the collected data was used as basis for public campaigns to promote positive image of older people and advocate for dignified life in the older age.
- **Public advocacy campaigns:** Three national public campaigns, organised in each of the countries and based on the results of national researches organised by partners on the project worked on improving the perception of older people as actively contributing to development of their communities and on challenging the prejudices and stereotypes about older people as passive members of their communities. On the contrary, through campaigns it was underlined that older people use their knowledge and experience to enhance social cohesion at national and local level which, in turn, through creating and spreading positive image of older people contributed to decreasing their isolation and motivating them to be more active and take their rightful position in the society.
- **Advocacy with decision makers:** In total, over three years and in all five countries of the project, the partners had more than 750 meetings with decision makers. One notable achievement in this area is participation of project partners in preparation of national reports for Regional Implementation Strategy of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in all the project countries. Project partners also participated in different government councils (for example in Serbia they participated in Government's Council on Ageing and Government's Council for Intergenerational Solidarity) and in writing of different national strategies and actions plans.

Final Conference in Belgrade

The final project conference, a large international event, was organised in December 2018 in Belgrade, Serbia featuring experts on ageing from many countries from within and outside the project region.

The conference, entitled “Taking Action on Social Inclusion of Older People in the Western Balkans” was the last joint activity in the three-year project with the objective being reviewing the achievements of the project, exchanging experience through lessons learned, creating plans for future activities, as well as gaining new knowledge and forging new partnerships.

In addition to the project partners from Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro, and the representatives of Austrian Red Cross and Slovene Philanthropy the conference was also attended by the representatives of EU Delegation in Belgrade, Austrian Embassy in Belgrade, Serbian Commissioner for Protection of Equality, Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, Slovenian Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, HelpAge International from London and Jordan, Age Platform Europe, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the representative of Serbian Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs.

The conference had 105 participants including representatives of the office of Provincial Ombudsman, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, Centres for Social Welfare, Gerontological Centre Belgrade and other institutions and organisations that work in ageing, as well as older people themselves. The conference was accredited with the Serbian Chamber of Social protection and the participants from Serbia working in the institutions for social protection had the opportunity to increase their professional expertise.

Activities at global level

UNECE Ministerial Conference

The project coordinators participated at the Ministerial Conference on Ageing in Lisbon 2017 with a poster presentation on the project showcasing the examples of good practice of social inclusion of older people in the region.

TASIOP

Taking Action on Social Inclusion of Older people



(Photo: Milica Dakic)

Project location:
Western Balkans (Serbia, Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro)



100 Years 1918-2018
A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY FOR ALL AGES
Realizing the potential of living longer
2017 UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing

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Project description

The goal of the project is to further improve the capacities of five national networks of civil society organisations and 50 civil society organisations in increasing public awareness and impacting on decision making processes on social inclusion of older people in five Western Balkans countries, at national and regional level.

The project, funded by European Union, Austrian Red Cross and Austrian Development Agency aims to strengthen five CSO networks and 50 CSO network members to influence regional and national development plans and other legal/policy documents relating to ageing and social inclusion of older people. By strengthening civil society networks the project will strengthen older people themselves to advocate for inclusive policies across the region. The expected outcome is that policy makers in the five partner countries will include recommendations of CSOs in their policy making process that will lead to better support to social inclusion of older people. Civil society and older people will also improve their capacities for evidence based advocacy which will lead to improved image of ageing, more active older people and better integrated communities.

How it contributes to realizing the potential of living longer

Since older people live longer in good health these days social inclusion is about ensuring they are active participants in policy creation in all areas of importance to them. This will contribute to a more cohesive society, reduce prejudice, change image of older people and avoid the otherwise frequent paternalistic discourse in discussions on ageing and older people. Important part of the project are the subgrants provided to local organisations in order to support their grassroots micro-projects. These will showcase a variety of different activities that should be relevant both for older people and the local community. One of the project outputs will be the publication of best practice examples from the micro-projects. This will create blueprints for the activities at local level that could be implemented in the future in the project countries.

Timeline of the project

1 february 2016 – 31 January 2019



Lessons learnt

Although the project is still in the second year of implementation some things can be seen as relevant. The obvious one is importance of knowledge and experience sharing, especially in the context of EU accession process and the shared history of the health care and social protection systems in some of the project countries. The CSOs in the region are in comparable position in different countries regarding the policy process participation and therefore any improvement made in any of the countries in positioning CSOs within the policy creation process or in creating concrete new policies beneficial for older people can be used in other regional countries as leverage CSOs can use to advocate their stances.

Relevance for the UNECE region

TASIOP project is a good example of regional cooperation, experience and knowledge sharing. This is relevant because all the project countries are on the EU accession path and for CSOs this is an important learning opportunity to engage in and contribute to the public policy debate in the process of harmonising the legislative and policies. Having insights in the policy processes in other countries from the region, the CSOs can utilize knowledge of what is working and what is not working in order to improve the process of developing the policies that aim to improve the situation of older people in the Western Balkan region.

The visibility of the project at the Conference was also increased through participation of Natasia Todorovic, invited by UNECE, as a panellist on a panel discussion on the topic of Ageing with Dignity as well as in the special side event organised by UNFPA on ageing in rural areas.

A confirmation of the project in promoting social inclusion of older people was participation of an older volunteer of the Red Cross of Serbia, Miroslava Matic in the 8th session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing in the UN Headquarters in New York in July 2017. She there emphasised that older women have the same rights as everyone else and that those rights need to be protected in practice because for older women being equal means fully participating in all aspects of life and this can only be ensured through equality before the law and equality in practice. Ms. Matic was also invited by the United Nations and UN NGO Committee on Ageing of in New York to participate in the 28th Anniversary Celebration of International Day of Older Persons in 2018 and speak about the human rights of older people and the need to adopt a New UN Convention on Human Rights of Older People, as a tie-in to the marking of the 70th anniversary of Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Natasa Todorovic also provided video-statements to mark the 15 June, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2017 and 2018 to the United Nations: <https://youtu.be/5o6PG0--c6M>, <https://youtu.be/dcERCqS2EmM>

In her statement Natasa Todorovic highlighted that in Serbia, as in many other countries the problems caused by the high unemployment rate of younger people increase the risk of financial abuse of older people. This does not pertain only to countries in financial transition, the phenomenon can be identified in every country experiencing financial crisis – and it has been especially pronounced since 2008.

Another achievement of the project was the visit of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons Ms. Rosa Kornfeld-Matte to Montenegro in April 2018 following the invitation of Montenegrin government. Prior to the visit, the Independent Expert consulted with the Red Cross of Serbia on meeting with representatives of the civil sector so following the recommendations she met with the representatives of the Dignitas Network and the Red Cross of Montenegro which provided us with the opportunity to promote the project, the Dignitas Network and the partner – the Red Cross of Montenegro. During the meeting with the civil sector representatives the Independent Expert discussed the challenges in working towards the better quality of life of older people in Montenegro such as the lack of services and support for older people living in remote villages. Also discussed was the participation of the civil society in the social protection system for older people and the importance of volunteering as the most cost-effective service model.

One of the important initiatives in the project was not just strengthening the civil society networks in the region but their networking with relevant civil society organisation networks in the European Union. As an example, Red Cross of Serbia and HumanaS network participated in the 70-day „Ageing Equal“ campaign organised by Age Platform Europe between October and December 2018.



Natasa Todorovic, Ministerial Conference, Lisboa, 2017

Part of the campaign organised by the Red Cross of Serbia was a photo-exhibition in Belgrade displaying older and younger people organised between 1 October and 10 December to promote positive image of ageing and intergenerational solidarity (it is estimated that 3000-7000 persons per day saw the exhibition). The exhibition featured the photos produced by a famous 92-year old American photographer Harvey Lloyd, demonstrating active ageing as a concept. The opening of the exhibition featured participation of the representatives of the EU Delegation in Belgrade as well as the United States Ambassador in Belgrade.

Red Cross of Serbia provided statements to the United Nations for the 2016, 2017 and 2018 sessions of the Open-Ended Working group on Ageing on topics of Discrimination and Abuse of Older Women and Long-term Care and Palliative Care/ Autonomy and Independence. The Red Cross of Serbia also conducted research studies for purposes of contributing to the HelpAge International's reports on these topics at the sessions that collect the research data from 24 countries.



Miroslava Matić, Red Cross of Serbia volunteer
in the United Nations, New York

HumanaS Network representatives Natasa Todorovic and Nadezda Sataric participated in creation of the Shadow Report on implementation of Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, providing the content related to discrimination of older women and helping increase the visibility of the discriminatory practices older women face in Serbia.

Research

A very important segment of the TASIOP project was research. National level research studies were conducted in all the countries in line with the needs. The research provided the data necessary for evidence based advocacy towards improved quality of life of older people in the Western Balkans.

Serbia

Summary of the research study on social inclusion of older people, SeConS and the Red Cross of Serbia, December 2017-January 2018

The research on quality of life and social inclusion of older people was done in December 2017 and January 2018 based on statistical data from public sources as well as other available data, looking at financial means, access to resources and services, social participation and social networks, leisure, life styles, culture and communication, quality of life and subjective perception of satisfaction. The research activities were performed by SeConS Group for Development Initiatives.

The objectives of this research were:

- A description of the current situation to serve as basis for formulating arguments necessary in public advocacy and concrete advocacy activities.
- Recommendations for changes in those public policies in Serbia that in some of their parts run the risk of social exclusion of older people
- Defining profiles of social included and socially excluded older persons in order to be able to more clearly communicate risk factors related to social exclusion of this population

The available data shows that Serbian population is among the eldest in the world, with the trend of intensive population ageing continuing due to low natality and fertility rates and migration of younger population. The average age in Serbia is 42.88 and the ageing index is 139.5. In 2016 the population of Serbia was at 7,058,322 with 19% of this number being persons over 65 and 57.5% of that population being women. Looking at the way older women and men live in Serbia, it can be said that their general status is unfavourable in comparison with the status of older persons in European Union. For instance, only 15% of over 65 population was working and in a demonstration of gender imbalance, for older men this share is 19.5% while for older women it is 9.6%. Likewise, in the over 65 population, 8% of men and 17% of women are not covered with any form of pension. Research also showed that pensions are the main safety barrier for poverty and that without social transfers and pensions, for the population over 65 the risk of poverty would be 82.3% (in comparison for the under 65 population this risk would be 48.7%). Another figure illustrating the financial situation is that 73% of all households with at least one person over 65 are unable to replace worn out furniture. And the information that 20% of older women are unable to use their own funds independently indicates the frequency of financial abuse, the most frequent form of elder abuse in Serbia.

Health-wise, in the population between 65 and 74 years of age, 60.1% report some chronic condition but 13% of all older men and 18% of all older women reported being unable to get treatment or medical examination they needed over past 12 months due to finances and transportation issues.

Older people make for 15% of all social welfare services beneficiaries (which is below their share in the total population of 19%) and the most frequent service (69%) is home based assistance, followed by retirement homes and daily care centres.

Elder abuse has been experienced by 19.8% of people over 65 with the most frequent form being financial abuse (11.5%) followed by psychological abuse (7.8%) and then physical abuse (3.9%). Sexual abuse is still a taboo with 50% of the respondents in the research declining to talk about it outright.

As for digital literacy, only 17% of older people in Serbia have used a computer in the 12 months preceding the research and only 18% used the internet. Only 3% have accessed the internet from a mobile device.

Transportation-wise, while 83% of older people living in urban areas has access to public transportation, its accessibility depends on the proximity of bus stops. 52% of older people live within 500 metres of the closest bus stop, but one fifth lives much farther away which is a serious issue for persons with limited mobility.

Almost two thirds of older people (64%) live in households without younger members which indicates that developing social activity and support networks for these persons is essential in order to keep them active, supported in their different needs and included in the immediate and wider community. More than 5% of older people in Serbia have no one to share their problems with.

Older men have more free time than older women – 8.3 versus 7.4 hours per day and while the overall satisfaction with the quality of life among older people does not differ significantly from younger population, it is also notable that for men the satisfaction with the quality of life remains at the same level or slightly increases with ageing, for older women it declines.

Main recommendations based on the research results:

- Creating and adopting new national Strategy on Ageing to establish and coordinate measures and activities to improve social inclusion of older men and women as well as improve their economic status and access to human rights
- Increasing the portfolio of social welfare services for older people so more services are available and older people are better supported in social inclusion according to their needs and preferences (daily care centres, clubs, home based assistance).
- Removing gender gap in pensions and risk of poverty. Creating models to address the risk of poverty among older women living on their own and with very low pensions should be one of the priorities.
- Ensuring that online services (e-government, access to healthcare or social welfare) are well adapted to the needs and capacities of older people through working with older people and testing the accessibility with a wide range of older users.

Summary of the study results. MOSHA 2018

Demographic characteristics of the sample

Overall, 505 (51.8%) women and 469 (48.2%) men were included in the survey. On the whole, 493 (50.6%) participants were aged 60-70 years; 329 (33.8%) individuals were aged 71-80 years; and 152 (15.6%) individuals were aged 81 years and above

Socioeconomic conditions

Running water was present in 88% of the homes. 78% of participants reported to have adequate heating at their homes. Electricity was available in 93% of the cases.

91% of participants reported to have refrigerator and 89% of older people had a TV set at home. Situation was always worse in rural areas.

Regarding self-perceived poverty, overall, about 37% of older people reported to be poor compared with 63% of their counterparts who did not perceive themselves as poor. The prevalence of self-perceived poverty increased with age.

Health status and access to services

Overall, the prevalence of self-perceived poor general health status was about 36%. It is higher among those living in rural areas (46%) and in informal periurban areas (50%) and increases with age. There was evidence of a positive association between self-perceived poor health and self-perceived poverty: the poverty level was significantly higher among older people who perceived their health status as poor.

The prevalence of at least one chronic disease or condition was about 47%. The prevalence increased with age. Among those who had at least one chronic condition, the prevalence of cardiovascular diseases was 65.4%; diabetes 24.6%; diseases of the stomach and/or the liver 31.5%; chronic lung diseases 36.5%. 41% of older people reported some degree of visual impairment and about 24% of older people reported hearing problems. More than 5% of older people reported to be bed-bound.

Regarding medical care, about 16% had not been able to access medical care/services when needed. It was higher in women than in men (17% vs. 14%) and in informal compared to urban areas (25% vs 14%). Difficulties to afford medical treatment (17.6%), long distance to medical facilities (12.3%) and the inability to attend medical services due to severe illnesses/pains (11.4%) were the main hindering factors.

24.7% of participants reported that they could not receive prescribed drugs, mainly because they could not afford them. The level of inability to pay for drugs was higher in rural areas and informal areas (about 28% and 31%, respectively). Applying the WHO-5 index, the overall prevalence of any mental health problems in the sample was almost 70%.

Social participation

Overall, about 8% of older people reported to have no contacts at all with their family members and/or friends. Prevalence was substantially higher among the very old people. 33% of participants reported to meet no friends on a daily basis.

18% of participants reported to engage in one of these social structures in civil society associations. The degree of societal participation was higher in men compared to women (21% vs. 15%), and it decreased with age.

About 12% of Albanian older men and women included in this study reported that they had conducted some type of voluntary work in their respective communities in the past 12 months.

Overall, about 19% of study participants reported to provide care and look after their members of the family.

The overall prevalence of some type of physical activities was about 14%; it was significantly higher in men than in women (18% vs. 11%, respectively).

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Research Summary: Discrimination of older persons in access to rights and services in the society and their social exclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina

According to the results of 2013 census the share of older people is 17.48% in the total population and it is increasing. The main causes of population aging are related to transition, underground economy, early retirement policies, low birth rates, and mass migrations of younger people from the country.

The research was conducted through focus group interviews and its results were collected from 18 different sampling points located in both entities. Apart from the original data obtained from 330 over 65 respondents, data has also been enriched with available information from different studies and relevant statistics. Assessment indicators in this research have been made according to the quality of life index of the elderly people. The quality of life index has been standardized by the Global AgeWatch according to the following macro categories: income security (pensions, poverty, social protection and GDP); health condition (expected lifespan, physical and mental health); personal capacities (employment and education); favourable environment (social connections, physical security, civil liberties and access to public transport).

The results obtained in the study indicate the alarming extent of social marginalization of older people. When compared to the other countries in the region, the quality of life indicators of older people in Bosnia and Herzegovina are unfavourable and are linked to the country's poor socio-economic situation, health habits, housing conditions, environmental factors, coverage of health insurance and quality of health services.

Some highlights include: 27% of older people in Bosnia and Herzegovina (11.40% in Republic of Srpska and 15.60% in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) are not entitled to pensions, which increases their economic dependency. Moreover, a large number of currently active working population at pre-retirement age, between 50 and 64, is unemployed and will not qualify for pension status in near future. Approximately 62% of older people live in relative poverty with only 177 Euros a month, while two-thirds, or 38%, are in the area of absolute poverty. According to the respondents in focus groups, 90 % of older people believe that the society discriminates them, show no respect and does not recognise their contributions and merits to the society. Monthly income of the average retiree covers only 25% of the average consumer basket, and at least four average pensions are needed to cover the costs of living – this is far below the average in the EU. Additionally, more than 50% of retirees financially support at least one more person, and such families are in a significantly unfavourable position compared to other older people who live in single households.

However, only 8.44% older people in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 6.9% in republic of Srpska received some type of social assistance from Centres for Social Welfare.

Furthermore, 3.16 % of older people are outside of the public healthcare system and unable to meet the health and welfare needs. Every fourth person over 65 said that their health status is bad and every second person older than 70 suffers from at least one chronic illness. 27.1% have a diagnosed condition that is limiting them in performance of activities of daily life. When it comes to mental health, the 65+ population has a high rate of 30% of psychological and mental disorders. Due to stigma and embarrassment, older people often refuse to seek professional help. According to their statements, those who participate in volunteer activities feel less depressed and anxious.

Older people Bosnia and Herzegovina are not sufficiently involved in public life. Very often, they do not have information on how to engage in public and political life in society. Despite the desire of individuals to be socially active, they are often prevented from doing so because they often do not have the funds for membership fees, driving tickets, meals and so on.

Research Summary: The need for social welfare and healthcare services among older people

The Republic of North Macedonia is undergoing a long and difficult process of reforms in the provision and financing of health services. The coverage of health insurance is close to 100%. The survey shows that only 1.5% of older people are not covered by health insurance. A survey of a representative sample of 1004 older people showed that the 75.7% of older people use of prescription drugs daily, whereas only 5.7% of the respondents never take it. There is a large number of older people who have difficulty in purchasing pills.

Despite the need, an older person may not be able to visit a doctor because of lack of sufficient financial resources or because of using other (national) treatment methods. Bad attitudes of doctors towards older people are also cited as a reason why older people sometimes do not get the healthcare services they need. However, overall older people are to a great extent satisfied with the services of health institutions.

There is a marked need for home based services for older people due to their reduced mobility, but also the need to be escorted by another person, which can not always be provided. The services include emergency assistance, patronage service visits in order to establish a timely diagnosis and regular check-ups, especially for older people who live alone.

The research found that the access to rights and services of social welfare for older people are less available in rural areas, primarily due to the distance of the facilities and the funds older people need to reach the service. Also, older people are not sufficiently informed and do not recognize the resources/institutions and organizations that provide them with social protection services.

Regarding the need for home based assistance in carrying out everyday activities, it is noted that this needs increases with age of older persons. People aged 65 are more independent in carrying out everyday activities, unlike people over 80 whose dependence on assistance is much greater. In everyday practice, older people most frequently receive assistance in carrying out everyday activities from their immediate family, spouses and children.

The research shows that older people show interest in using all the services offered by the home care centre: physiotherapist services, care during illness, escort for medical visits hospitals, assistance in taking prescribed therapy (in terms of ensuring proper medication is taken on time). Other services at home include maintenance of personal hygiene, hygiene of clothes and of the apartment, distribution of ready-made food at home, assistance with shopping for groceries and medication. These services are needed in both rural and urban areas, but much more in rural and remote areas, because resources there are much scarcer. It remains the responsibility and the challenge of the state to undertake measures and activities for creating conditions for the development of non-institutional forms for social protection of older people at the local level.

Montenegro

Research summary: The position of older persons in Montenegro and their satisfaction with the existing support services

The research was carried out in the form of direct interviews in three Montenegrin regions (9 municipalities): 24.8% in the southern region (municipalities: Budva, Herceg Novi and Bar), 43.9% in the central region (municipalities: Podgorica and Nikšić) and 31.3% in the northern region (municipalities: Kolašin, Bijelo Polje, Plav and Plužine). The sample covered a total of 900 respondents (most respondents are over 65), of which 600 were randomly sampled, and 300 of them from the social services beneficiary data base, support community and caregivers. Focus groups were also realized in three municipalities from the three regions (Bijelo Polje, Nikšić and Bar) among representatives of relevant institutions, local self-governments and NGO sector.

The questionnaire used during the research contained 53 questions, divided into the following 5 sections: Health care; Conditions of life of older people; Social Protection; Social life and social activities of older people; Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The main findings are as follows:

Examination of older people:

- As the research showed that there are great differences in the living conditions of different categories of older people in Montenegro, different support services should be developed in accordance with their needs.
- Socially vulnerable categories of older people have a great need for humanitarian / financial support, so, in addition to the larger financial allocations from the public sector, in response to their needs, it is desirable to involve the private sector, through providing financial support for various humanitarian initiatives.
- The socially vulnerable older people are also in poor health, a large percentage lives on their own, and all of this negatively affects their ability to function independently. In that sense, it is necessary to provide additional support services at home.
- Older people in Montenegro are not sufficiently familiar with the available support services, so the work on promoting them needs to be done.
- Older people are involved in existing associations or organizations in a small percentage, so they need to be informed about their mode of work and the activities that are being carried out in order to have them take part, which would contribute to the quality of their social life, as well as more active and healthier aging.

Research of relevant organizations and institutions:

- One of the key recommendations is to create a single database with all the necessary information for older people, both for urban and rural areas.
- It is necessary to adopt realistic action plans, and ensure their regular implementation.
- Cooperation between different actors in the public sector should be improved so there are no overlaps and duplication in terms of funding.
- Capacities of gerontocarers services should be increased and soup kitchens for older people should be organised

Lessons learned from community based social inclusion projects

One of the key activities in the project, especially with a view to identifying efficient and sustainable models for social inclusion of older people at community level was support for community-based, local level initiatives for social inclusion of older people. 105 project proposals were sent from civil society actors and 62 projects across five countries were finally supported through small grants. The objective of these projects was to come up with models for inclusion of older people in their communities and the society, with active participation of older people themselves. Also, the objective was to reach small, grassroots organisations, in many cases run by older people. These organisations usually do not have the capacity to apply for EU projects, so this was an opportunity for them to learn the entire project cycle (application, management, financial management, VAT exemption, narrative and financial reporting). The implementation period was ten months, with modest budgets – not exceeding 5,000 Euro – aiming to show that modest means can produce tangible results, leading to the possibility for these project to be replicated in other communities with local support. Important elements of the proposals that were awarded were: their potential to support older people in socially inclusive activities and initiatives; their potential to enhance financial security of older people; the elements of intergenerational cooperation and support (such as transfer of skills and knowledge in both directions); the potential to increase digital inclusion of older people; the potential to reach older people from geographically remote areas or from severely marginalised communities (such as Roma communities); the potential to preserve cultural heritage (considering that 2018 was the European Year of Cultural Heritage); the potential to encourage creative expression of older people; prioritising ecological solutions; the potential for replication of these activities in other communities across the region with minimal investment.

Some of the lessons learned through implementation and analysis of these small projects are worth underlining as they may prove to be very useful in future similar initiatives related to social inclusion of older people, the work of grassroots activists and small, community based organisations, in partnership with active older people.

Main lesson learned through implantation of the projects is that what is crucial for the success of such projects and initiatives is not the amount of funding in the budget, but motivation and well defined objectives, including knowing the needs of the community and forging a clear plan with well-defined objectives. Ownership of the project can be a decisive factor with the persons preparing and implementing the project being much more successful if they perceive it as something important to them and their community. Another important lesson is that successful projects frequently have a pronounced element of social innovation.

The implementation showed that organisations implementing the sub-grants in the same country, brought together through meetings organised by the country project coordinator tended to spontaneously share experiences, resources (such as venues for workshops) and skills. Even though there was no formal request for these organisations to cooperate in their projects, such instances occurred in several cases and in general their capacities were improved through cooperation. In addition, a significant number of these organisations expressed interest to formally join their national networks of civil society organisations recognising the opportunities for development and increased capacity for advocacy.

It should also be noted that the implementation of these small projects involved organisations accessing the issues of ageing and social inclusion of older people from different angles. Some of these organisations do not primarily deal with older people but are focused on human rights, women's rights, or even ecology. Their involvement brought fresh perspectives to the issue of social inclusion of older people, addressed some of the specific categories – such as older women in single households in rural and remote areas – and enabled older people to participate in their communities through interesting activities, such as volunteering for ecological work. This is a reminder that ageing should not be exclusively viewed in the

context of healthcare and social welfare services and pensions. The implementation of these projects showcased the heterogeneous nature of ageing and older age, successfully challenging the existing ageist stereotypes.

Small budgets that the organisations were granted for their work helped keep the projects inventive and the results achieved will demonstrate to donors in the future that such projects are valuable to the community as their cost is low and the results notable. At minimum, the visibility of the implementing organisations in their communities – as well as at national level – was increased along with the increased visibility of older people and the issues of importance to them. The projects demonstrated that communities can and are created based on affiliation and not just based on age. Equally important is that while some projects worked on expanding the knowledge and skillsets of older people – through education, intergenerational exchange etc. – the others were very successful in demonstrating the contributions that older people make to their families, communities and the society. As one of the most prevalent prejudices about older people is that they are a burden to the society's resources, it is essential to highlight that in reality they contribute at many levels and in very significant ways.

Since we live in the era of communication and mass media, the success of a project can to a large extent depend on the media. Through the media we communicate with the public, with the institutions, with donors, with volunteers, with beneficiaries as well as potential beneficiaries. Through the media we create the perception of ageing and older age. Not to be forgotten is that media looks for stories and that news are more likely to be interesting to them if they can be presented as such.

A lesson on working with the media is that this is a complex issue, necessary for the success and sustainability of one's work but full of important details that define the effectiveness of communication with the public. It is always important to bear in mind that the media and journalists look for news that are new and dramatic enough that they can be presented as stories. Complicated issues with many nuances and levels are likely to be condensed into simpler messages once they are published or presented on electronic media, therefore it is important to be aware of this in advance and have control over the message that will be sent to the public in this way. To ensure that the audience is hearing what you mean to say rather than what the reporters think will be the best interpretation, it is very useful to have continuous, lasting relationship with them. Following the interests and the style of reporting of particular media houses and particular reporters, then working with them over time on familiarising them with the issues your work focuses on will help them grasp the topic and understand the opportunities it offers. Typically, the journalists will progress from wanting to focus on stories about older people living abandoned, in poverty and poor health to understanding that older age is a social construct, that older people are the most diverse group in the society and that reporting on active ageing and contributions that older people make to the society make for more original and interesting stories. Of course, working with journalists efficiently also means ensuring that the information they get is based on verifiable evidence but also that the message is clear, easy to convey and powerful so that it catches attention of the broadest audience.

Particular issues addressed through implementation of small scale local projects

The organisations implementing sub grants identified and addressed a number of particular issues affecting the social inclusion of older people while at the same time demonstrating the strengths of engaging with the community, building local partnerships and looking into establishing good, long lasting relationships with the media professionals. Some of their lessons learned include:

Local stakeholders and networking: Building local partnerships with relevant stakeholders in the community (healthcare and social welfare institutions, schools, civil society organisations, cultural institutions etc.) is essential for successful initiatives of this kind and this includes the importance of liaising with local government. Even in cases when the local government can not immediately provide

additional funding for the project or initiative, it is well worth informing them in detail on the activities, goals, partners and the future perspective of the initiative. On one hand, this is a way to potentially obtain future funding, especially if the results of the projects demonstrate tangible benefits to the community – including savings to the local budget – but it can also produce all sorts of support that is not strictly financial but can significantly contribute to the quality or sustainability of the work. Such forms of support may include provision of free of charge venues or transportation for different events in the project, but also getting to know the activities and results of the project, being familiar with the expertise and skills demonstrated in the project makes the local administration more likely to view the civil society organisation as a desirable partner in future activities related to social inclusion of older people. As local governments also apply for funds from different national and international sources, having a reliable organisation to act as a proven source of expertise is very valuable. Having a successful project in the community and making sure the community recognises its successes is a precondition for improved social cohesion and development of the community as “nothing succeeds like success”.

Diversity of partnership: The implementation of these small projects demonstrated that there are no limits to partnering with organisations with different primary focus and different level of functioning. There is a wide diversity of organisations working on different aspects of inclusion for different groups and partnering with organisations with similar but not identical focus is a good way to multiply resources, reach wider public and intensify your message. Social inclusion of older people has many elements as it lies at the intersection of health, human rights, learning, gender, social welfare and other concepts and as such it is a topic with natural ties to many different groups in the population. Partnering with organisations focused on persons with disabilities or on women may produce many positive effects just as partnering with organisations focusing on work with children may produce interesting ideas and concepts for intergenerational exchange and cooperation. Intergenerational solidarity is a powerful social cohesion agent and several of the local projects implemented under the TASIOP project umbrella have reported excellent results in pairing older people with adolescents or teenagers in many different contexts, from debate clubs to exchange of practical skills and knowledge. On the other hand, partnering with organisations with particular focus helps highlight the issues important for older people that may otherwise get overlooked: gender component of ageing for one, or accessibility issues that may affect a portion of older generation that come into focus when working alongside organisations prioritising persons with disabilities.

Working with particular groups of older people: It is also important to bear in mind that working on social inclusion of older people from particular groups in the society carries its own set of special challenges. Older people are a very heterogeneous population, with more diversity in itself than any other age group. For instance, older Roma persons are generally not being focused on as a specific group by either organisations that work with Roma or organisations working with older people. This project helped bring their issues into focus. Working on social inclusion with older Roma people is a more complex issue due to a set of challenges and vulnerabilities that relate to this population. Across the region Roma people in general have a lower life expectancy and a lower quality of life while their social inclusion is at a generally lower level in comparison with that of their peers. One way to address this issue is certainly to strive for more diverse programmes and initiatives for social inclusion where different needs of different groups in the older population are recognised and planned for. This will increase the diversity and preserve more cultural heritage of this region.

Remote and rural areas: In remote and rural areas there is a special emphasis on the issue of accessibility of healthcare and social welfare services for older people due to different factors such as low population density, distance, existence of public transportations, weather conditions etc. The implemented projects in such areas contributed to increased awareness at local, regional and national level on these issues but also helped these services become more accessible in the areas where the projects were implemented. Promoting self-help groups and other forms of self-organisation and support among older people in all

communities ensured that older persons living in single households or with an older spouse, with no close relatives, are part of a group that communicates – and meets – on regular basis. As this significantly contributes to increased social inclusion and lessens the risk of loneliness and depression so it can ensure that persons who may need urgent or more complex medical assistance are better connected with the healthcare providers. Older people are also empowered and more active through these initiatives. Making sure that self-help groups for older people maintain regular contact with healthcare personnel that can be alerted in cases one of the members is unreachable is a much needed safety net for the most vulnerable and isolated members.

Informal caregivers: Another issue raised is how important it is to ensure recognition of the work done by informal caregivers and identify the best ways to support them in their work. Informal caregivers do a very demanding job and it is important that in addition to caring about others, they care about themselves as well. The need for non-institutional services for older people is higher than the capacities of public service providers everywhere, even in the urban areas in the region and therefore informal caregivers are an essential element in the lives of older people that serve not only to support them in better inclusion in their communities but in preserving their dignity in the older age and meeting many basic needs. It is, however, evident that the work of informal caregivers is almost universally under-recognised with scarce data about its benefits to families and communities as well as the savings to the society at large and as a result, many informal caregivers are deprived of any kind of support. The creation of training curricula and providing regular training for informal caregivers (family members, relatives, neighbours) is a good first step and organising further support such as self-help groups and forums and provision of the respite services will go a long way towards decreasing the stress the informal caregivers experience, increasing the quality of services they provide and decreasing the risk of injuries both for them and the older persons they support. Creating projects that would focus on informal caregivers, providing them with training, opportunities for capacity building and different services will be very beneficial in the future.

Intergenerational cooperation and exchange: Social inclusion of older people is dependent on relationships with other generations. The implemented projects showed that promoting intergenerational solidarity essential in developing a society of equals in which all generations will have equal opportunities and exchange between generations will ensure that no one is left behind. However, ensuring continuing and fruitful activities with equal inclusion of representatives of both older and younger generations demand careful planning in advance. It is particularly important to ensure continued motivation of the representatives of children/ teenagers and in this respect, one of the obvious ways is to partner with schools in the community. Again, schools are more likely to participate in such partnerships if it is clear what the benefits of the planned activities are for the children, for older persons, teachers as well as for the schools themselves. This demands knowing the priorities schools have in their work as well as flexibility and effort invested in creating shared calendar of events with partner schools.

Digital inclusion: In the era of rapid development of digital and information technologies, and the increased accessibility of different services and content via digital means, there are new and easier ways for older people to access them but there is also a risk for some older people to be completely cut off and excluded from services and the society. Through the implemented projects it was demonstrated that for many older people learning to use of modern computers, tablets, smartphones and the internet is a very desirable skillset and that this was an activity that can combine intergenerational cooperation and exchange with lifelong learning. Organising joint workshops for older people and younger generations where informational skills are the focus of attention is a good way to ensure cooperation and transfer of skills. At the same time, it was demonstrated that for older people, the learning environment has a very positive psychological effect. In context where learning informational skills was part of a structured educational process involving trained instructors, older people showed not just a lot of interest to learn – and help others learn, for example through creation of a written guide for other older people in one of

the projects – but also confirmed that for them this was a positive and inspirational environment that contributed to increase in their social contacts and activity. Considering that older people often face personal losses (friends, spouses etc.), this is a way to establish and maintain new social contacts. There is a prejudice about older people that they are not able or willing to learn. These projects demonstrated that they are not just able and willing but also very motivated to adopt new knowledge and skills and pass them on to their peers. One last thing to have in mind here is that for “computer courses” there is a very decisive difference in the whether they are free to attend or if there is a charge attached. Again and again it was confirmed that older people are very motivated to learn and expand their knowledge and skillset, that learning experiences have positive effect on their social activity and inclusion, but that having to pay for lectures/ workshops is quite frequently a barrier that many of them are unable to pass. For many older people in the region the situation with the income is such that they are often forced to choose between adequate sustenance and having access to cultural and social life.

Through several projects older people manufactured decorative items and souvenirs, and these are initial steps towards social entrepreneurship initiatives that can lead to better financial security in the older age. Since poverty is one of main indicators of social exclusion, such initiatives enhance social inclusion as of older people and lead to preserving their dignity.

Future plans

Continued advocacy for better social inclusion of older people in the Western Balkans through strengthening civil society organisations and, more importantly, through empowering older women and men to be equal and active members of the society. The three year of project implementation showed that there are many gaps that need to be addressed and topics to be addressed by the networks in the region. A very important topic is intergenerational solidarity because the need to develop it much more has been obvious in the course of the project implementation. Intergenerational exchange is an important element of social cohesion but it is frequently misunderstood as a concept. The next important topic is support for informal caregivers, whose contribution is under-recognised in the region and the services of support, education and prevention of burnout syndrome are lacking everywhere, leaving the informal caregivers to cope for themselves. Services such as respite service, self-help groups and education, with assistance of the civil society would go a long way to supporting this population that provides essential, yet invisible contribution to the society. Another topic of great significance that is insufficiently recognised is dementia as well as the human rights of older people with diagnosis of dementia. Not to be forgotten is digital inclusion of older people – in the era of rapid development of digital and information technologies, some older people are at risk of being excluded from services and human rights.

This opens opportunities for cooperation between the national networks and building on synergies and complementary capacities of these networks in order to further increase the level of quality and effectiveness of advocacy for and with older people in the region. This advocacy will have two main goals: one is to motivate older people to become active members of the society and advocate for topics of importance to them. The other is advocacy on behalf of those who are functionally dependent or live in poverty, in order to ensure that ageing with dignity is an obligation for the society. This is the only way to build „The Society for All Ages“.

Microprojects summaries - Serbia

Out of 25 received applications, 12 projects were selected for support.

AMITY

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Supporting the Social Inclusion of the Older Citizens of Novi Beograd"*
- *Community / municipality of project implementation: Belgrade municipality Novi Beograd*
- *Time period: 1st November 2017 – 31st August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: At the beginning of 2017, the City Municipality of Novi Beograd opened a Centre for Care for the Older People, Children, and Persons with Disabilities, with only one employee, in which the content had yet to be designed. The same year, Amity carried out the research on the needs of elderly households in Novi Beograd, which indicated which were the main problems of those people and how they can be alleviated.*
- *Total project budget: 4.698,84 Euro*

Target group

Older people living in elderly households in Novi Beograd, living alone, and primary school students ages of 10 and 12 from Novi Beograd, who grow up in families without grandmothers and grandfathers.

Problem the project addresses

The project deals with some of the key needs of older people from elderly households at Novi Beograd identified during the research in 2017: a specialized counselling service for the older persons is needed, where they can be informed about all the important things for them in one place; a counselling support to informal caretakers of older people, whether they are older person themselves or they are people under the age of 65; reducing the gap between the generations, as even 73% of the older people say that the older persons are victims of discrimination.

Objectives of the project

The overall objective of the Project is to contribute to the increase of the social inclusion of the older persons from older people households in Novi Beograd in the life of the local community.

The specific objectives are:

1. Reduced gap between generations of pupils in the 4th grade of elementary schools and 65+ generation from elderly households of Novi Beograd through the implementation of workshops that will contribute to better understanding and acceptance among the generations, thereby reducing the stereotypes and prejudices against the older people.

2. Increased quality of life of the older people, who have problems and challenges that will be easier to deal with after advisory-educational and therapeutic support of the professionals in the field of social, family-legal and health care.

Main activities

30 "Meetings of Generations" workshops, where 95 children, young people and older people participated. Through the structured joint activities, the participants improved mutual understanding and acceptance, and contributed to the creation of stronger social relations between generations. They learned from one another, together they acquired new knowledge and new skills, they were socializing. At each of the workshops, participants would first discuss on some of the topics (e.g. What children's games are being played today and which 60-70 years ago?; How did children spend their winter/summer

holidays then and how today?) and worked on making handcrafted items, drawing, painting...

Counselling Centre for older people and their informal caretakers was established, and during the project cycle we provided services to 88 beneficiaries. Older people mostly spoke about their financial problems, then about violence, disturbed family relationships, job-related advices, how to access services... Seniors' caregivers were interested in the issues of taking care of their sick family members and exercising rights in the field of social or health care.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The project contributed to the improvement of knowledge or the acquisition of new knowledge of children, older persons and informal caretakers of older people. Quotes: "In the beginning, I was afraid of so many old people, and I was afraid that I would be bored, and then I was barely waiting Thursday and a new meeting with them. I knew that I would hear something new and learn something ... "(Dejan, a pupil); "I liked every meeting with the little friends and each time I made cookies before coming (to workshop). I was always sure that some of the children would like my cookies and praise them... "(Grandma Miljana); "Although I participated in the decoration workshop for the first time in my life I did not get discouraged because it was the first time for a small Nikola, as well. We both tried to master that new technique and we succeeded."(Grandma Nadezda); "I learned why it was important to give your seat in public transport to a grandmother or grandfather with a stick" (Anica, pupil). More than 180 decorative handcrafted items were made and are now exhibited at the local community's office shelves.

The activities could have been promoted more in the media but political context and opportunities in the local community did not allow that. At the same time, withdrawal of the Health Centre and the Centre for Social Welfare of Novi Beograd from participation in the activities was another challenge, which was compensated for through Amity's voluntary engagement.



Recommendations

To establish cooperation with the school in the local community it is important to point out the benefits of the planned activities for the children, older persons and for school. It is important that CSOs are flexible in planning the dynamics and content of activities and in adapting to the school calendar. It is desirable to organize meetings once a week lasting for an hour. It is desirable to provide refreshment for the participants, since the children mostly attend workshops after school.

It is recommended that there are no more than 14 participants in one workshop (the same number of the children and older people). The precondition for the success of such programmes is the interest of the teacher who comes accompanying the children to the activities, because he acts as a motivator for the participants.

For older persons and their informal caretakers, the need for communication and understanding is crucial, even if we cannot specifically help them.



Name and information of the project

- *Project title: "Workshop of the Invisible Ones"*
- *Community/ municipality of project implementation: Belgrade municipalities Zvezdara, Stari grad, Voždovac, Savski venac, Vračar*
- *Time period: 1 November 2017 – 31 August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Older people are at especially high risk of isolation as in the current system of services they only have at their disposal traditional, and insufficient resources of the system, the system that is not aligned with the needs of the people it is supposed to serve. It may meet their basic needs but not their specific needs. One of those needs is the need to have one's capacities and talents affirmed in an encouraging group ambient where individuals can satisfy their needs for socializing, prove themselves through work and develop their interests and skills.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

Direct target group were older people regardless of their gender, religion or ethnicity and with no upper limit to their age. Indirect beneficiaries of the project were their families, spouses, children, younger people of Belgrade and the community

Problem the project addresses

We strove to present to the public the concept of working and active older people as well as to establish a good practice example for providing at this moment non-existent support and assistance to older people: motivating them to be active, to continue using their skills and develop new ones, to be recognized in public, to assist them with exhibiting and selling their products and ensure they are strengthened that way. It was important to send the message of positivity to other people, of the importance of being active, of the capacity older people have and need to recognize themselves as well as have it recognized by others.



Objectives of the project

- Developing a sustainable, effective model for transfer of skills, knowledge and capacities of older generations and thus building a bridge between generations that will facilitate exchange of ideas and cooperation, create opportunities for socialization, understanding and creation of social ties between generations that will be replicable in other communities.
- By exhibiting their works, the older people will participate in different public, humanitarian and cultural events in the community which will contribute to decreasing their social exclusion and marginalization as well as to building a new identity of theirs in the older age
- Intergenerational cooperation through exchange of ideas, knowledge and skills with younger generations.

Main activities

- The “Workshop of the invisible ones” project focused on activation, psychosocial support, education and economic strengthening of older people by having them work in the workshop-sales space and create handcrafted decorative and artistic items. The space was promoted and became recognisable as a place for socialising of older people who are creative, skilled and eager to work. The following activities took place: creating a group of talented older persons; creating a map of capacities, missing skills; providing necessary equipment, materials, space; education and mutual education between participants; approaching the market and the media.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Creation of an active roster of interested older people for activities in clubs and for selling items they themselves create, a network for cooperation with other civil society organisations and the private sector. In total, 17 workshops with 129 older persons were organised. Additionally, thematic intergenerational workshops were organised on different dates (such as International Women’s Day, Easter, the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day ...). The workshops were frequently attended by children with their parents and grandparents and participated in manufacturing decorative items (gift cards, textile hearts, decorative eggs...) that they took home with them. More than 150 participants in total.

The project created a sustainable model that can be used for intervention as well as prevention in relation to social exclusion of older persons through activation sonciteduned socialisation and lifelong learning. Older persons with talent



benefited from mentorship and the interactivity of the project proving that they are eager to be active in the older age and promote active ageing in the community. The project also worked on economical strengthening of older persons through exhibition and selling of their work, which is generally ignored in most of the social protection programmes. “Workshop of the Invisible Ones” also contributed to improved, positive image of older people and their capabilities as well as middle-aged unemployed persons who spontaneously joined the project.

Recommendations

It is important to identify items that sell well at the handcrafted items market and ensure the quality of the items made in the workshops is on the same level. It makes sense to make a longer list of potential items that can be made and sold and then narrow it down in line with capacities and the dates that the items will be sold on (related to events in the community)

The budget for the project was small so establishing a permanent workshop and sales space was impossible. Therefore we used available spaces at friendly civil society organisations. However, we believe having permanent space that the community becomes familiar with over time is essential in the longer term.

It is important to recognise that “the invisible ones” frequently have problems with motivation and need to be supported continually.

PHILANTHROPY, THE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Social inclusion of older persons*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Municipality of Kragujevac*
- *Time period: 1 November 2017 – 31 August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: According to a 2017 research only 28,8 % women and 39,9 % men aged 65-74 used computer in the last 3 months which is less than half of the 25-54 age group.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

The target group is older people from the Municipality of Kragujevac interested to acquire basic computer knowledge and skills. For older people, digital technologies are often inaccessible along with the information and services that are only available on internet sites.

Problem the project addresses

Older people had the opportunity to improve their computer skills and knowledge and therefore improve their access to information, services, different websites and mobile apps. This enabled them to better communicate with their friends and family members via Skype, Facebook, Viber, e-mail, for free. Additionally this improved their access to information and services such as e-banking, e-administration, medical appointment scheduling etc.



Objectives of the project

Overall objective is improving quality of life in older persons in the Municipality of Kragujevac through lifelong learning. Specific objective is improving competencies of older people in using digital technologies.

Main activities

Four ten-week courses – each course organised for 12 participants

Creation, publication and promotion of Computer and Internet use Guidelines with active participation of older people in the courses.

It is particularly important to point out that the changes in this domain are very fast and relatively new so education should take this in consideration as much as possible.

Computer courses support greater involvement of older people in social life as this project encourages lifelong learning. Reducing social isolation requires meaningful engagements and social experiences and a key value of digital technologies is its ability to connect people and communities.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

- Improved quality of life of older people in the Municipality of Kragujevac
- Encouraged and promoted lifelong learning
- Improved access to information and services on internet
- Improved social inclusion

The participants praised pleasant atmosphere during the courses as well as the lecturer who was very supportive. The biggest challenge in the project was that a higher number of older people applied for the courses than planned. This was solved through creation of waiting lists.

Recommendations

Primarily, it's necessary to connect with older people's organisations and promote the project. The project showed that there is significant and growing interest in acquiring computer skills among older people. But, at the same time whether the courses are free or not is for many of them a deciding factor due to low income. Therefore, the courses should be carefully designed to meet older people's needs in the area of digital literacy, but also to ensure pleasant atmosphere and patient, supportive lecturers and be free of charge in order to be accessible. Well-designed Computer and Internet use Guidelines, made with participation of older people are a great addition.

Quotes

Computer course

„This was much more than a computer course. It was an opportunity to socialize and spend time together“

Milica, beneficiary

Promotion of Computer and internet use Guidelines

„Using Guidelines, I can learn together with my grandchildren.“

Slobodan, beneficiary



Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Improving the quality of life of older persons living in their natural environment through improving the quality of formal and informal support*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Belgrade*
- *Time period: 1 November 2017 – 31 August 2018*
- *Total project budget: 579.000 RSD (4,856.98 Euro)*

Target group

Broadly speaking, target group for the project are all persons over 65 that may need the formal home care services or care provided by informal caregivers but the primary target are older people receiving the formal home care services as well as their informal caregivers.

Problem the project addresses

Compared with the rest of Serbia, social protection services are better developed in Belgrade. Despite this, the existing services are still not sufficient for the needs. As the existing projections suggest that the need will grow, so the capacities of social protection services need to grow. Therefore, this project aims to increase the capacity of the social protection system to provide training for gerontocarers, as well as to increase the capacity of informal caregivers.

Objectives of the project

- Through accrediting the training programme for gerontocarers the project will contribute to increased accessibility of the service and the increased number of gerontocarers, which will improve home care services as well as the quality of life of older people and their families.
- Training programme for informal caregivers will be established which will contribute to improving their skills, reducing their stress and injury risk (as well as risk of injuries among the older people receiving care) and the risk of elder abuse perpetrated by informal caregivers. The implementation of training will also include establishing self-help groups for informal caregivers.

Main activities

- Creating accredited training curriculum for gerontocarers
- Collecting necessary materials, synthesizing them into a curriculum delivered to the Republic Institute for Social Protection for accreditation
- Creating training curriculum for informal caregivers
- Identifying and analysing necessary materials and creation of the curriculum
- Organising training for informal caregivers
- Selection of informal caregivers and organising training based on the curriculum.

The activities are in line with the priorities of the Social Protection system in Serbia and the Strategy for Development of Social Protection with its focus on non-institutional services and support for living in one's preferred, natural environment. Providing care at home to older beneficiaries supports them in their daily activities and enables them to function independently. However, such services are not sufficiently available in relation to the existing need, as confirmed by long waiting lists. This is in part due to the insufficient numbers of certified gerontocarers who received accredited training.

On the other hand, a lot of research shows that informal carers frequently do not understand the needs of older people, do not understand their problems, and as a result end up not meeting their needs, even neglecting or abusing them inadvertently.

Creating accredited curriculum for training of gerontocarers will contribute to the increased number of gerontocarers at the disposal of older people in need of this service. At the same time, creating training curriculum for informal caregivers will improve the capacities of informal caregivers, increase their capacity to understand the needs and provide better care to older people.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The curriculum for training of gerontocarers was created and submitted for accreditation to the Institute for Social Protection. The curriculum for training of informal caregivers was created with a view of improving the skills of caregivers, reducing their stress and burnout, reducing the risks of injuries on both sides and the risk of elder abuse. Both activities have gone as planned and have performed as intended.

The biggest challenge related to the project was the analysis and systematisation of the relevant literature. Scientific and expert materials in Serbian language are rather scarce but the literature in other languages is abundant. Therefore, it was challenging to go through all the available information and materials, rank them according to their relevance and classify the most significant element as to ensure they are included in the final versions of the two curricula.

Recommendations

Recommendation for other civil society organisations is to always, before starting with project implementation, do a thorough analysis of the needs in the target community. If the project that they are planning is not relevant in the chosen community, if its objectives do not resonate with its needs, it is better to keep adjusting the project as to meet the realistic need before starting the implementation.

Since the need for non-institutional services is higher than the capacity of existing services everywhere in Serbia, we would encourage organisations to create projects based on our example and to contact us for advice if needed. Creating a curriculum for training frequently can be good basis for some future project. Well performed needs assessment is key – done well it ensures the rest of the project is based on solid ground.

Systematic approach is important – we learned this through analysis of the available literature and materials but it was confirmed through all other activities as well.

Focus on the project goals and significance – motivation is important, especially at times when the workload seems insurmountable. Having the needs of the target group in focus at all times helps.

LUZNICE HANDCRAFTS ZEC

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: „Let us be visible”*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Babusnica municipality*
- *Time period: 1 November 2017 – 31 August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Babusnica is classified as one of the deprived municipalities with population at a very low standard of living and high poverty rate. The infrastructure is very underdeveloped so villages are difficult to reach and during winter their population is completely isolated. 90% of the population is over the age of 75 and almost one in three households are a single older person living on their own. The local administration and social welfare institutions can not meet all the needs for social protection services and they are not present in the remote areas. Luznicke rukotvorine “ZEC” is licensed for provision of home-based services and is in direct contact with many older people on the daily basis.*
- *Total project budget: 588,800 RSD (4,979 Euro)*

Target group

- Older women living in rural areas near the national border, living in difficult conditions: derelict houses, bad health, inadequate access to healthcare, socially excluded, living alone and in remote locations.
- Primary school students.

Problem the project addresses

Older people tend to isolate themselves, through thinking they are useless and unimportant to their family and community. The society is not kind to them, especially older women, so they withdraw and tend to stay indoors, living monotonous lives reasoning that their time has passed. Older women, however, have a lot of knowledge and skills, they have preserved the customs and tradition for decades and now they do not have anyone to pass them on to. At the same time younger people are unaware of the problems older people face and do not have sufficient knowledge about the customs and tradition of the part of the country they live in.

Objectives of the project

Addressing the exclusion of older people from the society.

Making older women more socialised, more active, recognised for their social contribution, empowered and visible through:

- Active participation in events in the community
- Socialisation with their peers
- Sharing their experiences with younger people
- Assisting older people in rural areas
- Having organised visits by medical doctors
- Have necessary food and medication delivered by volunteers



Main activities

Assessing the need in the field and mapping 30 older women. Four workshops in primary schools in Babusnica were organised to familiarise students with the problems older people face. Workshops with older women were combined with sessions of manufacturing decorative items and exchanging recipes, lore and tradition. Exhibitions of handcrafted items were organised, as well as meetings with local stakeholders, visits of older women from Babusnica to older women in rural areas. A cookbook of traditional recipes was also created and printed. The regional and local media covered many of the activities and the selection of activities was done in line with realistic needs and the possibility of connecting people across distances as well as generations. Increased visibility of older women and the challenges they face was one of the priorities.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The biggest challenge was having the older people under one roof, considering the beneficiaries of the project were from remote parts of the municipality – up to 30 kilometres away from the urban area. Despite this, some 40 women were well motivated and participated in social events, workshops and the collection of recipes for the cookbook.

Additionally, 80 younger persons participated in the project, its workshops, as well as the collection of recipes and volunteering for visits to elderly households. These younger people now have a different perception of older people, provide support to those who need it and are motivated to be part of the activities in the field. Three young girls learned to weave through these intergenerational workshops and they have started their own website to promote their handcrafted items. More than 60 students attended the lectures on elder abuse and actively discussed this issue.



We have noticed that many older people rejected to participate in workshops by saying that they do not have any valuable knowledge and that are therefore ashamed, which suggested to us that organising more social events without a particular topic is an effective way to make them leave their homes.

Such events were very successful, with preparation and sharing of traditional meals, discussions about recipes and weaving patterns as well as singing traditional songs.

Recommendations

- Constant direct contact with older people, gaining their trust and designing activities based on their stated needs.
- Support to older people will be more comprehensive if it is based on already established multisectoral cooperation
- Young people will be interested to participate if they are familiarised with the problems of older people living alone in remote areas without shops or pharmacies. Activating younger people through intergenerational workshops and visits to elderly households and inviting them to participate in volunteering activities that support older people is effective

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Older age as a challenge"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Sumadija region, municipalities Kragujevac, Topola, Batocina, Knic*
- *Time period: 1 November 2017 – 31 August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Sumadija region has 17% of all the over 65 population in Serbia. Older age should be seen as a challenge to be conquered. The project included older people from urban areas living alone and with some kind of disability, who are refugees or internally displaced people as well as older people from rural areas living isolated and at risk of poverty. The intersectoral dialogue in the four municipalities was improved through the project and older people were educated on the importance of better social inclusion in their communities.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

Persons over the age of 65 in Sumadija region. The shared problems of this population include social and economic insecurity, loneliness, insufficient volume and quality of healthcare, social welfare and transport services (especially in rural areas) as well as insufficient inclusion of older people in decision-making processes, especially on topics of importance for them.

Problem the project addresses

Prejudice about older people in Sumadija are a burden from the past that should be faced and excised. The topics in relation to social inclusion of older people we focused on:

- Strengthening intersectoral dialogue in the four Sumadija municipalities and including all stakeholders working with and for older people
- Developing educational contents for older people focused on the importance of better social inclusion of older people in their communities
- Raising public awareness on the stereotypes of older people and how to abandon them, through campaigns, printed materials and media guest spots.

Objectives of the project

Goal: Increasing the awareness of people and community on the need to improve and spread the positive attitude towards older people

Specific Objective 1: Improving and protecting all human rights and fundamental freedoms of older people

Specific Objective 2: Supporting inclusion of older people in the development of societal support



Main activities

Educational workshops: 20 workshops across four municipalities. Older people were educated on the importance of better participation in decision-making on the issues that affect their quality of life. Focus groups were used to help older people define the problems in their communities: bad economic status, insufficient access to healthcare and social welfare services, very low participation of older people in cultural life of their communities, loneliness and social isolation. Intergenerational cooperation is very low due to it being absent as a topic from schools and the media.

Panel discussions were used to strengthen intersectoral dialogue and exchange of experience. It was agreed that problems of older people across the four municipalities are similar and that they can only be solved through interdisciplinary approach.

A campaign aimed to raise the public awareness about the importance of spreading positive attitude towards older people: 100 posters and 800 flyers were distributed across four municipalities, alongside four television guest spots at regional Kragujevac TV station.

Final conference of the project was organised for representatives of all four municipalities and served to summarise the activities and reiterate how important is to have intersectoral cooperation between institutions and organisations working with and for older people.



Outcomes and the lessons learned

The project achievements include:

- Strengthened intersectoral dialogue in every of the four municipalities
- Established dialogue of all stakeholders working with and for older people in the four municipalities
- Increased interest of older people for educational workshops – continuing after the project ended
- Promoted idea about forming a network of civil society organisations in Sumadija region, focused on advocacy for better quality of life of older people

Bigger participation of urban older people would have made the project even better.

The challenges included:

- Contacts between municipalities are rare which was overcome by scheduling working meetings between them
- Absence of local media in these municipalities, which was overcome by focusing on the regional Kragujevac TV station

Recommendations

- Working in several neighbouring municipalities makes a lot of sense as the problems of older people there tend to be similar
- Strengthening intersectoral dialogue contributes to community development so it is valuable to support this dialogue as much as possible
- In smaller municipalities civil society organisations are underdeveloped or non-existent. Project such as this one contribute to development of civil society and increase the activism among the project's target group
- The project demonstrated that development of volunteering through self-help groups for older people yields very good results in both rural and urban areas.

ISP EVERGREEN

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Social Inclusion of Older People – ISP Evergreen*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Belgrade*
- *Time period: 1. November 2017 – 31 October 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: The project is focused on creating the ambient for increased social inclusion of older people. The initiative was started by the pensioners who used to work in the Institute for Social Policy (now closed due to transition). The operational manager of the project is the Network of Social Researchers “ISP-Evergreen”. The project was implemented in partnership with the Republic Institute for Social protection, with the Institute providing the venue for the activities of the ISP Evergreen club.*
- *Total project budget: 5000 Euro*

Target group

The target group for the project includes social researchers classified in three categories: veterans (pensioners) – who used to work in social protection, seniors – currently active in institutions for social protection, and juniors – interns and students of social sciences

Problem the project addresses

The main problem is marginalisation of older people entering retirement and the risk of social exclusion this carries. The club is open and aims to connect as many persons from the target group as possible in order to have them self-organise the programme activities. The project involves interactivity and active participation of Club members and the activities are developed in line with the needs and contributions of the participants. Cooperation with professional associations was also pursued.



Objectives of the project

The main goal of the project is to gather older, retired social researchers for socialisation and exchange of experiences with younger colleagues so they will, based on principles of self-help and self-organisation, engage their potential to create initiatives, suggestions and volunteer contribution to improve support for older people in Belgrade.

Specific objectives of the project:

- Periodic meetings based on shared interests, to socialise and exchange information and experiences
- Self-organisation and implementation of club activities based on affinities and self-organisation principles, intergenerational exchange and volunteer contributions
- Volunteering in social protection clubs of the Gerontological Centre Belgrade

Main activities

The central activity of the project is organisation of regular intergenerational social events in the ISP Evergreen Club with three programme segments (Time Machine, Current Issues and Venturi) based on the affinities of Club members – veterans, seniors and juniors.

A website was created to present the activities of the club: www.mrezaisp.org/ISPevergrin

Activities also included participation in events and activities where potential and contribution of older people as well as active ageing are promoted. A panel discussion was organised on the International Day

of Older Persons with “socialisation” being the topic discussed by gerontologists, sociologists, politicologists and anthropologists along with the presentations of examples of socialisation of older people: veteran journalists’ events, the Red Cross of Serbia book club for older people, Olympiad of the Third Age and ISP Evergreen.



These activities are interconnected and promote active ageing. They are based on shared affinities of social research professionals, they promote socially relevant topics via the website and social networks underlining the potentials of all generations in the chosen area and they support and encourage social participation and volunteer contributions of veterans.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Key achievement is the regular rhythm of intergenerational social gatherings and their structured programme. The most important outcome is the positive effects of intergenerational socialisation and activating potential of older people in the Time Machine programme, as well as in the participation in social events and public events promoting active ageing.

An excellent result is the high participation of juniors (40%) and a good quality of intergenerational exchange between veterans and juniors. In the words of one younger participant:

“I am privileged to socialise in the Club with researchers and practitioners of all generations who, in a very pleasant atmosphere, exchange practical experience accumulated through years of work, as well as new information related to social sciences. As a representative of younger generation, I am happy that eminent experts decided to sit down with students and young professionals and discuss the results of efforts targeted at social problems as well as give us advice about the challenges we face. They also give us opportunities to discuss all these issues with them and therefore strengthen our professional identity through sharing the new knowledge we get through studying or work, as well as the professional dilemmas we face.”

Bojana Dimitrijević, Doctor of Political Sciences

More could have been done in participation and volunteer activities of veterans: it is important to actively create opportunities for participation and volunteering of older people.

Recommendations

For projects of this type shared affinity is key as it is basis for socialising and creating opportunities for social participation. In our case we share professional identity related to social research. However, this is also true for other professions and other social groupings. Affinities may be various: shared hobbies or sharing the same geographical area of origin.

Key lessons from one year of implementation are about sustainability: 1. It is important to have continuing presence of the key activist persons in the club; 2. Their dedication and volunteer contribution is the key condition for development of activities; 3. Innovation in selection of topics and participants in discussions and socialisation is important to attract participants and ensure continued activities. 4. Logistical support, especially provision of a venue by an institution is very helpful.

CLUSTER FOR REVITALISATION OF OLD CRAFTS RE: CRAFTS

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Bank of Motifs*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Savski venac, Belgrade*
- *Time period: 1 November 2017 – 31 August 2018*
- *Total project budget: 4,496.94 Euro*

Target group

Older people over the age of 65, particularly the ones who have completed the Information Literacy Course that was implemented as part of an earlier project. It was the intention from the start to ensure older people with a certain level of IT literacy are offered creative activities that build on it.



Problem the project addresses

Social inclusion of older women improves their physical and mental wellbeing through reducing their loneliness and risk of depression. Creative work in workshops is also important for intergenerational solidarity – it strengthens the family ties through knowledge transfer between generations. This project also supported lifelong learning and demonstrated the importance of informal education for every individual. Creative work in this project contributed to fighting discrimination, prejudice and stereotypes of older people and older women in particular.

Objectives of the project

Increasing the quality of life of older people on Savski venac municipality through gaining new skills and knowledge. The project included three kinds of workshops:

Digital camera handling/ mobile phone photography

Handcrafts workshops (weaving, knitting, embroidery)

Social networks workshops (posting photos of the created items on the social profiles of the Bank of Motifs group) as well as the www.kreativnalab.rs website established through a previous project.

Main activities

Workshops with older people to create a collection of different textile patterns (knitting, weaving, embroidery...) in cooperation with professional designers.

Workshops with older people on digital photography.

Taking digital photos of the created patterns and, with the support of the workshop coordinator, preparing these pictures for the final exhibition of the project.

Workshops with older people on using social networks to post photos of the created patterns (Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram...)

A poll on the living conditions of older people to collect information that will be disseminated via press conference.

Media guest spots

Final exhibition of the items created at the workshops to coincide with the European Heritage Days.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

- Demonstrating the significance of textile handcrafts in the process of social inclusion of older people
- Merging different decorative items created through workshops and then photographing them was a creative process with different stages and rewarding for many involved individuals
- However, support of municipal administration would have been helpful and for future similar projects it would be highly recommended to establish an agreement about it in advance
- This was also the biggest challenge in the implementation – the need to work around the obstacles that were created by assuming support that in the end was not there.

Recommendations

Main recommendation is to establish firm ties with pensioner associations as well as the municipal administration in advance as these are important contributing factors in implementation of the project. Future projects of this kind should also take into consideration that previous knowledge and skills of the participants are very important in terms of the quality of the work that can be done, as well as that continued work with the same group of participants is what produces good results in the end.



ASSOCIATION DADDY

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Heart for the grandchildren*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Belgrade municipalities Stari grad, Vracar, Savski venac, Palilula and Zvezdara*
- *Time period: 1. November 2017 – 31 August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: The project included psychosocial and legal support to grandparents who due to their children being undergoing divorce or having divorced do not have sufficient contacts or sufficient quality of contacts with their grandchildren.*
- *Total project budget: 4,995.75 Euro*

Target group

The target group are the parents of divorced couples, in their primary roles of grandmothers and grandfathers who are usually neglected during the divorce process. This target group was selected as divorce does not only affect the divorcees but also the whole extended family. Also, parents are still an important factor in the lives of many couples going through divorce (financial assistance, sharing the household, assistance with providing care to their children).

Problem the project addresses

The project is designed to address the widest possible scope of problems grandparents face that are result of the divorce of their children and new circumstances. The focus was on rebuilding or maintaining the relationship with the grandchildren regardless of other circumstances related to the divorce.



Udruženje građana Tata je neprofitna nevladina organizacija koja deluje u oblastima:

- ostvarivanja, razvoja, zagovaranja, promocije i zaštite: modernog demokratskog društva, ljudskih i građanskih prava i sloboda;
- specifičnih potreba i prava roditelja u jednoroditeljskim porodicama i njihove dece;
- specifičnih potreba i prava roditelja koji pripadaju posebno ranjivim društvenim grupama;
- pozitivnog maskulinizma i očinstva;
- rodne i roditeljske ravnopravnosti;
- prava deteta;
- specifičnih potreba i prava muškaraca i očeva kao primarne ciljne grupe;
- specifičnih potreba i prava razvedenih građana, njihove dece i porodice.

UG Tata je osnovano 14. februara 2012. godine u Beogradu.

TATA
Onaj koji golica stopala,
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UG TATA
Beograd – Stari grad
ul. Kapetan Mišina br. 5a
060/ 674 82 82
www.tata.rs

Od decembra 2017. godine, aktivnosti programa Srce za unuke realizuju se u okviru regionalnog projekta **Inicijativa za socijalno uključivanje starijih osoba**, koji se istovremeno realizuje u pet država regiona uz finansijsku podršku Evropske unije i Austrijske razvojne agencije ADA. Tehničku podršku koordinaciji projekta pruža Austrijski Crveni krst, a projektom koordinira Crveni krst Srbije.

Besplatna podrška korisnicima će se obezbeđivati do 30. juna 2018. godine, a o daljim modalitetima podrške u okviru programa Srce za unuke, UG Tata će blagovremeno obavestiti javnost.



PROGRAM PODRŠKE BAKAMA I DEKAMA

koji zbog razvoda ili posledica razvoda svoje dece ne ostvaruju ili ostvaruju nedovoljno kvalitetne kontakte sa unucima

The Project is funded by the European Union

AUSTRIAN DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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www.srecezaunuke.com

www.srecezaunuke.com

Objectives of the project

Identifying concrete problems in the family relations and the most efficient way to solve them. Considering the project focused on older persons, radical behaviour change was not likely to happen quickly, so the work focused on smaller details and changes in behaviour that bring visible results.

Main activities

The project was implemented through individual meetings where concrete individual problems were discussed, predominantly those arising from divorce of the children or their relocation to another country. Group discussions were a welcome exchange of experience showing to participants that their problem is usually not unique, that they are not the only person to make a particular mistake, or that they have done well considering the circumstances. This improved the outlook of most participants, giving them hope for a better development of their situation in the future.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The most frequent problems identified:

- Not accepting their children's choices
- Insisting on outdated models of socialising with their grandchildren
- Rejecting any responsibility for the relationships in the family that lead to this situation
- Objective issues: relocation, difficult medical conditions, death in the family

There were frequent comments on how often the grandchildren should be calling/ visiting, on who is supposed to call whom first. Some older people said they do not want to see their grandchildren if that means seeing one of their parents whom they dislike and some also commented that their grandchildren only visit them on pension day.

SRCE ZA UNUKE

Srce za unuke je program psihološko-socijalne i pravne podrške udruženja građana Tata **namenjen bakama i dekama** koji zbog razvoda ili posledica razvoda svoje dece ne ostvaruju ili ostvaruju nedovoljno kvalitetne kontakte sa unucima.

Program je nastao kao rezultat iskazanih potreba korisnika višegodišnjih aktivnosti udruženja građana Tata u obezbeđivanju podrške porodicama u razvodu.

UG Tata od svog osnivanja 2012. godine, pa do danas, kontaktiralo je oko 5.600 građana u vezi sa problemima uzrokovanim razvodom, od čega trećinu predstavljaju roditelji bivših supružnika.

Svi oni su ukazivali na poremećene odnose sa decom i unucima nakon razvoda uglavnom usled neadekvatnog pristupa informacijama o Zdravom razvodu i poželjnim porodičnim odnosima nakon njega, a sa druge strane da je institucionalni odgovor na ovu vrstu potreba još uvek nezadovoljavajući. Na žalost, sve ovo se odnosi i na njihovu decu, jer ni oni nisu dovoljno edukovani, niti adekvatno podržani i osnaženi nakon razvoda.

Tako se stvara začarni krug zamršenih porodičnih odnosa u kome svi trpe. Razvod je i dalje tabu tema u Srbiji, postoji manjak informacija i podrške službi koja bi olakšala prolazak kroz stresan period života svim članovima porodice.

Ovim Programom, po prvi put u regionu, se razvija efikasan model podrške u vezi sa pitanjima iz razvoda koji uključuje članove šire porodice.

Psihološko-socijalna podrška

Neka od pitanja koja su obuhvaćena psihološko-socijalnom podrškom u okviru ovog programa su:

Da li je u porodičnim odnosima uvek najbitniji početak?

- Kako ste prihvatili partnerski izbor svog deteta?
- Koliko je brak vaše dece uticao na promenu vašeg načina života?
- Koliko ste i na koji način uzeli učešće u odgajanju i pomaganju oko unuka?

Šta bi trebalo "vraćati unazad", a šta ne?

- Razdvojiti važne i manje važne događaje.
- Sa čime smo svoju decu opremili za svet odraslih?
- Razgovarati o roditeljskim modelima, šta koji nosi sa sobom i kako to utiče na one koje smo vaspitali i unuke u čijem vaspitanju učestvujemo.

Šta za nas znači "želim najbolje svom detetu" i da li je to zaista najbolje?

- Definisane stavova i postupaka koji podržavaju tu želju.
- Koliko smo bili deo bračnog života svoje dece?
- Kako i na koji način smo preneli model na odnos sa unucima?

Koliko i na koji način smo bili deo razvoda svoje dece?

- Šta smo mislili i govorili o razvodu dok se nije desio našoj deci?
- Šta smatramo podrškom, šta je pomoć i šta su "najbolje namere"?
- Koliko smo učestvovali i na koji način?

Kako danas izgledaju naši životi i odnosi posle svih događaja?

- Koliko je naše učešće danas u životu unuka?
- Šta želimo, a šta nam nedostaje?
- Odnosi sa bivšim partnerima naše dece, kakvi su danas?
- Kako dostići dobre odnose posle svega što se dogodilo?

Postoje li trajno narušeni odnosi?

- Kako je došlo do toga da sudreti sa decom i unucima prestanu?
- Šta možemo da uradimo ako kontakata nema uopšte?
- Koliko smo i šta spremni da uradimo u pokušaju da se nastala situacija popravi?

Svim zainteresovanim bakama i dekama do 30. juna 2018. godine, biće na raspolaganju sledeći besplatni oblici psihološko-socijalne i pravne podrške koji će se realizovati u Beogradu:

- **Predavanja na teme:**
Pravni i institucionalni okvir razvoda u Srbiji
Porodični odnosi nakon razvoda
Biti baka/deka – odnosi sa unucima

Datumi:
ponedeljak – 26. februar 2018. godine
ponedeljak – 26. mart 2018. godine
Mesto:
Svečana sala Gradske opštine Stari grad, Beograd, Makedonska 42

- **Grupne radionice psihološko-socijalne podrške**
- **Individualne sesije psihološko-socijalne podrške**
- **Individualna pravna podrška (u saradnji sa advokatima UG Tata)**

UG Tata poziva sve bake i deke koji zbog razvoda ili posledica razvoda svoje dece ne ostvaruju ili ostvaruju nedovoljno kvalitetne odnose sa unucima da uzmu učešće u aktivnostima ovog programa.
Kroz različite vidove individualne i grupne podrške trudićemo se da razumemo, olakšamo, ne osuđujemo, ali i pomognemo konkretnim predlozima rešenja.

*Za informacije o terminima grupnih radionica i individualne sesije, potrebno je kontaktirati UG Tata

Internet contacts with the children and grandchildren living abroad seem to be unsatisfactory for some of the participants and seeing them only during annual holidays when they come back to Serbia and want to spend time with other people as well is also frustrating. Finding a balance that will work for everyone is not easy but usually everyone agreed that shorter but more frequent talks and shorter visits with a better quality of interaction were the way to go. Also, making sure that the children are allowed to have their own lives without trying to influence it too much was highlighted as important.

The discussions were focused on concrete situations with a view of changing the established behaviour and identifying new models that can be acceptable for all sides.

The biggest challenge was inspiring the older people to keep working on themselves as for many it was an internalised „truth“ that their time has passed.

Recommendations

Longer work with people facing these issues is certain to be more beneficial. The participants of the project were all satisfied with both individual and group discussions they had, the exchange of experience and new knowledge they adopted. It is evident that older people are interested in having solutions for these issues but are hesitant about openly talking about it. It is only when there is a large problem with being alienated from part of the family that they feel motivated to act. It is recommendable to increase the pool of information from older people in similar circumstances as the bigger sample will provide better analysis of common problems and solutions.

ASSOCIATION OF ROMA BEASA „RUMUNKA“

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: “Club for Older Roma People”*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Municipality of Sombor, village Backi Monostor*
- *Time period: 1 November 2017 – 31 August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Roma people make for 15% of the population in the villages of north western Vojvodina province but less than 5% of them complete primary school due to economic reasons, their ethnicity, but also patriarchal upbringing and language barriers. Because of this their access to labour market is reduced and their life of poverty is passed on to the next generation in their family. Older Roma people are one of the most vulnerable groups since they have never officially been employed, have no social or pension insurance that would provide them with some stability in the older age. They often live on their own in derelict houses, separate from their children who also struggle for survival.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

Primary target group were 50 Roma and other older people living in elderly households who are physically, socially and culturally isolated, older persons recovering from surgery, older persons with chronic conditions as well as older persons needing home care services living in Roma settlement at the edge of the village.

Problem the project addresses

The older people in the project have next to no support in the older age due to never having been registered as employed and due to frequent changing of the location. They live in the Roma settlement and have medical records but they do not use preventive healthcare services due to traditional/ cultural reasons which leads them to self-isolation.

The project worked on socialising them and reducing their isolation through club activities for older Roma and other people. The club provided warm and welcoming atmosphere and workshops where older Roma women organised courses on knitting and embroidery, cooking contests of traditional dishes, as well as socialisation and socialising events with other civil society organisations.

In addition, where it was necessary, volunteers were visiting older people in their households to provide support with house cleaning, gardening, firewood preparation and other household duties.

Objectives of the project

To provide home care service and additional non-institutional services as means of improving the quality of life and inclusion of 50 Roma and persons over the age of 60, focused on single households in Backi Monostor and city of Sombor. To improve social contacts and communication between Roma and other population in order to ensure older Roma and representatives of marginalised groups taking more important roles and becoming more important in their community.

Main activities

- Collection of data on older people, visits and individual needs assessment
- Daily workshops in the Club (knitting, painting...)
- Monthly social events in the club including picnics and house-visits between older people
- Periodic medical examinations, social support, home based services
- Public event: public panel on “Promotion of services for older people in the community”
- Production and distribution of promotional materials for the Club

These activities aimed to improve the quality of life and to meet different needs of older people, primarily in reducing social isolation, promoting social inclusion and supporting older people in being active. The activities also strengthened the relationships in the community across ethnic and generational lines and has contributed to better quality of life for a marginalised group of older people while highlighting their problems to the relevant local institutions.

Outcomes and lessons learned

The older Roma people have become less isolated through structured social activities with their peers in the Club, working together, socialising, celebrating birthdays and other events... This improved their social inclusion and motivated them to be part of a group and address the issues that affect the whole group. The success of the project may be seen in the fact that more than the planned number of older people participated in the Club activities every day and the “special events” organised on different dates had even more interested participants.



Communication with the relevant authorities and stakeholders should be more emphasised as the target group of the project is vulnerable on many levels and increased social inclusion is merely a first step towards solving many of their problems on economic, social, health and other levels.

One of the biggest challenges is related to VAT exemption procedures: many vendors in the provincial parts of Serbia are unwilling to go through the procedure so procurement of goods for the project was more difficult than it should be.

Recommendations

Increasing social inclusion of older Roma people is more difficult due to their multiple vulnerabilities. Roma families on the average have a much lower quality of life than their other peers and older members of these families are proportionally less socially included and exposed to numerous risks. Therefore, general programmes for older people should be making conscious efforts to include older Roma in their activities, with full awareness of many specific social and cultural elements that make such efforts more complex. It is good to know that older Roma love to cook different traditional dishes and compete among themselves in cook-offs, as these are the activities that will motivate them to participate. Additionally, short-distance trips, without much walking are their favourite and they will feel inspired by them, talking at length for a long time about the memorable anecdotes from the trip.

MOVEMENT FOR THE THIRD AGE SERBIA

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Raising the Quality of Life of Old People in Serbia"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Territory of the whole Republic of Serbia*
- *Time period: November 2017 - August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Statistics show that Serbia is a country with one of the oldest populations in Europe and the world, since older people make up almost one third of the total population, with a large share of the poor and lonely older persons, without sufficient social support and with extremely insufficient presence in the public media. The research of the Faculty of Media in Belgrade from December 2015 shows that out of 15,000 published articles in Serbian media, only 3% of all are written by older people. In addition, in 90% of these texts about the problems of older persons speaks representatives of republican and local authorities, PIOs, analysts and others, and older people almost do not have the opportunity to highlight their own problems, their opinions and suggestions for improving their position.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000Euro*

Target group

The target group of the Project were all persons of the third age (older than 60), including persons with disabilities, regardless of their age.

Problem the project addresses

Improving the social status of older people in Serbia as well as their presence in the media (TV, radio, etc.); developing and improving sports and recreational life of the people of the third age; developing and improving mutual and social-humanitarian relations, based on the principles of assistance and self-help; encouraging intergenerational cooperation and strengthening gender equality.

Objectives of the project

The project was primarily focused on actively involving older people in social life through:

Organization of special sports-recreational, health and cultural activities in 14 regions of Serbia including all municipalities from these regions (literary meetings, painting workshops, etc.);

Organization of intergenerational meetings and competitions in the field of sport and culture;

Organizing educational lectures in the field of health, with topics and contents adjusted to the people of the third age, including medical examinations and advices;

Improving media attention for older people and their activities, by recording footage in ten Serbian regions, to be broadcast in the TV show "Third Age" of National Broadcasting Corporation, produced by the Movement of the Third age of Serbia as the Independent Producer .

Main activities

All activities within the Project were focused on the realization of the stated goals (sports and recreational competitions, health and educational lectures, cultural activities, improvement of media attention towards older people and activities, recording of special TV programs to be broadcast in TV show "Third Age"), with the ultimate goal to contribute to improving the quality of life of people of the third age.

The intention was to address some status issues of old people, to improve their participation in social life, thus contributing to improving their position in society and creating stronger social relations between generations.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The movement of the third era of Serbia is aware that the realization of its project can not significantly affect the change of the position of older people in Serbia, but that it can at least partially contribute, through the organization of sports-recreational, cultural and educational events, massive direct involvement of members of the third age in these activities.

Recommendations

The implementation of the Project has shown that even with relatively small funds the principal goal can be achieved. The experience of certain pensioners' organizations can serve as an example of good practice to the others and to push them to initiate similar actions aimed at improving the position of the oldest population. Such example is shown in the 39th "Third Age" show, broadcast on November 27, 2017, in which the public could get acquainted with the concrete results of the Grocka Municipality's help to the Municipal Association of Pensioners, through the adaptation of municipal facilities for pensioners' activities, the purchase of accompanying equipment, material assistance to the socially most vulnerable older people, etc., with the goal of showing through concrete examples how and how much the social-political community and Organization of pensioners take care about quality of life of the oldest people. A similar message was given in the 42nd "Third Age" show dated December 25, 2017, reporting on the Forum organized on the occasion of the International Day of the Older People, and talking about the challenges older people face when exercising their rights including the point of view of the Serbian Protector of Citizens. The Forum's organizer's intention was to find out in the direct dialogue with older people what the most frequent problems in realizing their rights and security mechanisms are, how they perceive their rights, how they access them, what are the obstacles to their realization and how to overcome these obstacles.

CHRISTIAN HUMANITARIAN ASSOCIATION BREAD OF LIFE

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Support to senior activism through development of entrepreneurship – Creative workshops of a Club for older people"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Belgrade, Vracar municipality*
- *Time period: November 2017 - August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Research shows that poverty and loneliness are among leading issues for older people in Serbia. Association Bread of Life implements different activities for older people through its project and this includes activities in the Daily Care Club for older people. These activities include participation in self-help groups that are involved in cultural, creative, recreational and educational workshops. Through these activities older people also make contacts and organise joint activities with other clubs and associations in Belgrade and other cities.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000Euro*

Target group

Older women, mostly those with lower pensions, members of the Daily Care Club run by Bread of Life

Problem the project addresses

Older people gain new knowledge, skills and self-confidence and understand the importance of team work in the active ageing process. They are also encouraged to take more active participation in the life of the community.

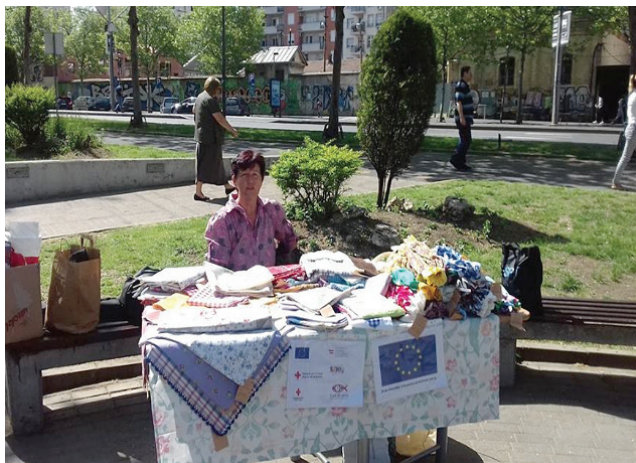


Objectives of the project

Overall goal of the project is to include seniors in the activities of creative workshops through adoption of knowledge and skills, tailoring and sewing and basics of design. The Club members are encouraged in creation of handmade items that can be sold. The sale of these items may create additional funds that can be used to improve the quality of life of seniors included in the work of Bread of Life clubs as well as seniors in the local community.

Main activities

At creative workshops participants discussed design of items and everybody took equal participation in planning, tailoring, sewing and finishing the decorative items. The participants were especially thrilled during the selling exhibition where they took active role in promoting and selling the items they had made.



Outcomes and the lessons learned

The older women participating in the project feel useful and capable of contributing to the development of the Daily Care Club for older people. They gained new knowledge, experiences, skills and techniques and refreshed their memories of the skills they used when they were younger. Some of the items made were manufactured using recycled materials: bags, aprons, plastic waste bags, and this was also used to promote recycling. Bags sold well especially because the project coincided

with the general stores in Belgrade starting to charge for disposable plastic bags.

The participants responded very well to the group activity – designing and creating the items through a group discussion and brainstorming.

The biggest challenge in the project was in the first phase when many of the stores we approached were suspicious of the VAT exemption procedure that they had no experience with.

Recommendations

- The capacity of older people to create and influence changes is underutilised and underrecognised, so organising different creative work to encourage them is recommended
- Exploring opportunities for creating and promoting sales of items made from recycled materials is recommended
- Older people may need continued encouragement to participate in all phases of the activity – from planning to final sales and promotion.

Microprojects summaries - Albania

In Albania, out of 19 applications, 12 projects were selected for support.

NGO HEALTH ACADEMY LABYRINTH

Title and information on the project:

- *Project title: "Building networks between older people and health services in Kukës region"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: The micro project was implemented by NGO Health Academy Labyrinth in Kukës Region in North East of Albania. Shkelqime Tobli and Dritan Bala were key persons in implementing the project.*
- *Time period: January - November 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Kukës region is mostly a mountainous and rural territory. It has a population of 85,000 inhabitants and one of the highest rates of poverty and emigration in Albania. The initiative was focused on 5 villages of the region: Shishtavec, Novosej, Tërthore, Shtiqën and Has.*
- *Total project budget: 4,800 Euro*

Target group:

Older people in villages are the main target group. Target groups were chosen based on the vulnerability of older people living in remote rural areas. Initiative targeted as well nurses in health centres in rural areas because they could act as agents of linking communities with health services. Young people were involved as well in the project to introduce new models of voluntarism and community contribution.

Problem the project addresses

Recently in Albania a newly approved package of services of primary health care included for the first time specific care for older people. Nonetheless, health professionals are not very well aware about it and no trainings have been organized so far to support its implementation. The situation is especially problematic in districts outside the capital Tirana.



The micro project in Kukës Region is using this package of services as bases for its trainings and other activities.

Objectives of the project

The micro project aims at promoting social and health care for older people, by improving knowledge and skills among community nurses, and enhancing awareness among youth about ageing, promoting their community engagement.

Main activities

NGO Health Academy Labyrinth has been working since the beginning of 2018 on a number of activities to reach its objective. First, they involved all potential local stakeholders, raising their awareness on ageing issues (director of social wellbeing in Kukës Municipality, Directors of health insurance and social services, directors of Health centres and people from Red Cross Local Branch). The initiative was

welcomed and supported by Kukes Mayer. Many contacts were organized in selected villages where many adults and youngsters had migrated and left behind couples of older people or lonely ones. The highest percentage of older people was identified in Terthore village, with 750 older people from 4000 total inhabitants, or in Shishtavec where there were 19 lonely older people. High school of Kukes was approached and in a training session with young volunteers, they were presented with facts about ageing challenges in Albania while being motivated to be the first generation of youngsters supporting older people in the region. Following the training, a number of youngsters have started meetings at their rural communities, looking for older people in need of assistance, identifying their specific concerns and reporting to the health centres about it. A training session for 25 nurses was provided by experienced public health professionals and was focused on technical details of the new package of services for older people. To encourage most active older people in networking with more vulnerable ones, social events were organized, with games songs and poetry. Representatives from Municipality have participated.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The full data about utilization of services and other details will be available next year. Comments by older people involved or contacted show also that these efforts and the engagement from all social actors in the area, are improving the trust in health services there. Logistics are always a challenge when working with remote rural areas, but there is the opportunity of easy involvement of health personnel which is not as busy as in urban areas.

Recommendations

There might be many new services in health sector targeting older people but they remain mostly in paper, because personnel are untrained and unmotivated. With small initiatives like this their efficiency can be increased.

It helps to engage other community groups into the process, besides older people. They bring energy and enthusiasm to the process. Although most young people don't get involved intensively, there are many among them who enjoy the new information and experiences and see this field of social work as an interesting area of their own personal development.

It is always important to involve the local governments; they give more sustainability to the initiative and even if they don't have extra money to give, they are interested to see initiatives from civil society in their territory.



SANUS-AMBULATORY NURSING

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: “For a good old age - supporting the carers and increasing autonomy of older people “*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: The micro project was carried out by ‘SANUS-ambulatory nursing’ in Municipality 5 of Tirana City. Skender Dule, Fabiola Sina and Ani Ormeni were coordinators and trainers in this project.*
- *Time period: December 2017- July 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Sanus has some experience in promoting the profession of home carers and advocating for home services. Albania doesn’t have a long tradition in the organization of home care and only recently training programs are being introduced in the field. Most of the burden of home care for the frail and sick older people is taken by families or unpaid carers.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

Older people with special needs and their, mostly older, informal carers, as well as health personnel of the local health centre in one Tirana quarter.

Problem the project addresses

The widespread problem of home-based caregivers who work alone to support the sick or immobile older people without support and without training.

Objectives of the project

Identifying the needs of the frail older people and their families in all their complexity, preparing brochures with instructions based on the needs, training informal carers and facilitating the connection between them and doctors or nurses of primary health care. In this manner the initiative have been targeting older people with special needs and their carers alike, developing a model for home care which, with little support can be extended in other communities in the country.



Main activities

This micro project was among the first ones supported by TASIOP to start activities in the field. Since December 2017 meetings with doctors and nurses of local health centre were organized, their support was assured, and information about community was collected.

During January 2018, there was carried out a limited scale screening of about 300 older people with special needs and their families using a detailed check list adopted by similar German models. The instrument used during the home visits included items about health and social situation of the older people in need for care, and their informal carers. The data gathered were later discussed in a workshop with participation of health professionals, and women carers.

Based on the detailed knowledge of the most common health, social and environmental challenges faced by older people, and after reviewing international best practices in the field, a brochure with

practical guides and instructions was prepared, designed and published. The brochure is in Albanian and it is titled 'Golden Autumn: practical home care for older people'. It can be found and downloaded online at mosha-network.org (<http://mosha-network.org/2018/07/10/perkujdesje-praktike-per-te-moshuar-ne-shtepi-vjeshta-e-arte/>)

This tool was distributed through community channels to families and it was used for organizing two training sessions targeting all interested informal carers in that community, in collaboration with health centre No. 5 in Tirana.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The interest for the training was very high and SANUS is planning to provide more sessions after the micro project is closed, not only to informal family carers, but also to unemployed women or men who want to work for a salary as carers for older people but have no previous experience.

Up to now a database for older people needing care is created, their needs are better known by public health and social services in that area, 75 carers are trained and coordination among families of older people and health centre staff has been improved. In the same time it is right to emphasise that as an added value, the resilience and social capital in the community is strengthened.



Recommendations

It is important to acknowledge the widespread problem of home care and the suffering of many family members without much support from society. This is especially true in low resource settings and areas with low tradition of organized care for older people.

Tools and training can serve as a way to support carers and the older people with special needs improve their quality of life.

Engagement of health services can reorient their attention and resources toward the home care and can provide additional support to families.

Setting up networks of carers can maximize the effects of training, and provide a source of continued support and motivation for families of older people. It helps building stronger and more resilient communities as well.

THE LEAGUE OF JOURNALISTS OF HEALTH

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: “Media and third age: Improving the skills for better communication”*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Tirana. The League of Journalists of Health. Key persons Sonila Mlloja and Alma Demiraj*
- *Time period: January – July 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: The project operated in Tirana involving journalists of national and local media as well as leaders of civic organizations at national and local level*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

Two distinct target groups are identified in the project. The first is journalists, especially young reporters covering health and social affairs. The second is made of activists of civil society and leaders of pensioners’ organizations.

Problem the project addresses

There are two main problems addressed by the project; the first is related to the fact that young journalists lack information and experience in dealing with issues concerning ageing and third age. Events are not correctly covered; the image of older people is continuously pictured as passive, vulnerable and impotent. Many times the size of the problem in the Albanian society is not grasped well. On the other hand leaders of civil society organizations representing older people don’t understand well the role of the media, its interests, and its professional tactics. They are inclined to blame media for lack of coverage of events, believing that only content and cause is enough to always assure TV prime time coverage.



Objectives of the project

The project aims to improve the media coverage or addressing of issues related to ageing and older people by building collaboration between journalists and older people associations and training of both target groups.

Main activities

Main activities of the project include two training sessions: one training (February) was organized with journalists who work on health and social news in collaboration of Association of Geriatrics and Gerontology and General Union of Pensioners of Albania. It served to improve the insight of journalists on ageing problems in Albania, share with them data on health and social problems, as well as improve their approach when covering older people and their issues in media. The other training (March) was provided by experienced journalists to older people activists representing associations of pensioners and other related groups. It served to help older people to know and better access media by knowing its mechanisms and interests.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

As it was expected, the activities served to intensify the interaction of older people organizations with media professionals, improve the efficacy of communicating new facts and give older people activists more initiative when working with the media. Indeed, in the months following the trainings, by continuing to coach and facilitate the collaboration among journalists and older people groups, this micro project has triggered a large number (around 15: 9 TVs and 6 newspapers) of very professional and positive media coverage on ageing issues in Albania.

Recommendations

When working with media activists should keep in mind that journalists and reporters need news which could attract the attention of the public. The facts should be new and possibly dramatic. They have to be prepared to talk to the media. One full report, a new complex initiative or a long story should be squeezed into 2-4 messages which could be communicated in few minutes.

It is better to treat journalists as partners and honest professionals instead of criticising them and focusing all the time on flaws of the media industry.

Different media have different interests and not always a bad news is good news. It helps to monitor which media is covering what story, so to know the right moment and the right media for your story. There are not only bad stories about older people. There are many good positive initiatives going on in the society. They need to be adapted into interesting stories for media to cover them.

<https://youtu.be/bk96lpmu7b8>

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: “Setting up self-help groups among older people in Rrogozhina”*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Tirana. Albanian Institute of health and Social development*
- *Time period: January – August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Rrogozhina is a town in the district of Kavaja, some 70 km south of Tirana. After the fall of past regime there hasn’t been any form of community or civic organization of older people. One doctor from the implementing agency had been working there in the past and enjoyed respect by local older people. There was good knowledge and understanding of problems and sensitivities about older people life and problems there. This served as a base to design and start an organized initiative in the town*
- *Total project budget: 4,750 Euro*

Target groups

Two different main groups were targeted by the project: Most active older people in Rrogozhina and most isolated ones.

Problem the project addresses

Lack of informal community ties among many older people in a community where there are not public or state sponsored mechanisms to address isolation, loneliness, lack of mobility and poverty of many older people, and where family support is on decrease because of emigration.



Objectives of the project

The objective of the micro project was to enhance participation of older people in community and promote models of mutual assistance and voluntarism.

Main activities

A series of consultations were organized in Rrogozhina with community representatives and heads of health centres, serving to identify potential active older people in the area and to discuss the strategy of contacting and involving them. Other issues discussed during these consultations were the amount and format of information existing at Rrogozhina county office about lonely or vulnerable older people, and recourses or services they have at municipality level in this field. Volunteers of implementing NGO organized meetings with older people at health centres of Rrogozhina and invited them in a workshop. During the workshop the discussions revolved around best practices related to establishing self-help groups, volunteering and civil society activities. 35 persons participated in that activity. Some of them were older people living alone and having their children emigrated abroad. 5 self-help groups were set up, each with a membership of 6-7 persons. A plan of action was prepared, consisting of periodical meetings, themes to be discussed, spreading the network in neighbourhoods and organizing home visits or supporting members of the groups when necessary. Gradually the number of older people involved reached more than 75. Older people in the self-help groups in addition to meeting regularly for a chat, a coffee or a lunch, are making frequent phone calls to each other. Some groups’ leaders have been

engaged in communicating with municipal administration and the health centre, to better understand the bureaucracy of services and afterward have spread the information to other older peoples in the groups.

In cases when members of the groups have been feeling unwell and needed assistance, they and their family members received support or assistance from the group's network.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Comments from workshops demonstrate that older people in Rogozhina have been seeing the isolation, and lack of the community feeling, as a major threat to their life quality. The sense of togetherness has been declining dramatically during last 20 years, and coupled with emigration have created a sense of depression in the community. The initiative has been greeted by all participants as an organized way to build network and the sense of friendship and security among older people. More can be done to reverse the stigma about voluntarism created after the fall of communism.



Recommendations

To motivate participation and activism, award with certificates other forms, the most active members of the groups. In addition, use extended meetings of all groups to share the best experience and the most successful stories among them.

The initial home visits have gradually not been considered a major approach in the micro project because older people themselves didn't agree on their efficacy or practicality. They preferred meetings at the coffee shops, common lunches at cheap restaurants and phone calls to keep social ties and mutual support, especially the emotional one.

It is important to involve local health personnel, so they know about the groups and ask for their assistance when it is needed to reach most vulnerable and isolated members. Channels of communications with health professionals and access to health care will be improved.

ASSOCIATION OF PARAPLEGICS AND TETRAPLEGICS OF DURRES

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Integration and support for paraplegics of all ages"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Dures. Association of Paraplegics and Tetraplegics of Durres, Key person Adivije Hoxha.*
- *Time period: December 2017- June 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Durres is a city around 50 km from Tirana with a dense population. The implementing agency is a branch of Albanian of Association of Paraplegics and Tetraplegics. Its leader is a very active woman who is paraplegic herself.*
- *Total project budget: 2,590 Euro*

Target group

Older paraplegics and their families

Problem the project addresses

Despite the improved legislation, paraplegics remain one of the most vulnerable communities in Albanian society. They suffer physical and emotional isolation because of poor and inappropriate infrastructure and lack of services. Their families often suffer together with them. Most of them want to escape from their depressed isolation and get involved into a healthier life. Many have energy and ideas for integration and community participation and just need some support to realize that.

Objectives of the project

Objective of the micro project was integration and socialization of older paraplegics (and some tetraplegics) in Dures and support for their family carers.

Main activities

A group of 72 persons with disabilities and their helping caregivers (approximately 200 persons in total) were targeted by the initiative. They have been trained on information technology and healthy life style. In addition in a number of cultural activities (visits to theatre, exercises at seaside, celebrating together summer day, poetry, literary and musical events etc) persons with disabilities and members of their families were socialized and integrated to cultural life. During 6 months 5 social events and many home visits were organized. The activities were selected based on needs expressed by older people with disabilities themselves, as the most effective approaches against isolation.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The implementing NGO has been providing more sustainability to the activities by networking with many local partners and involving groups of all ages in the process (businesses, pensioner associations, students, local artists etc.).

The effects of the intervention seem to be tangible, with older people with disabilities of Durres participating and expressing their enthusiasm for the activities. On



the other hand the initiative has been greeted by local partners as a good model to be replicated in other areas. The initiative could have included more advocacy elements.

Recommendations

Adapt social events to include all ages of paraplegics and make them feel part of the society.

Include into the activities those organized in nature, which can be seen by other citizens. This would help to raise awareness in the larger population about the vulnerable groups and improve solidarity.

Take into account during organization of events, the fact that people in wheelchairs can not have physical access to all areas. This is especially true in cities and societies with poor recourses and tradition in this field.

The social events for paraplegics and their families should be better used for advocacy as well. It can help potentiate the outcomes of the project and may influence for a city more friendly for older people with special needs.



CULTURAL ASSOCIATION MOTHER THERESA

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Integrating older people in an artistic community of all generations"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Bregu I Lumit area north of Tirana. Cultural Association Mother Theresa. Key person Tonin Ndrejaj*
- *Time period: December 2017- January 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: The newly formed informal areas in north of Tirana are composed mostly by poor families from mountainous north regions which were located there after the collapse of the regime in 1990. Bregu I Lumit is one of these areas and although it is very close to Tirana has many economic and social problems. Older people are one of the groups who feel the rapid disintegration of old traditional communities and families and suffer lack of support and social networks they had in original villages they left to immigrate into these new territories. Cultural Association Mother Theresa, is a new organization which tries to promote artistic life (traditional songs and dances) especially among deprived communities.*
- *Total project budget: 2,200 Euro*

Target groups

Older people and their families in the Bregu I Lumit area north of Tirana. Young people with some singing and dancing skills are targeted as well, bringing together generations in the neighbourhoods.

Problem the project addresses

Difficulties about adaptation with urban life of newly settled communities are especially felt by older people, who have been enjoying traditional social capital or community ties in the rural mountainous villages in North Albania, from where they have been displaced, for a better life.

Objectives of the project

The objective of the micro project was about involving older people in an artistic community in a large informal area of Tirana with a lot of problems related to poverty, social isolation and vulnerability.

Main activities

Approximately 90 older people were identified and invited to be part of the organisation of a folk music and dance concert. Amateur artists (some of them older people themselves, some youngsters) from Bregu I Lumit have involved older people and worked together in using instruments, singing songs and dancing. They have prepared a concert with folk dances and songs. Older people have been involved in the rehearsals and have contributed in the designing and organization of the concert. Two professional folk music artists were invited as well during the rehearsals and performed at the final concert.



Outcomes and the lessons learned

Approximately 150 older people participated in the final concert and they expressed their high interest for more similar activities like that in the future. The activities of the project gave more opportunities of older people, their families and younger amateur artists, to meet with each other and build new ties in the new environment.

Recommendations

The project demonstrated that with little support (a venue and a few instruments) from local government of Tirana, there would be more intensive artistic life for older people and more community integration of them.



NATIONAL UNION OF ELDERLY PENSIONERS (NUEP)

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Setting up a daily centre for older people in Tirana"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Tirana. National Union of Elderly Pensioners (NUEP). Key Person, Ferdinand Shkalla,*
- *Time period: December 2017 – September 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Despite political promises only 3 daily centres are set up in Tirana by municipality. In many meetings older people have expressed their interest and raised their voice for a better access of pensioners to this service as a way to combat isolation, to continue their lifelong learning and improve integration in the society. NUEP have been showing that it is possible to set up and maintain this model by civil society, with significantly fewer resources than publicly owned centres.*
- *Total project budget: 4,940 Euro*

Target group

Pensioners of Tirana, who look for a way to socialize and participate actively in the civil society.

Problem the project addresses

Increasing isolation and loneliness of older people in large urban centres, coupled with insufficient support for daily centres for older people by local government.

Objectives of the project

The objective of the micro project is to provide a model of self-sustaining daily centre for older people combating isolation, helping their socialization and supporting lifelong learning.

Main activities

NUEP rented a small venue where older people are invited to get organized and participate in a range of structured discussions or lectures provided by professionals. In that centre they provide refreshments and newspapers and books.

The centre has organized more than 12 sessions of education with presentations from specialists of different fields (health, history, literature, law, sociology, economics, information technology, art and sport). For some national holidays, like New Year's Eve or Summer's Day, Teacher's day, Women's day, etc., NUEP organized large festive events, inviting all new and old participants in the project. Other activities carried out around this centre have been celebrating the birthdays (34 events) or other special days of some of their members, promoting the work of some of their most active members or volunteers (12 events). One meeting was dedicated to high school and university students discussing with them themes of mutual interest such as ageing of population, protecting environment, literary developments. Some of the pensioners in need of medical assistance were supported in their access to appropriate medical care. Some group visits to museums and opera have been organized as well.



Outcomes and the lessons learned

More than 100 lonely people and more than 200 lonely couples have been actively participating. There have been in total 960 older people who were involved at some point in the activity. More than 35% of them were women. A number of experienced and educated older people along with many instructors (32 of them) were invited in the sessions dedicated to learning during all life. Every day the centre was visited by 15-20 older people. NUEP – a pensioner’s organization – is optimistic about the continuity of the initiative by involving private businesses in financing it.



Recommendations

Local government can find a better way of collaborating with the civil society and by spending only a fraction of what it actually spends for its own daily centres, it will be able to provide a better and more comprehensive service to older people in the city.

Most older people will contribute with a lot of voluntary work for a centre which they feel belongs to them.

Organizing social events and especially providing lectures increases enthusiasm in participation.

ASSOCIATION FOR INTEGRATION OF ALBANIAN PENSIONERS (AIAP)

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: “Supporting integration of older people in local organizations”*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Laprake, Babrru, Kombinat, Shkoze, Instituti Bujqesor, Sauk, Vore, Fushe Kruje. Association for Integration of Albanian Pensioners (AIAP). Key person Osman Terziu*
- *Time period: January –September 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: AIAP is a relatively new association of pensioners, founded round 5 years ago and is working to spread its presence outside Tirana capital, in towns and smaller centres where there are not older people organizations.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

Pensioners in small towns in central Albania

Problem the project addresses

A survey carried out by Association of Geriatrics and Geriatrics in 2012 showed a very low participation in organized civil society life of older people in Albania; less than 10% of them were part of an organization or club.

Objectives of the project

The project was aiming to increase the number of older men and women organized in older people groups and pensioners’ local clubs in eight towns, in some deprived areas around Tirana and other towns near Tirana region (Laprake, Babrru, Kombinat, Shkoze, Instituti Bujqesor, Sauk, Vore, Fushe Kruje). The towns were selected based on expressed needs the implementing organization had received and where it has some contacts and influence.



Main activities

After a coordination conference organized in Tirana at the beginning of the project, up to September 2018, nine meetings with older pensioners and young people from local high schools were organized. On average 50 persons have been participating in each meeting. Nine branches or clubs of the implementing organization have already been set up and their activities are being supported. 623 vulnerable older people (most of them living alone) have been identified and invited to the meetings. They are now actively participating and are connected with other members. In the meetings representatives from local governments and local businesses were invited to better connect the needs of older people clubs with existing social services or other integration opportunities such as daily centres. Some local businesses have been involved by contributing with food packages for poor older people. Around 980 older people received food packages and presents during the events. A general conference of the association was organized in Tirana at the end of the project and all the experience from the new clubs was presented there.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The meetings carried out in the frame of the project have served to integrate generations, educate about active life in old age and set up nucleuses of organized branches of the Association for Integration of Albanian Pensioners in the selected towns. More than 600 pensioners have been involved in social life and are more active contributing members of the communities.

Now there is a better networking of Association for Integration of Albanian Pensioners with communities in several semi-urban and rural municipalities around Tirana. Hundreds of previously isolated pensioners in areas with minimal social activity now have a possibility to connect with other fellow older people while finding many more opportunities to be active members of the society.

On the other hand many young people from local high schools who participated in the activities are expected to further facilitate connection among generations and plant the seeds of future intergenerational activities in their communities.

Recommendations

Support existing associations to spread their model of organization to other areas where integration of pensioners in civic society life is most needed.

Involve local businesses and create more resources to support families of those most in need. This will give immediate reward to active participation and build credibility for the project.



GENERAL UNION OF PENSIONERS OF ALBANIA (GUPA)

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Voice of the pensioner" - a newspaper for pensioners"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Tirana. General Union of Pensioners of Albania (GUPA). Key person Faik Xhani*
- *Time period: January –September 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Voice of the pensioner is the only monthly newspaper in Albania fully focused on older people issues and made by older people themselves. GUPA has been publishing it based on support from various donors, for some years and it has served as an important instrument of civic participation of older people.*
- *Total project budget: 3,500 Euro*

Target Group

Pensioners of the country

Problem the project addresses

Voice of older people not heard sufficiently by institutions and not spread appropriately to the other parts of the country by mainstream media.

Objectives of the project

The objective of the micro project is to inform pensioners about what is of interest for them and advocate for their rights to national and local institutions, by means of the newspaper 'Voice of the pensioner' which is developed and run by pensioners themselves

Main activities

Micro project has helped the preparation and publication of eight issues already, while three more issues during 2017 have been supported by the implementing organization itself. Most of the issues of the newspaper are illustrated with the activities carried out by MOSHA network in Albania, including advocacy initiatives aiming at changing policies for older people. In many columns or sections the newspaper provides an opportunity to pensioners activists to write about their communities, about their ideas or about their heroes in life. A special column is for distinguished activists and their contribution. Issues of the newspaper are used for campaigns for the rights and against abuse with older people. 8000 copies of the newspaper are distributed for free to a large number of institutions and daily centres where they can be accessed by pensioners and decision makers.



Outcomes and the lessons learned

The newspaper have given its contribution to influence decisions in favour of pensioners, including a financial reward of 5,000 ALL distributed to all pensioners in the country and an increase of 2.8% of all the pensions. It has served also to sustain the social participation of many older people by either showing their civic contributions to a larger audience, or by providing a medium for many of them to present their views and comment on recent development about ageing issues in the country.

Recommendations

Older people with some experience in writing can serve as excellent editors for a newspaper made by pensioners.

In addition to presenting activities and best practices from older people projects, it is important to also include write-ups about the life of some of the most active older people or some of the real civic action heroes among them. This serves to encourage many others to fight isolation, participate and contribute to the society.



GENERAL UNION OF PENSIONERS OF ALBANIA (GUPA)

Title and information on the project

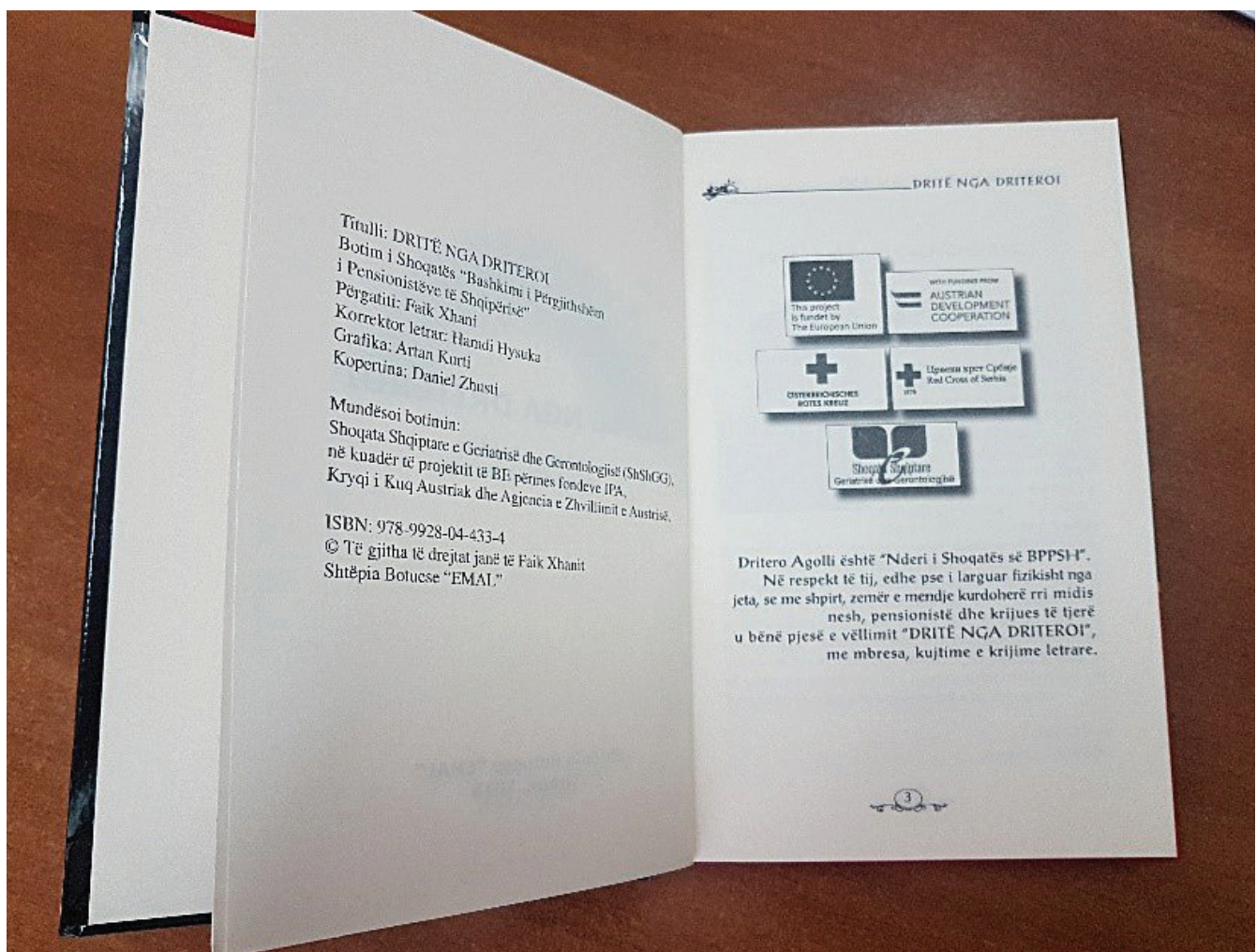
- *Project title: "Drite from Dritero- A poetry contest"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Tirana. General Union of Pensioners of Albania (GUPA). Key person Faik Xhani*
- *Time period: January –October 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: In 2017 one of the most celebrated poets of post war Albania passed away. This served as moment of stimulation for many older people who loved poetry and books to express their talents and ideas.*
- *Total project budget: 1,500 Euro*

Target group

Older people with special interest in arts and literature

Problem the project addresses

There is an increasing trend towards commercialization of all forms of art in the country and superficial pop culture focused mostly on youth's tastes is widespread. Older people feel there is not enough room for them to get involved in society as art consumers as well as contributing artists.



Objectives of the project

This is an initiative related to the 'Voice of the Pensioner' newspaper and its objective is to provide a forum for older people to express their literary and artistic skills, emotions and poetry analyses. This forum is expected to stimulate many older people with interest or talent in the field of poetry and fight in the same time the wrong perceptions about unproductive old age. 'Drite' in Albanian means 'Light' and Dritero is a very important Albanian writer and poet who passed away recently.

Main activities

The legacy of Dritero was used as a main theme for the contributors in the forum. An artistic board was set up and it reviewed all contributions, selecting all the publishable material, which was presented in 6 issues of the newspaper 'Voice of the pensioner' (three of the issues were supported by TASIOP project). A book with selected poetry and other contributions including memories or analyses from artists or politicians was published and promoted during October 2018 in an interesting combination of opportunities: October is the month of literature and 1st of October is the day of older people.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

There are 46 pieces of poetry published from 41 individuals, mostly older people. GUPA and the board promoted also some events of poetry reading near daily centres of Tirana. 3,000 issues of newspaper containing poetry for the competition have been distributed to pensioners. Many older people were able to express their skills on poetry or art critic and contribute in art life of the country.

Recommendations

Giving an opportunity to older people with writing talents to contribute to the artistic life of the society is good for the whole society. On the other hand, it is important to promote art for all ages and not only some of them.



ASSOCIATION OF PENSIONERS OF MAT

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "A handcrafting fair for women of Mat"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Mat. Association of Pensioners of Mat, a GUPA branch. Key persons Sefer Duka and Sanie Meta*
- *Time period: January-March 2018 (postponed to October 2018)*
- *Very brief description of the context: Mat is a mountainous region in North Albania with acute economic problems but with a proud tradition of handcrafting.*
- *Total project budget: 2,000 Euro*

Target group

Older people especially older women with handcrafting skills

Problem the project addresses

Pension breaks many social ties for older people and hinders the full expression of their capacities. Many of them with experience and skills would like to continue work and contributions, but opportunities for that, especially in remote areas, remain very limited.

Objectives of the project

The aim of the initiative is to support handcrafting interests among older women and younger women in Mat region, as a way to combat isolation and provide ideas for self-sustaining cultural and economic activities.

Main activities

After preliminary and organizational activities focusing on identification of potential participants of the exposition, implementing agency used 1st of October, the International Day of Older People as the day for development of a fair. It was organized in Burrel, the central town of Mat region, with permission and support from municipal administration, near the old palace of sports. In addition to promoting traditional hand crafting, a chess contest (as well as other games) was organized as well. Approximately 50 women and 30 older men participated in the exposition with their works. Approximately 200 older people attended the activity.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Many older women and men of Mat demonstrated their special capacities to participate in work market and contribute in social life of the isolated area. Local media was invited and covered activities potentiating the message of a town where all ages get involved and contribute.



Recommendations

One of the skills many older women in remote areas can still exercise is handcrafting of traditional products. In addition they can play a special role in transmitting those skills to younger generations. Local governments by supporting them, will support a more prosperous and integrated community.



ASSOCIATION OF PENSIONERS OF VALIAS

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Support for informal carers in Valias"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Valias. Implementing agency: Association of Pensioners of Valias, a GUPA branch. Key persons Nikoll Tabaku and Enver Hasa*
- *Time period: January-June 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Valias is a small depressed town near Tirana whose life used to be based around an important coal mine, now abandoned.*
- *Total project budget: 2,580 Euro*

Target group

Isolated and frail older people in Valias and their families

Problem the project addresses

While government provides only minimal assistance to frail and sick older people, the burden lays on the shoulders of their families. The situation is critical in some areas where massive unemployment and emigration of youth are combined.



Objectives of the project

The aim of the micro project is to identify the isolated and frail older people in Valias, and support the informal carers there by building networks and involving them in pensioner groups.

Main activities

The implementing NGO has carried out 200 home visits and identified 27 carers in need for support. They have organized a number of activities and 150 older people have been involved in them combating the isolation this way.

Continuous support was provided through follow up home visits, assisting with chores and shopping as well as small financial contribution provided to 27 carers. In addition, they have been integrated in the social life of the organized pensioners of Valias by participating in activities and social events organized in the town. Local government representatives were contacted as well and information was shared, although the support from them has not been tangible.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Many older people with special needs in Valias have been identified and many of the families have been supported. A model of integration is given to the community and more opportunities are shown to those wishing to participate and get integrated.



Recommendations

Focus on most deprived areas and give hope to communities by organizing social events celebrating the contributions of members of the family. Organize home visits to those most in need and the most isolated.

ASSOCIATION OF PENSIONERS OF LAC

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Community involvement for older people of Lac"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Lac. Implementing agency: Association of Pensioners of Lac, a GUPA branch. Key person Maliq Koleci*
- *Time period: January-September 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Lac is a small ex-industrial city, centre of the Kurbin district, some 50 km north of Tirana. It was formed during the year 60, in the process of forced industrialization of the country. Most of its households are made of families coming from different parts of the country. After the collapse of the old inefficient industries, it is suffering high unemployment and high crime rate. The GUPA branch of Lac is a new one and a small nucleus of activists are trying to build a network of active pensioners and help vulnerable older people get organized*
- *Total project budget: 3,470 Euro*

Target group

Older people of Lac.

Problem the project addresses

Isolation of many older people caused by community disruption, in the context of a failed economic and social model.

Objectives of the project

The project had a number of objectives; involvement of lonely older people in community life, improving information/education of older people on chronic diseases, empowerment of older people about their rights and enhancing intergenerational solidarity.

Main activities

The micro project activities were based around training sessions with specific themes. One training session was focused on typical health problems of older people and self-management and prevention of diseases in older age, another training session was about a short introduction on laws influencing older people in Albania. The subjects of trainings were chosen by implementing agency in response to the perceived needs expressed by older people, as well as going by experiences observed elsewhere in Albania and shared with them in the framework of TASIOP



project. In this component of project approximately 120 older people were involved as well as some professionals from local health centre and from Tirana volunteering. Another component of the micro project was, involvement of around 50 young activists from the local school, who were selected in a two scale model; first young people were proposed by older people activists as members of their families; some others were proposed by teachers. Afterwards, the first young individuals invited some of their friends. They were invited to participate in activities with the older people and were informed about ageing issues as well as forms of activism of older people in Lac area.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

A network of older people was created in Lac area, who are empowered with better knowledge, while setting up a model of community organization. It is also a foundation for a model of better communications between older people and younger generations.



Recommendations

Identification of enthusiastic older people activists is key for continuation of activities and achieving the objective of reaching and involving more isolated and vulnerable older people.

One of the ways to start building new network in similar deprived areas or disrupted communities, is trying to revive old networks which existed around an artistic centre from the past, or around a large public enterprise which does not exist anymore.

ALBANIAN SOCIETY FOR ALL AGES (ASAG)

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Developing a magazine for older women entitled 'Active Ageing'"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Tirana. Albanian Society for All Ages (ASAG). Key Implementing person Mira Pirdeni*
- *Time period: January-April 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: ASAG is an old organization operating for more than 20 years in the field of advocacy for older people. Its activities have a strong gender component and this magazine is the first of its kind in the country.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

The magazine targeted groups of active older women and men, and some local governments. It is also distributed among youth groups, to promote better intergenerational understanding.

Problem the project addresses

There are data showing that despite recent improvements, older people in Albania are scarcely involved in civic society and activism. The situation is worse for older women. There is a need to promote activism and participation of older people, especially women into community life, by providing positive examples.

Objectives of the project

Objective of the micro project was to develop and publish for the first time in Albania a magazine with focus on older women's and related intergenerational activities.

Main activities

The motto of the magazine in line with Association objectives is 'for women of all ages'.

The magazine is published by an interdisciplinary and intergenerational team in Albanian and English. In the magazine are presented positive models of active ageing women in Albania and activities related to intergenerational solidarity and cooperation.

It was promoted in a number of events in Tirana and other municipalities, where women's associations have been involved as well as local government officials.



Outcomes and the lessons learned

The magazine was welcomed by all the target groups during promotion events.

Recommendations

It is good to involve during the process of preparing the issue a combination of activists and experts in different fields.

Self-made magazines can not be distributed without an intensive process of promotion targeting many different groups in the society.



Microprojects summaries - Bosnia and Herzegovina

Out of 22 applications received, 13 projects were selected for support.

RED CROSS TUZLA

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Stari novog doba*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Tuzla Municipality*
- *Very brief description of the context: Project's objective is to increase interest of older people for involvement in social events and improve their psycho-physic health and through the intergeneration cooperation and long-life learning decrease causes and consequences of social exclusion of older people in Tuzla municipality.*
- *Total project budget: 4,459.49 Euro*

Target group

Target group are older people (65+) from Tuzla municipality. It was planned to involve around 150 older people in project activities. Selection of older people was made in cooperation with associations of older people and initiative groups for active aging based on the community needs.

Problem the project addresses

Although Tuzla municipality implemented a lot of measures aiming to decrease social exclusion of older people, there is still need for further development of existing and additional measures to respond on the needs of older people. Focus of the project is on promotion of active aging with dignity and contribution to the investment in lifelong learning of older people. By involving youth in project activities, we would like to make direct contribution to the development of intergenerational solidarity as one of the instruments for social inclusion of older people.



Objectives of the project

Overall objective is to increase number of older people involved in social events aiming to improve their physical and mental status and encourage them to be involved in the creation of policies in their local society.

Specific objectives are:

By connecting tradition of older people and trends of youth, create directions for older people to test research their own possibilities and recognize different physical and mental conditions in order to be able to react on time and appropriately.

Through providing information, contribute to the awareness raising of older people on the importance of their participation in social life and life of community.

Main activities

The project activities were grouped in three groups. First group of activities are related to the promotion of active aging and lifelong learning of older people (Creative workshops with older people and self-education created with aim to get knowledge about their own bodies through the very simple processes. Publishing “ABC of advocacy” for older people to learn basic elements of advocacy with the aim being to solve their problems in local communities). Second group of activities includes promotion of active aging and getting knowledge with a view of developing intergenerational solidarity (“Online café” events and Intergenerational Gastroroads). The third group included organization of round table and media promotion of project activities to contribute to raising awareness about needs and importance of older people and their participation in social life and development of the community.



Outcomes and the lessons learned

The activities created important impacts considering number and interest of older people involved in project. Process of social inclusion of older people was one of challenges we faced with at the beginning of project implementation, but direct involvement of older people in creation and implementation of project activities made positive impact and resulted with significant number of older people involved in project. Especially important was organization of Intergenerational GastroRoads where beside older people were involved pupils and parents of the School for children with disabilities from Tuzla. Important part of this activity is that traditional meals after joint preparation are distributed to the vulnerable older people which has multiple effects.

Recommendations

Considering that all project activities are prepared in a way that older people have an active role, project could be applied in other communities. One of the key lessons learned in the previous period is that the most important thing is to involve older people in the planning and creation of the project activities and particularly look for those older people who are familiar with the needs of their population in the community. Involvement of other stakeholders willing to contribute to improved social inclusion of older people is one of the key factors with multiple benefits for target groups.

“The goal of our participation in the project is that beside gathering of our children and their parents with older people, preparing meals for social vulnerable older people, we participate in the development of social solidarity towards the most vulnerable citizens.”- Vanesa Malkic, social worker from the „School for children with psycho-physical disabilities“.

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Golden Age*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Živnice Municipality*
- *Time period: 01. August 2018 to 31. January 2019*
- *Very brief description of the context: Initiative for Social Inclusion of older people*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

The target group consisted of 50 lonely older women. This group was selected with the objective being improving the quality of their lives, preserving their health, preventing chronic diseases, maintaining functional ability and preserving physical mobility.

Problem the project addresses

Fifty older women are involved in various social activities in order to reduce their social exclusion.

Objectives of the project

The objective of the project is to actively involve older people in community life in order to increase the quality of their lives, especially those who suffer from feelings of loneliness or increased need for social contact. Intergenerational social links will be established which will enable the strengthening of a positive image of the older people in Živnice municipality.

The second goal of the project is to develop the awareness of young people and other citizens as well as the overall local community on the importance of concern for persons of third age.

Main activities

- Promotion and presentation of the project, planned project activities and project objectives
- Designing the materials for the campaign: leaflets, brochures, posters- shirts, pencils etc.
- Creating and printing campaign materials: leaflets, brochures, posters, t-shirts, pencils, etc.
- Intergenerational co-operation with young volunteers
- Celebrating significant dates, holidays, cultural and entertainment events at the local level
- Film projections, social events and workshops on health for older people
- Psychosocial Workshops for
- Providing home-based assistance, medicines, food supplies and occasional transport to a doctor etc.
- Organizing excursions
- Organization and work of self-help groups

These activities were selected because we believe they will improve the inclusion of older people in decision-making on matters that are related to aging and age, and improve the image of older people as well. In this way, the loneliness of older people has been reduced and their inclusion through self-help groups has increased.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The project contributed to increasing the quality of life of project beneficiaries. The awareness of citizens and the local community about the importance of non-institutional care for the older people through organized campaigns has been raised.

Especially effective activities were:

- socializing and workshops on health for older people,
- organization and operation of self-help groups,
- marking important dates, holidays, cultural and entertainment events,
- psychosocial workshops for project users,
- organizing excursions for beneficiaries of the project,
- Intergenerational cooperation with young volunteers.

Recommendations

To organizations that would eventually replicate this project in their communities we would recommend that they make it because it's really priceless to see a smile on the faces of older people and hear their song at the end of each meeting, socializing or workshop, and at the same time knowing that you have enabled them all that. The greatest joy to the beneficiaries of the project was going for excursions so it would be useful for the project to add a few more of these excursions. It would be effective to have a specially equipped room with computer equipment to organise intergenerational activities where young volunteers would coach older people to work with computers.

What we learned from this project:

Loneliness, especially in older age is very hard for everyone. It is necessary to find ways to make this loneliness easier because they are all those who have spent their lifetime working, creating a home and family, feeding and educating children and, finally, when they need someone, they are left alone. In that solitude, what remains is only to remember the past, so they quickly lose all hope and get sick. They need support and we need to teach them that "it's not all over", that they are not alone, that there are still those who are like them, and to enable them to connect and become like family members to each other, or like somebody with whom they can talk, drink coffee, go for a walk ...

The quotes of the President of the "Golden Age", Ms. Mira Boro, through the verses:

"All paths are open, women are going to socialize whether it was summer or winter, whether it was sun or rain, at socializing, and they always are sometimes less, sometimes more.

And in the end, they all know, socializing lasts long and with a little goodwill, socializing will be better.

It is better to hang out with small mischiefs in the "Golden Age" rather than being lonely with problems and ages in your room. "



Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Community based intergenerational centre*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Gračanica Municipality*
- *Time period: June 2018 – march 2019*
- *Very brief description of the context: The project goal was to work on mitigation and prevention of social exclusion of older people in the municipality of Gračanica and improving their quality of life by developing a model of intergenerational community-based centre. The purpose of the Centre is to enable older people to participate in various social, cultural, educational, counselling, creative, volunteering, self-help and other activities that can help them practice more contributing roles in the society and to be in touch with their peers as well as younger generations and society in general.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

- Older people organized into self-help groups (80)
- Youth (50)
- Representatives of local civil society organizations
- Public institutions
- Decision makers
- Media

The project involved older people and youth to enhance their meaningful interaction where both could learn and give each other sense of purpose.

Problem the project addresses

The project addressed the issues of absence of community-based services and opportunities whose purpose would be to prevent or reduce social exclusion of older people, promote active and healthy ageing, promote intergenerational and meaningful cooperation, combat ageism and stereotypes and, in general, combat discrimination of older people. It also addressed the issues of older people poor access to rights and entitlements as well as low awareness on demographic changes and needs to act to respond to those changes among decision makers and those responsible to make sure older people can exercise their rights.

Objectives of the project

The general objective of the project was to alleviate the consequences of social exclusion on older people, to prevent social exclusion and to contribute to improved quality of life of older people in Gračanica.

The specific goal of the project was to develop a model of intergenerational community based centre at local community level, whose existence would enable older people to participate in various social, cultural, educational, counselling, creative, voluntary, self-help and other activities that will help them provide quality and useful time with peers as well as with younger generations.

Main activities

The project had three sets of activities:

- Capacity building of older people and youth representatives;
- Implementation of the knowledge acquired through capacity building - self-help, volunteering, data collection and intergenerational learning and advocacy;
- Human rights based advocacy – including public awareness raising and campaigning.

Final beneficiaries played key roles in all project phases, were empowered to realize that they are equal and contributing members of the society. In addition to self-help groups where they met regularly to help each other and workshops where they interacted with youth, older people went into community, identified their peers, assisted them, screened their needs and reported about those to related CSOs, decision makers and the media. They campaigned and worked on awareness raising on the situation of their rights. By doing so, they challenged a traditional view of viewing older people as a homogenous group and in need of help mainly. Youth were meaningfully involved to influence their views on ageing and to empower them to act as generally aware and responsible citizens.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The project successfully demonstrated a model of a local intergenerational community based centre that can easily supported by local authorities if there is a political will and awareness on the need to address older people social exclusion and intergenerational gaps.

It enabled older people to learn that they are still valuable assets and contributing members of the society and that they should be among the key players and advocates for their own rights. Further, it enabled them to interact meaningfully with younger generations and help both realise that they can work together, share and learn from each other.



The existence of such centre, based on the statements of the beneficiaries, contributes significantly to their psychosocial wellbeing. It helps them stay in touch with the community, to maintain social links but also to follow development trends, which is of special importance for prevention of their social exclusion and prevention of discrimination.

Specially effective where the workshops where both generations participated together and the lectures follow by questions and answers by different experts and in different area, for example lectures on health.

Recommendations

To be successful, project of this kind require thorough participatory preparations including needs assessment of the related stakeholders.

Older people-led organizations need, at least in the beginning, support in project and team management as well as ongoing support advocacy and policy influencing processes.

Relating to older people can be particularly challenging for youth, as they tend to focus on the present and think mainly about themselves. They may be less interested in learning about older people and their issues. They may display negative behaviour that is hard for older people to understand and youth need guidance and encouragement to help them relate to older people and understand the implications of aging. Similarly, older people can find it very difficult to learn from youth in the beginning.



Quotes:

“I was somehow “dragged” into the project. As someone who lost the spouse, who did not feel like doing anything or going out of my house, I really did not see a point in the project. However, once I joined it I gradually started to feel differently. I felt useful. I was helping others and acting on behalf of those who could not do it themselves. My life started have a different meaning...Now, I am happy that I was pulled into that. That realisation makes me even more passionate in advocating our rights”. Meša, Gračanica.

“It is never boring with older people. They are full of stories, experiences and when with them I feel important. They share their knowledge and experience with me and they listen to me too! I also like their spirit and sense of humour. It is fun to work with them. It is also nice to see that in spite of so many problems that they have, they still try to enjoy their life and have a positive view on it” , a young volunteer, Gračanica.

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: “ Initiative for social inclusion of old persons”*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Sanski most*
- *Time period: June 2018-April 2019*
- *Very brief description of the context: The project aimed to improve quality of life of 30 particularly deprived older people from rural and inaccessible areas by informing them about their rights in the areas of social welfare and healthcare and the ways to exercise those rights. Further, to influence their physical, mental and spiritual health, the project aimed to provide health education and socialising activities*
- *Total project budget: 4,460 Euro*

Target group

- Persons 65+
- Seniors with disabilities
- Older people with mobility difficulties
- Lonely older people, older women
- Older households

The members of these target groups are vulnerable and not sufficiently informed and aware of their rights.

Objectives of the project

General goal was to contribute to the improved quality of life of older people in the municipality of Sanski Most.

Specific goals were:

To empower 30 older people by informing them about their rights in the field of social welfare and healthcare and about the ways these rights can be accessed.

To enable 10 old people to contact competent institutions with our assistance and initiate procedures for the realization of specific rights (right for pension, health and social protection rights)

Main activities

- Organising a Conference on exercising rights in the field of social welfare and healthcare of older people
- Organizing workshops with a psychologist and family doctor to provide information on improving the quality of their everyday life of older people
- Organising socializing activities for older people to reduce their social isolation
- Informing the public about the problems of older and “forgotten” people
- Transportation and assistance to users for the fulfilment of their rights (assistance in obtaining various documents for the purpose of fulfilment of their rights in the field of social and health care, pension insurance)
- Organizing self-help groups (2x per month for 10 participants, 2 groups), organizing a workshop on marking the day of health with a lecture by general practitioners on prevention and protection of the health of older people. Media presentation of the project
- These activities were chosen because by working in the field, we have established that there are older people from very remote rural areas that are difficult to reach, and would enable this project to achieve in the first place their basic rights, such as rights from social and health care, pension insurance, and then inclusion in additional activities in our project

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Improving the quality of life of older people from remotely distant and inaccessible places in the surroundings of Sanski Most through providing assistance in exercised rights in the field of health and social protection received information about their rights in health and social care, and about the way they are exercised; direct impact on the reduction of social problems in Sanski Most; facilitating everyday life for people in a difficult socio-economic situation; quality social support provided through networking of support actors in Sanski Most; the public is familiar with the problems of old and abandoned people



Better co-operation of local authorities when carrying out the project would have helped. The conference, where older people learned about their rights, and could talk about their problems was particularly effective.

The obstacles we found were scepticism among older people. We also had difficulties when it came to the support groups, because of the VAT exemption procedure.

Recommendations

To perform demographic analysis before starting a project; to have a good plan for the activities in the project, a group of older people who can independently carry out their activities.

- Older people are a very sensitive category,
- It is difficult to gain their trust
- When active in self-help groups, they want to devote themselves completely
- Emotional connections are made and they start treating the NGO activists as part of their family

“I am very happy to be part of this project. Since my husband died I was feeling very lonely at home. This is a way to get outside and be part of a community” - Radojka Ninić,

“Thank you very much for including me in this project. I met new people who are facing the same problems as I do”. - Danica Milinović



Title and information on the project

- *Project title: “Corner for the creative moment”*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Doboj*
- *Time period: June 2018 – March 2019*
- *Very brief description of the context: Social inclusion of older people is possible only through a well-regulated system, and continuous inter-sectoral partnership. Activities in the project focus on pursuing and demonstrating solutions to problems of older people; it provided for assessment and analysis of the quality of life of older people and responded to the scarcity of data and interest to collect it by related stakeholders. In brief, the project addressed the issues of alienation, loneliness, poverty, and consequences of family separation. It wanted to contribute to reducing loneliness and introduce the models of community bases services that can contribute to social inclusion of older people.*
- *Total project budget: 4,495 Euro*

Target group

Lonely older people and members of their families, participants in organised creative activities.

Lonely older people with no participation in any activities in the community, feeling that no one in any way cares about them

Problem the project addresses

Older people are not sufficiently recognized in strategic documents, especially at the local level, and the core of all activities was to advance systematic processes that would lead to social inclusion of people over the age of 65.

In addition, lack of intergenerational solidarity has been evident primarily due to disruption of family norms and values that are crucial to the regulation of relationships in the family as well as in the society. Active and dignified aging was the concrete problem that this project focused on.



Objectives of the project

- Map the basic needs of older people in the project localities.
- Enhance social inclusion of older people in local communities
- Inform older people about their rights through the pilot program of Services for Older People (information on their rights, ways of advocating, consideration of the relationship of older people as consumers ...)

Main activities

Media campaigns – Older people and their social exclusion are not attractive topics to the media. Therefore, it was necessary to create conditions that can influence their interest and attitudes. The project provided for data collection, assessment of the needs and situation of older people rights and in all those activities older people played key roles.

Mapping the existing services for older people and the gaps at the local level: to influence changes and to contribute to improvement of the quality of life of older people, it is necessary to develop local programmes and services and to influence local authorities to include older people among the priorities of the local community planning and development.

Pilot programme for older people – It is very important to check through the pilot program the correctness of the proposed changes and the satisfaction of older people involved in those changes

“A Corner for the Creative Moment” – a sort of a one stop shop offering expressive activities (poetry, performances), socializing, exhibitions, etc. The commitment of ToPeeR to realize this programme means sustainability of the project and it is most important that in Dobož there is an organized place for social engagement of older people and environment for their active and dignified ageing.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The Corner for the Creative Moment is the first project in our local community targeting people 65+. So far, their needs have been addressed solely through the association of pensioners and eventual veteran organizations. The change can be reflected in the fact that at least 300 older people that we directly targeted for the first time were asked to speak up about their needs and proposals to meet them.

Recommendations

- The most important recommendation is that in all future projects older people should be asked and consulted first about their needs. CSOs working with and for them should provide for conditions that encourage healthy and active aging.
- Each project pertaining to persons over 65 should include intergenerational solidarity or participation of different generations, including children.
- Involve all related stakeholders at the local community and work together on promoting active and dignified ageing.
- Age is not a disease and this should be a leading motto of foundation of all our efforts.
- Older people should be involved in all processes of the project planning and any other processes related to their lives.
- Focus groups are a good research tool that enables thorough insight into older people real needs.

Quotes:

“I’m worried that everyone thinks I’m ill because I’m 73 and I would love to be asked to contribute and to use my life experiences. I was a very successful entrepreneur but since retiring, I have never been asked for any advice. I have never asked by anyone about what I would like to do and what are my needs now when old and retired”

“The computer is my best friend, I like to explore the Internet and be part of many social networks. Perhaps the most I like is that the people I contact with, either business or private do not know how many years I have and feel necessary. My advice is accepted and I often ask questions how to solve some problem. I think it is very important that older people are also taught how to deal with the IT world”

“I believe that we, older people, through the Program Corner For the Creative Moment will have the opportunity to give our opinions and influence not only to our gatherings, but also to the important decisions that are made at all the most decisive levels, from the municipal to the state parliament”

“Activities that are organized for older people should be created just by us older people or to comply with our suggestions that are our needs.”



HOUSE OF OPEN HEART

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Living together-active ageing"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Mostar*
- *Time period: February 2018 – December 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: We accept and welcome new members in our organisation, include them into project, remind them what is like to be an active member of the society again. We established self-help groups where their members talk about problems, ask for help and provide advice to other members of the group.*
- *Total project budget: 3,722.20 Euro*

Target group

Our target group were older people because they are not active enough, they often feel excluded and neglected by family and the society, which can lead to anxiety and depression. They are not socialising with other people and they spend their days alone without no one to talk to.

Problem the project addresses

Some of the problems addressed with help provided by Centre for social work and Health insurance institute: the right to use a public kitchen, healthcare for older people, favourable spa treatment.

Objectives of the project

Include different people from the local community, empower intergenerational cooperation and include older people from south part of the city in planning and implementation of the activities for preservation of the environment.



Main activities

- Getting new, older members in our organisation;
- Training and guidance for our new volunteers.
- Connecting members with one another (They liked the idea of being part of something .Our organisation became like a home for them and almost all of our new members started coming regularly to our meetings and workshops. All our workshops and meetings where fun, relaxed and educational).
- We organised self-help groups, so our members could talk about problems that they are facing and how to successfully solve them. They asked for help and advice other members or leader of the group. The self-help groups turned out to be very efficient; the members reported that they finally have someone who listens to them. Our members suggested that we should engage a nurse who can measure their blood pressure and level of blood sugar for free, because many of them do not have necessary equipment. We also provided free hairdressing services to our members as a part of the project (“It is important how we look; it is important how we feel”). New appearance increased their confidence and they went home happy and satisfied. We connected with other civil society organisations in our town and our and their members spent quality time together.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The project created positive changes in the daily lives of our members. They changed their daily habits, they became more active, less stressed, more open to other people. Our members became friends with one another, so they are spending time together outside of our organisation and we are sure that friendship will continue beyond the end of the project. Self-help groups were particularly effective. Our members exchange their experience in order to help others. Activities that were also very useful were the ones when our members talked about their past and their memories from younger days. A challenge for us was initially to explain to older people that we are not a charity organisation that provides material help.

Recommendations

We would recommend other organisations to follow suggestions of their members, allow the members to come up with some ideas and implement them. Publicly recognise the member who did something that benefits all members of your organisation.



LITTLE MERMAID

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Older people's self-help groups and peer support"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Zavidovici, Zenica Canton*
- *Time period: June 2018 – March 2019*
- *Very brief description of the context: The project was developed as an answer to lack of opportunities for older people in Zavidovići municipality for active participation and human rights based advocacy. It wanted to help the self-organization of older people and to further develop a model of exercising their rights to participation through self-help groups, volunteering and peer assistance and intergenerational cooperation.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

The project targeted directly 130 older people in Zavidovići municipality (town and villages) who due to the political, economic and social situation, including high rate of migration of the younger and active generations, face problems of poverty, loneliness, social exclusion, discrimination and neglect by the society in general. The main target groups in the project were:

- 130 older people
- Youth representatives (20)
- Representatives of public institutions

Problem the project addresses

The project addressed the issue of discrimination of older people in Zavidovići and poor access to rights and services. Many older people still feel they can be active and contributing members of the community but opportunities for them to be active are scarce and non-existent. They are usually overlooked in local municipality budgeting and planning and seen as someone who is well covered by pensioners associations. Consequently, their diverse needs have not been met nor have their capacities been built to participate in a new democracy equally. The project addressed lack of intergenerational solidarity, awareness and existing stereotypes among different generations.

Objectives of the project

By developing a model of older people self-help groups, older people volunteering, peer support and intergenerational cooperation, the project wanted to contribute to mitigation of older people's social exclusion in Zavidovići and to improving their quality of life in general. Further, it wanted to demonstrate a feasible and sustainable community based model of programmes that can adequately address older people needs and promote their active and healthy ageing.

Main activities

- Preparatory activities: introductory training for representatives of older people groups' leaders, participatory planning of project activities.
- Regular meetings of older people groups, 2-3 times a month for at least 2 hours per meeting.
- Articulation of older people needs in public and among decision makers
- Advocacy activities.

To help people organise and encourage their active participation in the community well-designed preparatory activities should take place first. Those include identification featured older people who had previous experience with similar activities and could act as leaders for others.

Preparatory phase was followed by older people's self-group meetings where older people help each other, plan community activities and assistance to their peers in need. Older people identify their

peers, record their needs and provide them with the support through their volunteering activities. As volunteers, older people are involved in a kind of action research; older people volunteers collect data on the needs of their peers and take them to the public as well as decision makers along with the policy requests and demands for actions.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The project demonstrated a model of older people self-organisation, activism and volunteering in the community.

By being active and by volunteering older people pointed at different needs of older people in the community and a need for development of adequate community services.

It showed the community that older people are an asset and that together with younger generation can create a cumulative social force benefiting whole community. Older people started to feel useful and needed in the society, which as one of the volunteers said, "Help them to feel alive again".

While in general a project was a success, it turned out that more time is needed to better prepare older people for older people advocacy. Majority of them, including the organisations they represent, lack capacities, knowledge and skills to involve into more demanding and concrete advocacy activities including other relevant key players.

Recommendations

Older people, once involved, are very serious and committed volunteers who expect to be treated in the same way. They expect good organisations, leadership and serious consideration. They appreciate being consulted before and when planning of any programmes that affect their lives. Active involvement and feeling ownership over the project are very important to sustain motivation and to build up a project.

They as all other volunteers need ongoing support or mentorship including further capacity building, information provision, reflection and supervision.

Adequate venue and environment for their work is crucial and should be in place.

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Promotion of the rights of socially excluded older people with disabilities and special needs"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Gračanica and Doboj East Municipality*
- *Time period: June 2018 – March 2019*
- *Very brief description of the context: The main objective of the project was to raise awareness of the situation of older persons with disabilities and special needs in society, about their rights and social exclusion. At the same time, the project wanted to draw attention to the situation of informal caregivers of older persons with disabilities, who are mainly their family members and are left to themselves, or lack the knowledge, professional, psychosocial support that such persons necessarily need.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

Main target groups are older people with disabilities and special needs (including their family members) who are socially excluded and face numerous negative factors such as loneliness, poverty, depression, abuse and neglect. The project strategically targeted youth, civil society organisations, relevant public institutions, decision makers and media.

Problem the project addresses

The project addressed the issues of older people with disabilities and special needs and the issues of absence of community based services for this particular group including their family members who often act as informal carers without any support and guidance on how to perform those roles and how to protect themselves too. Health situation of older people with special needs is especially difficult and awareness on them and their needs is very low. Equally low is the awareness on the situation of the people around them who act as informal carers without and professional support and guidance needed to perform those roles adequately and to protect their own mental health and wellbeing.

Objectives of the project

The goal of the project was to influence the quality of life of older people with disabilities and special needs in the municipality of Gračanica and Doboj East.

The specific objectives of the project were to:

Analyse the situation of older people with disabilities and special needs in order to raise awareness among the relevant institutions and advocate for their rights;

Empower older people with special needs and their families to cope with their problems more easily and seek help or to claim their rights.

Raise public awareness on the situation of older people with disabilities and special needs in the municipality of Gračanica and Doboj East and highlight the need for action.

Main activities

In order to initiate evidence based advocacy and awareness raising activities it was necessary to identify older people with disabilities and special needs and collect data need on their situation. Experts in the fields (medical, social protection, legal staff) and volunteers were trained to visit those people in their homes, collect information but at the same time provide some guidance, counselling and professional advice to older people as well as to their family members or informal carers.

The main activities in the project were as follows:

- Preparatory phase; selection of experts, volunteers, planning of work and activities-
- Home visits to older people with disabilities and special needs, situation screening and counselling (medical, legal, psychosocial) by medical staff accompanied by volunteers.
- Analysis of the situation of older people with disabilities and special needs.
- Round table on “Social exclusion of older people with disabilities” with participants from all relevant organizations and institutions participated.
- Monitoring and reporting.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The project was just a small contribution to raising awareness on the needs of older people with special needs. It has been obvious that very little attention has been paid to them and that initiatives to change that should be more in focus of all those dealing with human rights promotion and protection. There should be more awareness raising activities in the area of health issues with the emphasis on development of community-based services that would provide older people with the possibility to stay at home and have an adequate care. At the same time, the project proved that there is a great need for working with informal carers, for targeting them and addressing their needs too to better help older people with special needs as well as to protect their own health. More work should be done in promotion of long-term care strategy and adequate programmes in BiH and on promotion of more unified health care system that would provide all citizens and especially older people with equal and rights based care. 100 older people with disabilities and special needs and their informal carers were helped through counselling, informing, guidance or preventive advice on how to offer help, provide care to older people but also take care of their own health and wellbeing.

Recommendations

Approaching older people with special needs can be a challenge. It takes time to gain trust and to get their interest for cooperation. This also relates to their families and those who take care of them. Their expectations might be big and it is very important to introduce them carefully to the objectives of the visits, which are usually to inform them, to guide and provide counselling in the area of health, social protection of legal issues. Further, it is necessary to let them know that the aim of the visits is also to inform the responsible stakeholders on their situation. Selection of the staff that will work with them and visit families of special importance. It is advisable to have someone from medical profession for the first visit. Ongoing support and mentorship to volunteers and other staff involved is also very important in order to sustain their motivation and to enable them to better manage and cope with all difficulties they might face while working in the field.

PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "IT Seniors"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Sarajevo*
- *Time period: June 2018 – February 2019*
- *Very brief description of the context: Older people exposed to new technologies that can increase their social inclusion*
- *Total project budget: 4,400 Euro*

Target group

Older people from Canton Sarajevo. Many of them live in tall buildings, sometimes completely isolated from the outside world, not knowing their closest neighbour.

Problem the project addresses

Isolation of older people. Their exclusion from social life, connection with family members that live outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Objectives of the project

Older people trained in basic IT skills, including use of the Internet, Skype, Social Networks, MS Office. First Guideline for seniors for Basic computer use in Bosnia and Herzegovina published

Main activities

IT and Internet lessons were organised for older people to overcome their isolation and connect them with their family members, friends who live outside of the country as well as to give them opportunities to become members of centres for healthy ageing and meet their peers

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Older people are less isolated and more active

One on one computer classes with focus on Skyping were particularly effective

More hours per person would have produced even better results

Recommendations

This activity became easily very popular in urban environment. Older people are very eager to learn new technologies. They see changes around them and the fact that everybody uses cell phones, iPod, and computers. They are aware that Viber or Skype can be much cheaper and convenient for communication than regular phones. Focus should be on cell phones and the ability to use them.

- Use young people as trainers who have abilities and willingness to work with older people
- This activity takes time, if repetition is needed have time planned for that
- Use training guidelines, they were tested for the past seven years in centres for healthy aging

PATHS OF PEACE KOZARSKA DUBICA

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: “The Rights of Older People in the Municipality of Kozarska Dubica – ‘Active Age’”*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Kozarska Dubica*
- *Time period: June 2018 – March 2019*
- *Very brief description of the context: The project represented as a response to older people’s expressed need to have opportunities for informal get-togethers and socialising. It introduced a model of self-help groups, human rights education and support by professionals in the area of health where focus was on the implementation of preventive health measures and influencing the improvement of the life habits of this population.*
- *Total project budget: 3,722.22 Euro*

Target group

Older people without family care, who are not able to take full care of themselves. This group was chosen based on their functional dependence on people’s assistance, next to their desire to socialize and for opportunities to participate in the processes of communicating their rights to stakeholders.

Problem the project addresses

Local social institutions can not meet all the needs of the target population, nor have special programs and models of assistance to older people than those modest, financial ones. The project worked to improve understanding between these institutions and the target group, ensure older people are better informed in order to overcome social problems, reduce their isolation and improve their socialization.



Objectives of the project

The overall goal of the project is to improve social inclusion of older people who live in the Municipality of Kozarska Dubica.

The specific project goals are:

To inform/educate older people about their rights for active participation in local community and society in general,

To strengthen the capacities of the older people and their participation in the process of advocating for their rights, and

To ensure transparency of the project and promotional activities through the media.

Main activities

- Informing/ educating older people - Conducting a „self-help program“,
- Printing of promotional materials (brochures, making a banner) and media project promotion,
- Organization of the final ceremony – informal gathering of project beneficiaries and other participants.

The education program for older people aimed at improving their knowledge of social and health protection rights, with the involvement of professional staff (doctors and social workers). The goal is to make these services more accessible to the target group and to animate them for more active participation in public, cultural and other social events, which will contribute to reducing their social exclusion.

Through promotional materials, we ensured the transparency of project activities, and visibility of the

donor. The media presentation aimed to raise awareness about mutual cooperation of decision-makers at the local level, institutions of social and health care and citizens to jointly address the needs of older people without family care within the local community.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The project contributes to the direct participation of the target group in the activities, which is a novelty in the sense that they are no longer only silent observers, but active participants in the process of improving their physical and mental condition as well as social position. In addition to the good cooperation with the institutions of health and social protection, media reporting on activities ensures positive assessment of the project in the community.

Particularly effective activities included conducting education/ information programme related to informal get-togethers. At the end of one of the programs, a participant thanked with the words “Thank you for socializing and for not lying” (a reference with pre-election political promises). Two activities that were not planned in the project but were carried out, and left a special impression on the participants, were a socializing with two non-governmental organizations from Sisak and Hrvatska Dubica. Socializing was organized on the occasion of marking the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

Participants from rural areas were harder to involve, which was resolved via organized transportation to lectures with the active assistance of our volunteers. All this happened during the current political and electoral activities, where the participants initially did not fully believe that the lectures had nothing to do with any political activities.

Recommendations

It would be good to conduct field research and check the interest of potential project beneficiaries.

- In addition to a good project idea, it is important to have good communication with the donor;
- It is necessary to achieve good cooperation/ support of the local community and the media that positively influence the realization and importance of the project;
- It is also important to have a good number of project staff and volunteers.



ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN UNIVERSE

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "A Good recipe for the long term aging"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Mostar, Stolac, Jablanica, Konjic*
- *Time period: June 2018 – April 2019*
- *Very brief description of the context: Considering the various circumstances that have affected our country in recent past, the inevitable result of these circumstances is that Bosnia and Herzegovina is slowly becoming a country of older people. Because of this, we decided to help our older friends spend the last years of their lives, a bit more carefree by offering them activities that were carefully prepared. Our activities are adjusted to the pace and interests of older people so that they can be successfully realized.*
- *Total project budget: 3,226 Euro*

Target group

Target group were older people whose pace and interests were fully considered in the project.

Problem the project addresses

By implementing this project we wanted older people to be more seen and more listened to – more present in public. We tried to encourage them to talk freely about problems they are troubled with. We think that the older people deserve to spend their time in best possible ways, so we decided to offer them activities that enhance the spirit and body. Their reactions proved us right.



Objectives of the project

Main project objectives are to make first contacts between different municipalities, to exchange experience and current information in order to get clear picture of real need of older populations in and out of nursing homes. To motivate them through implementation of this project to take part in something not so typical for them. To form self-help groups that will continue to act after project period is over.

Main activities

Socializing with a book, laughter therapy and good snacks are definitely a good recipe for long-term aging.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The project "A Good recipe for the long term aging" has proven that planned activities were well chosen as older population are mostly inactive family members if they even have any family. Self-help groups are helping them to get together and socialize in ways they are not used to.

Socializing with the books and laughter therapies are mostly effective activities although just gathering and chit-chatting was fulfilling its purpose.

The majority of the participants expressed their satisfaction and wishes to have such social events more frequently, "because there is no time to waste"

Aging populations pose a challenge to the fiscal and macroeconomic stability of many societies through increased government spending on pension, healthcare, and social benefits programs for older people. This may hurt economic growth and overall quality of life if governments need to divert public spending from education and infrastructure investment to finance programs for older people. This is fact that our government is facing too. The main concern of older people we worked with for most of the time is money and how to afford medical care when needed. The project distracted their attention from the darker issues in life for a while.

Recommendations

Having more frequent and longer social events would be an incredible contribution to the life of older population.

This is the way to address loneliness and lack of attention from others, to bring smiles to faces of older people and give them opportunities to talk about issues they are troubled with. All this makes them feel recognised and not forgotten and neglected members of the society.



ASSOCIATION OF CITIZENS WITH IMPAIRED VISION

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Reducing barriers for social inclusion of older blind persons"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Tuzla*
- *Time period: May 2018 – December 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Older people make 25% of the population of Tuzla city. About 100 of them use Red Cross caregiver's home care services. Groups which belong to network "Initiative for active aging" are formed in a certain local communities. In December 2017, City council has adopted the Plan of Action for Social Inclusion which targets vulnerable groups. Regardless to above mentioned positive shifts, services for majority of older persons are not accessible.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

The target group for the project are blind older persons from Tuzla. This particular group was chosen because of their low level of social inclusion.

Problem the project addresses

Particular attention is paid to education and information of blind older persons and encouraging of their activation. These persons are isolated because of prejudices and their dependence of sighted assistants.

Objectives of the project

To create accessible educational and social programs in community which will contribute to empowerment of blind and partially sighted older persons at the area of Tuzla city and make preconditions for their easier social inclusion.

Main activities

- Two-day workshop on advocacy for ten blind older persons; To practice on one or two issues of local importance for the blind persons (transportation, enabling aids, etc.)
- Seven educational workshops on the following topics: Eye hygiene, How to live with diabetes, Cardiovascular diseases, Advancement of daily skills, Accepting of visual impairment, The role of sport in blind person's life and free time;
- Visiting at least 15 blind older persons and talking to them and their families;
- Once a week, organising a meeting of blind older persons with wide range of activities: walking, playing chess or other games, cooking, etc.)

The activities were chosen in order to encourage and motivate blind older persons to be more active in the Association and initiate changes on behalf of themselves. They addressed the problem through dissemination of knowledge (health protection, how to live with blindness and learning from other blind person's experience).

Outcomes and the lessons learned

One of the most important changes that the project has created are increased number of active blind older persons and their openness for exchanging experience. Older blind persons who can not be active in the Association due to health reasons like Association's team visits. Feeling that they are important to somebody makes them happy. Active older blind persons like to spend time in the open. The group of educational workshop's participants were actually passive listeners. They did not ask questions to lecturers. Some of older blind person used to sit in the house. When we called them to attend workshops, they were uncertain. When we offered them transportation, they accepted to come.

Recommendations

We recommend to organizations that want to replicate the project to use our experience and talk to us. When you want to work on something for a certain group of people, talk to them and carefully consider their opinion. Do not take a picture of blind person without his or her allowance. Do not make promises to beneficiaries that you can not fulfil.



Microprojects summaries - Republic of North Macedonia

Out of 18 applications, 12 projects were selected for support.

NGO - ASSOCIATION OF CITIZENS OF THE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE, MACEDONIA, SKOPJE

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: University of the Third age – Skopje and social inclusion of older people*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Skopje, Macedonia*
- *Time period: November 01, 2017 – August 31, 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: The small project is to creatively train and educate older persons for greater social inclusion in the community. Workshops and lectures for: Art and Poetic expression; Healthy food, Creative gardening, floriculture; Wellness & Spa; Physical exercises; Anti-stress, Yoga & Meditation.*
- *Total project budget: 4,977.20Euro*

Target group

Target group in this project is older people as well as older people at risk of dementia/ Alzheimer's disease.

Problem the project addresses

The increasing share of older people in the population of the Republic of Macedonia is a challenge that requires mobilization of all resources in society. Many civil society organisations are addressing it through their development programmes, ours included. Older people need: active, healthy and creative ageing in order to be truly included in the society.



Objectives of the project

The main goal of the project is to creatively train and educate older persons for greater social inclusion of these people in the community's activities. Through this project, the following goals have been realized:

- Older persons are motivated and creative, as well as able to engage more creatively in managing their lives and creative free time. They feel more fulfilled and satisfied.
- Older people understand how to improve their health and take better care of it.
- Older people engage creatively in the community, participate in public events.

Main activities

The main activities are workshops and lectures for:

- Art expression, painting, creative ceramics
- Poetic creativity and poetry as a hobby
- Healthy food, diet, healthy breakfast, lunch, dinner
- Creative gardening, floriculture and fruit
- Wellness & Spa for better mental and physical health
- Physical exercise for strengthening the anti-stress ability
- Music, Yoga and Meditation.

For example: Workshop No. 8: The leader and lecturer at the workshop, prof. Dr Shekerinka Ivanovska, gave a lecture on the theme on the topic: Emotional intelligence and personality in the older age. A practical case analysis was made. Then, a psychologist T. Kostovska, explained the techniques of intrusive behavior, exchange of experiences, Q&A, small meditation exercise. These activities are chosen because they positively influenced the improvement of health, mental ability and protection and prevention of dementia.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

This project has improved social inclusion of older people, as well as the flow of information and the personal sense of satisfaction with their health and mental health. Older people are now better informed about dementia, Alzheimer and Parkinson's disease. Better inclusion is a result of improvements made in four areas: preventive health (physical and mental), healthy nutrition / healthy diet according to their age; involvement in creative art and poetry for better mental resilience; daily light exercises at home for physical health and anti-stress programs for easier handling of the problems with relatives and friends; emotional intelligence as a precondition for good relationships. The main challenge was the overwhelming interest of these people in the workshops and lectures so we had to change the plans to be able to include all the interested participants.



Recommendations

At the beginning of the project you have to create a questionnaire for the participants to ask them which areas and workshops they are interested in. This will make forming the groups by categories easier. Categories can be: art, poetry, healthy food, anti-stress programs and emotional intelligence. First do a lecture on a specific topic or problem, and then follow up with workshops in these areas.

As for challenges, it is worth having in mind that it is more challenging coming up with needs of those older people over 75 or 80. These older people need more support from the communities and the society such as day care centres, especially for those suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

ASSOCIATION SOCIAL CENTRE OF THE MUNICIPALITY CENTAR, SKOPJE

Title and information on the project

- **Project title:** *Taking action of social inclusion of older people*
- **Community/municipality of project implementation:** *Community Centar*
- **Time period:** *November-June 2018*
- **Very brief description of the context:** *Socialization of older people*
- **Total project budget:** *4,995 Euro*

Target group

The target group of this project are older people. They are also part of the society and they need to be included in decision making processes in the community on the topics of interest to them.

Problem the project addresses

The aim of this project is creation of a sustainable and efficient lifelong learning model by empowering older people through work with younger people on digital information and communication technologies. This in turn should address their participation in the modern society and especially in the decision-making processes on topics of their interest. Additionally, the project addresses loneliness and through visits of young volunteers and regular physical exercise with them.

Objectives of the project

Informative meetings with representatives of the target groups (older people, representatives of the members of the Association of Pensioners of the Municipality of Centar, young educators competent for digital and information technology, etc.)

Realization of 5 workshops with older people and educators for the transfer of regular inter-generational knowledge and skills in digital and information technologies. (20 people)

Thematic open days with older people.

Participation of the target groups in the two budget forums of the Community Center, regularly organised by the Center every year.

Organizing regular and continuous socialization by the community center for individuals in the pensioner clubs and the municipal reading rooms (30 persons)

Organizing physical activities in local primary schools or in nature.

Organizing clubs focusing on activities of interest to older people, for example: literary meetings with authors from Macedonia and the neighbouring countries.



Main activities

- Five sessions dedicated to for physical exercise, lead by a physical therapist
- Five workshops with older people for the transfer of intergenerational knowledge and skills in digital and information technologies in cooperation with the Youth Office of the Municipality of Centar.
- Ongoing meetings with representatives of the target groups and with the activists/ volunteers for the continuous implementation of the activities - talks and agreements on the activities with the president of the Association of Pensioners of the Municipality of Centar.
- A meeting was held with the members of the Association of Pensioners on the topic of literature and literary activity of older people. Among other things, the discussion was about the benefits of reading and discussing books among older people. The participating pensioners were given books that were donated by the National University Library.
- Thematic open days with older people.
- Participation of the target groups of the two budget forums of the Community Center

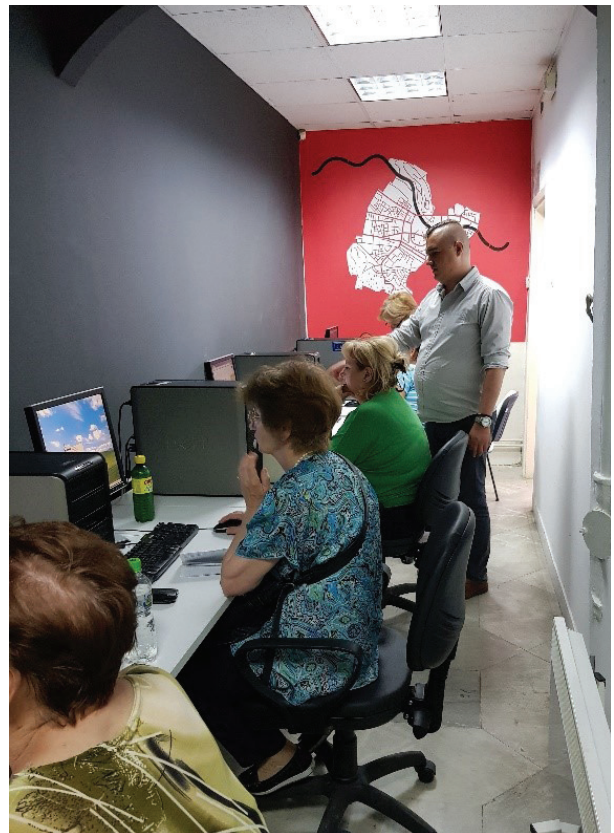
Outcomes and the lessons learned

Successful meetings and planning lead to well implemented activities. The enthusiasm and energy of the President of Association of Pensioners of the Municipality of Centar was very important in organising all the project activities.

Recommendations

Older people were really satisfied with the project activities especially with the physical exercises that were organised from January until June 2018 and they expressed their wish for the exercises to continue. They would like such exercises to be organised regularly, at least twice a week, which could not be achieved in this project due to limited resources. Older people suggested that it is good to submit a petition to the municipality of Centar, in order to meet the goals that were achieved with this project.

Older people would also like computer and information technology classes to be organised on regular basis, and more frequently than once a month. They also want inclusion and more entertainment activities in their pensioner clubs.



ECO-LOGIC

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Inclusion of older people through intergenerational exchange of knowledge and skills with young people*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: City of Skopje, Municipality of Chashka (Village of Bogomila)*
- *Time period: 01.11.2017 – 31.08.2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: The idea of the project is to connect older people with younger people, through exchange of intergenerational knowledge and experience on a variety of topics, emphasizing sustainability in homes. Older people will be connected with younger people in public spaces, in the targeted municipality of the project (municipality of Centar), and additionally in municipality of Chashka (Village of Bogomila).*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

- Older people from Municipality of Centar, in general city of Skopje, Municipality of Chashka (Village of Bogomila)
- Young people working in the civil society sector
- Young people that work as home care assistants for older people
- Young people in general
- Children from educational center Mr. Frog (involved in testing of the developed tool/ game that was used for purposes of the inclusion activities for older people)

Problem the project addresses

The problem addresses the need for inclusion of older people in society through various types of activities involving younger people. Older people are involved in our societies mainly in activities related to gaining direct benefit in terms of free transportation, discounts for various medicines and so on. On the other hand, these people are less and less included in various activities that have an educational and/ or entertainment component. The project successfully managed to involve older people, home care assistants, younger people and children in intergenerational activities that are entertaining, educational and initiated a discussion between generations.

Objectives of the project

Intergenerational exchange of experience, knowledge and opinions on variety of societal topics, emphasizing older people's preferences to stay in their natural environment (such as their home) for as long as possible.

Testing and integration of entertaining and easy to use tools and methodologies that will enable more efficient communication and interaction between older and younger people.



Main activities

- Creation of concept for workshops, communication strategy and promotion
- Open call for participation of older people in the project
- Creation of a tool in a form of a game for stimulation of discussion, opinions and share of experience and intergenerational knowledge between older people and youth
- Involvement of home care assistance care givers in the project activities
- Creation and dissemination of flyers and posters in the target municipality

- Workshops with older people, home care assistance care givers and youth, thus enabling transfer of experience, knowledge and opinion among the target groups. Activities such as explanation of basic ICT technologies (Viber, WhatsApp, Skype etc.) were delivered by younger people and home care assistants to older people.

The activities were based on the development of an innovative tool/game. The innovative tool/game initiated joint activities in the form of entertaining and educational workshops, where older and younger people were positioned in teams that had a goal to discuss, propose solutions to given environmental problems and to win the game.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

- Realisation among older people and younger people that have never met before that they can collaborate, discuss and have a good time together. It is not often seen that people from different age groups that do not know each other are involved in joint activities.
- The workshops where older people and younger people were together and divided in mixed teams that played the developed innovative game were particularly effective
- The project was designed accordingly towards the development of the activities with the educational game/ tool, which turned out to be highly effective. What could have worked better is the time frame and overall budget – where it would be good to increase the number of workshops and people involved in the project.
- Designing a tool/game that would work great with different age groups was the biggest challenge. The game that was developed by the team of Eco Logic achieved this, with high efficiency.

Recommendations

- To contact Eco Logic and ask about participating in a training for innovation in education processes. Additionally, organizations willing to be involved can contact us in order to receive printable version of the tool created in the project.
- Do not be afraid to involve older and young people at the same time in your activities, but have in mind that you need to provide entertaining, interactive and at the same time educational activities in which all of the participants are active at the same time.



UNION OF PENSIONERS' ASSOCIATIONS OF MACEDONIA

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Preventive home visits for active and healthy pensioners*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: City of Skopje - municipality of Aerodrom, Centar, Kisela Voda, Karposh and Gjorce Petrov*
- *Time period: From 01.11.2017 until 31.08.2018;*
- *Very brief description of the context: The project's theoretical design is to activate the older people through home visits by professionals, assess their individual resources and meet their health needs by adopting and maintaining healthy lifestyles. The project is a joint initiative of the Union of Pensioners' Associations of Macedonia and PHI Lilison Medika from Skopje*
- *Total project budget: 4,919.22 Euro*

Target group

The project involved municipalities of the City of Skopje with more than 10% of older people in the population. It included 250 randomly selected persons over the age of 60, as representatives of persons with different levels of independence in the performance of their activities of daily life (ADL).

Problem the project addresses

Approximately 70% of older people have three to five chronic diseases at the same time, often chronically progressive. However, the assessment and interventions of only isolated health problems in older people, without considering their functional abilities and interaction with other family members and their environment, can lead to limited and suboptimal results. On the other hand, a comprehensive health assessment is still difficult to achieve in a traditional doctor's office. Therefore, the biggest interest of the older people, according to several surveys conducted on the field, exists for health care service of a medical team at home.

Objectives of the project

Due to limited time and budget as well as the insufficient number of participants in the pilot study, the project's goals was reduced to the first steps of the envisaged program of preventive home visits (PHV) for older people, with a focus on:

establishing from the existing medical practice, the best evidence base of measures to monitor healthy lifestyles of older people,

assessing the health and social needs of 250 pensioners using a tested PHV protocol,

continuous monitoring of the health condition and habits of the pensioners, with advices and recommendations for greater physical activity and proper nutrition, as well as providing assistance and care to pensioners who need it.

Main activities

The project was implemented through a series of activities arranged in several parts:

- The project group conducted a comprehensive research on the available literature of PHV. Then a productive workshop was held with the presence of 16 participants. Utilizing the different types of data and information collected in an integrated manner, the synthesized evidence base was subsequently established, involving the members of project group in iterative discussions.
- Based on the results of the research literature and discussion in the workshop, the 2010 Easy-Care

standard proved to be the most acceptable protocol for implementing the PHV and it is tailored to the needs of the project as a (PHV-PHA) protocol for proactive health assessment of respondents. In addition, all documentation was prepared for evaluation and statistical analysis.

- The medical team conducted 250 home visits where health and social needs of pensioners were evaluated using the established (PHV-PHA) protocol. Also, care and support of 20 pensioners was carried out by caretakers of a local care association - Nega Plus.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

(PHV-PHA) protocol as a key element of the project was implemented to 250 retired participants aged 62 to 85 (average: 71 years), of which 116 were male and 134 female, with predominantly secondary and higher education. The obtained Body Mass Index (BMI) in the retirees ranged from 81 normal weight, 109 overweight, 54 obesity I degree, and 6 with II degree obesity.

In assessing the overall needs for care and support, it was found that only 17% (n = 42) of the pensioners were independent and without any need for care, 67% (n = 168) had an average need for assistance, and 16% (n = 40) a high need for care and support (see the graph). For the majority of pensioners, most often they needed support and care in the areas of “mental health and general well-being” (157/250), “healthy living” (167/250), “self-care” (68/250) and “mobility” (113/250). Regarding the assessment of the so-called “risk of breakdown in care”, the lowest score of 1 point and low risk was received by 41 pensioners (16%) and the average score of 2-3 points and moderate risk was 67 pensioners (27%). In assessing the “risk of falls”, only 25 (10%) participants from the target group reached the value of 3 or more points, i.e. a high risk of falling.

Recommendations

Based on the results and experiences from the research and the identified evidence base, we propose the (PHV-PHA) protocol to be used in the next phase of this project - implementation of the PHV program in a larger representative sample of the target group retirees.



The PHV should be in the form of an interview with open and well-structured questions that enable to conduct home visit in a personalized way. It is also important to have a manual on interventions and treatment prepared, which will contain information about services in the local community, especially in the health and social area.

With a certain reserve that the pilot project includes a limited number of participants, our conclusion is that the (PHV-PHA) protocol implemented in this way can be used to identify the health risks in older people with different levels of ADL addiction. Most importantly, it seems that the (PHV-PHA) protocol is enough sensitive to identify health risks in the older people with good health, and that are those that represent the target group of PHV throughout Macedonia.



ASSOCIATION RAINBOW

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Share a smile - tell a story*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Municipality Radovich*
- *Time period: 8 months;*
- *Very brief description of the context: Smiles, smiles and only smiles*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

Older people. This particular group is chosen because it is the most vulnerable due to low level of knowledge about their rights.

Problem the project addresses

Dysfunctional families view older family members as a burden. When younger family members use their pension money they also make them completely dependent and this is a very common occurrence in the rural regions. Older people are frequently expelled from their houses in order to make room for younger family members who need their own rooms so they have to live in a new, alien environment.

Objectives of the project

Drawing attention to difficult position some older people are in, without support from even their family members

Changing public awareness of the problem of loneliness of older people

Strengthening the sense of belonging among older people and combating loneliness

Main activities

- Visits to natural environments with picnics and socializing
- A special programme for entertainment of older women
- Joint workshops for interaction between older and younger people to share their experiences and skills
- Inter-ethnic collaboration with Turks etc.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

We caused positive changes in more than 80 homes with raising the awareness in older people about the fact that they need not only food and medication but also social contacts, a warm cup of coffee but serviced with a honest smile, they need respect, and someone to spend time with.

The most effective activities were those in nature and those which had interaction from all of the participants especially when they were working on something together (for example: cooking).

More outdoor activities would have been preferable by the participants, as would have been more joint activities such as chess contests organised at homes of some of the participants.

The main challenges were related to transporting the participants during outdoor



activities. We had capacity to transport 35-50 people but had a lot more interested ones. These challenges were very complex because we needed to explain to the people that couldn't come with us on the first trip that we are planning more trips and that we will include all of them.

Recommendations

- Be honest with the members of your target groups, be available on the phone for them and be very to react when they need you.
- Always approach older people with respect no matter the situation.
- If they are gathered somewhere on the street or in someone's yard go and shake their hands with a friendly smile
- Give them a nice compliment whenever possible and make a friendly contact



ASSOCIATION OPEN THE WINDOWS

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Information Technology and the Third Age*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: City of Skopje*
- *Time period: 11/1/107 – 08/31/2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Our country has long since passed the threshold of demographic ageing. With persons over the age of 60 accounting for 15% of the population at the 2002 Census, the Republic of Macedonia exceeds the 12% coefficient of older population. Technological development, on the other hand, is rapid and further contributes to deepening the gap between generations and making it more difficult for older people to be actively engaged in the society.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 Euro*

Target group

Older people in Macedonia are falling behind the modern trends of living. The project enabled thirty older people to access to information and communication technology and the Internet, and thus to join the digital community. The project worked to enable them to: feel more fulfilled and independent, stimulate their minds and provide improved social inclusion.

Problem the project addresses

Information and communication technology can pose a challenge to older people due to many things, including reduced mobility or weaker eyesight. However, assisting older people with accessing this technology helps them overcome the same challenges and makes it easier for them to participate in the society.



Objectives of the project

The overall project objective was to raise the awareness that older people can fully enjoy the benefits of the modern digital world.

The specific project objective was to strengthen the capacities of older people related to information and communication technologies and the use of Internet so they can be more easily involved in the community.

The project also strived to convey the message that access to computers and the internet for older citizens and the improvement of their computer skills contribute to the progress and well-being of the society.

Main activities

Identification of potential participants

The project team conducted a research to identify thirty older people and their needs for computer use.

Workshops on basic ICT skills

The participants came once a week for one-hour workshops for basic computer and Internet use. They were divided in groups in order to ensure quality and person-centred approach for each participant that included a needs assessment, an assistive device recommendation and software adjustment. The workshops were for basic office programmes and basic Internet use.

Workshops on e-designs

This activity gave the participants an opportunity to learn how to use their skills in practice by producing e-products. With the support of the team they produced an anthology on different topics, which emerged from their interests. For example, they selected topics such as travel, gardening and entertainment.

Final event

A public event was organized where the achievements of the participants in the e-workshops were presented. The event served to promote and raise public awareness of the active involvement of the older citizens in the community.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Lifelong learning is one of the main factors for creating an inclusive society when it comes to older citizens. Continuous acquisition of new skills is the main key for them to realize their full potential.

„When I heard about the possibility of attending the trainings I did not hesitate to apply. Until then, I had no experience of any kind in a computer use. At first, it was very confusing and difficult. I thought I would never learn. The keyboard confused me with all the buttons and signs, it looked as I was in a cockpit of an airplane. But with time it was becoming easier and interesting. I must say that the trainer’s patience contributed to the trainings becoming relaxing.“ – Violeta Ivanovska, project participant.

The main challenge was that the participants needed time to acquire the knowledge and a lot of repetition of the material. The team thus decided to hold two sessions in one day, which proved to be very useful.

Recommendations

The project team recommends the organisations wishing to replicate the project in their communities to prioritize the use of ICT with older people as it carries significant potential for their inclusion in society. Also, it is recommended to apply a person centred approach because most of the older people have specific needs due to their aggravated mobility and perception.

Lessons learned that might be useful to organisations wishing to replicate the project in their communities are:

- The project has shown beyond doubt that use of ICT can serve as an instrument that can better involve and motivate adults to participate and engage their interest in the community.
- The team learned that older people are likely to initially experience confusion because of the odd ICT jargon.
- Teaching older people about ICT and internet is a hard but a rewarding task.



Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Preparation of Local Action Plans for Social Inclusion of older people*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Vinica and Makedonska Kamenica*
- *Time period: 01.11.2017- 31.08.2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: The daily reform process in the social sector in the Republic of Macedonia poses a need for increased participation of the civil sector in the planning of strategies and action plans for social inclusion of older people. Vinica and Makedonska Kamenica are rural municipalities without strategies and action plans for social inclusion of older people. Thus, there is the need to define jointly between older people and the relevant institutions, the priorities that will inform the action plans for both Municipalities.*
- *Total project budget: 4,934.15 euro*

Target group

The target group of the project are older people from Vinica and Makedonska Kamenica, representatives of: older people with disabilities, mobility problems, lonely older people and housewives, informal caregivers.

Problem the project addresses

There are more problems related to the social inclusion of older people:

The municipalities of Vinica and Makedonska Kamenica are emigrant areas. Young people go for temporary work abroad, and their parents (retirees) remain alone in their homes. There is a lack of using preventive healthcare programs for older people, and there is no systematic approach to solving this problem; Older people from rural areas have been forgotten; The potential of older people (expertise, skills, abilities, etc.) is not used to include them in the overall social life of the community; Older people are not involved in decision-making at local level.

Objectives of the project

- Improving the quality of life of older people
- Defining and determining the problems and risks of social inclusion
- Promotion and affirmation of social inclusion
- Exercising the rights and meeting the needs arising from decentralization



Main activities

- Preparation of questionnaires.
- Establishment of working groups in the two municipalities, adoption of a rulebook on the work of the working groups, situation analysis, survey, organization of focus groups, round tables, presentation of EU experiences in the field, defining problems, grouping them, priorities, strategic goals, sub-goals, activities and action plans, fundraising plan, monitoring and evaluation, preparing the document, organizing a public hearing on it and finalizing it.
- Adoption of the document by municipal councils and establishment of a coordinative body for monitoring and evaluation of the action plans.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Local Action Plans for Social Inclusion of older people in the Municipalities of Vinica and Makedonska Kamenica have been developed. The Local Action Plan for Vinica has been adopted by the Council of the Municipality of Vinica and the Local Action Plan for Makedonska Kamenica is in the process of adoption. All the activities envisaged in the project were effective. The whole process was participatory and democratic with respect to each individual and every opinion was considered with respect.

The main challenges were overcome by coordination and timely communication with the target group and all stakeholders involved in the process of preparation of the local action plans. Inter-institutional cooperation should work better. The older people represented by the Pensioners' Associations from both municipalities should work to improve communication with local and national authorities, to find real alliance to support in implementation of their mission.

Recommendations

- Our recommendations are as follows:
- Obtain support from the target group
- Obtain support from the local community (municipality, schools, kindergartens, social welfare centres, NGOs, cultural institutions, etc.).
- Make work rules and stick to them
- Follow the time limits of the sessions
- Actively listen
- Make sure your work is known and well publicised
- Sign memorandums of cooperation with key actors in the process
- Explain their role in the process
- Explain the benefits that the target group will have and why they are important to the main actors in the process
- Create a communication plan directed at the different actors in the process



JUSTICIA

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Self-esteem and social inclusion - a prerequisite for dignified aging*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Kumanovo*
- *Time period: 01.11.2017- 31.08.2018*
- *Total project budget: 4,976.77 euro*

Target group

The target group are older people who were active before retirement, intellectuals, former experts, managers, artist, other. This particular target group was chosen because it is most neglected, even discriminated because society does not recognise their capacities.

Problem the project addresses

The problem of vital, talented and highly educated older people is loneliness, isolation, loss of self-esteem, the feeling that the community does not need them, that they are useless despite the knowledge and experience they have. They don't have hobbies, have much free time, have the need for social contacts and also for integration and using their capacities.

Raising the awareness of the public about their vital energy and possibilities to be active in the society as well as engaging the vital older people, on topics that are of their interest and necessary was the main idea in this project.



Objectives of the project

Transferring knowledge and skills that will bring together older and younger generations, NGOs and the business sector

Encouraging self-confidence and inclusion in the social life

Encouraging healthy aging, tranquillity and avoiding stressful situations

Encouraging older people to run their own courses, to volunteer and get involved internships, exchange of knowledge and mentoring with younger generations

The same model can be replicated elsewhere, the possibility of opening courses, where lecturers will be older experienced persons

Main activities

Project started with a press conference, with older participants, representatives from municipalities and other subjects. The communication aspect was very important with frequent use of social media, distribution of leaflets statements to local TV and internet portals for every event with short briefings, photographs, and videos. Finally an electronic book of artworks from the workshops in the project was published. These activities were chosen because they contributed to raising the public awareness about vital energy of older people and their capacity to be active in society.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

This project increased public awareness about the capacities and energy of older people.

Particularly effective were workshops for project management, writing, dancing bachata, painting on glass, writing poetry and haiku and senryū.

If there was funding for better media communication (a coordinator assistant position), we feel the project would have been even more successful.

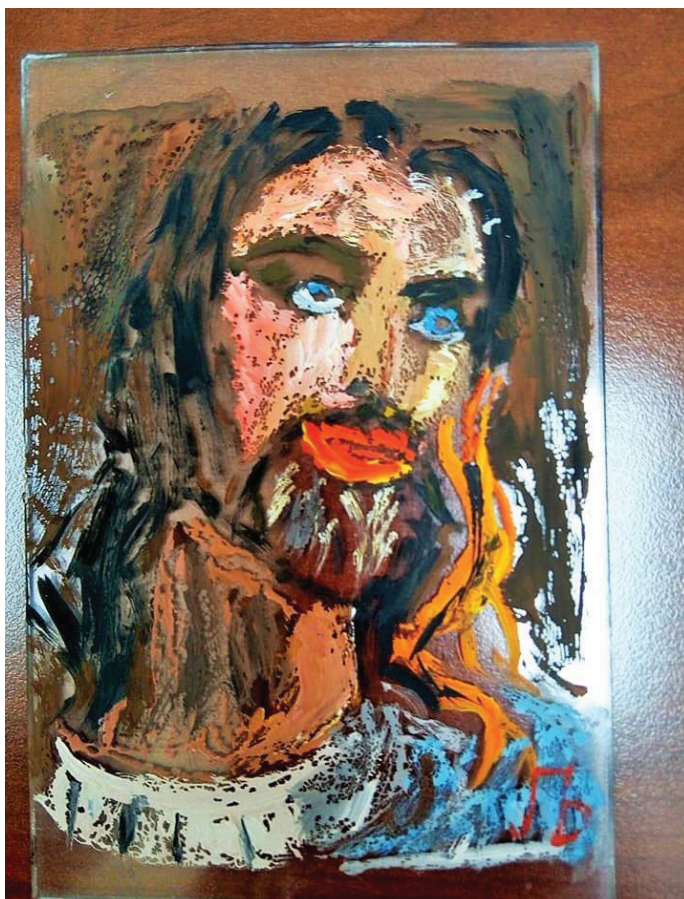
Recommendations

It is good to have memorandums for cooperation with Associations of Pensioners in the municipalities where the project is being implemented.

Very useful is to have one more paid person, as a project assistant for organizing workshops. There is sufficient work for at least 2-3 persons on the project.

Always have a line in budget for information in newspapers (internet portal) or some agreement with them in advance.

Source educators and venue space from local organizations of older people if you can because it helps you and empowers them.



Quotes

“The Pensioners’ Association “Kumanovo” Kumanovo, in which members of the pensioners from the municipalities of Kumanovo, Lipkovo and Staro Nagoricane in the last few years, have rightly been given special attention to dedicate to the older generation. Several projects were implemented to help older people how to go through a visit easier, relaxed life.

In this function, with great pleasure, we also accepted the offered cooperation with the Association “Justicia”. With the mentorship of the chair Ms. Olivera Docevska, at the end of last and the beginning of this year, eight workshops were held on many interesting and popular topics by eminent lecturers. The topics were interesting, which attracted attention of over 160 pensioners from the retirement branches of the city and Lipkovo.

The series of educational and creative workshops were evaluated positively, because it helped the participants to gain new insights, new faces in the function of gaining self-confidence in better organizing life for more dignified aging.

In the Association we are sharing the pleasure that we have collaborators like “Justicia” and Ms. Olivera Docevska. Spirko Nikolovski, President of Pensioners’ Association “Kumanovo”

“Presenting to them the rules for successful communication with the media, I think that those who took part in the workshop went richer for new knowledge, and those who want to get involved in advocacy and lobbying the goals of the ZPC will be easier for them, because they got basic knowledge of the topic. They are, I am sure, that they will be able to make the acquired knowledge visible in the work of the Association in the future, and to popularize the models that were presented to them. All in all, after the completion of the creative workshop, the general impression is that everyone was satisfied with the two-hour friendship, the participants, the organizers and the educators.”

Jasmina Todorovska, educator, journalist

CONTACT

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Active living*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Centar and Cair municipalities, Skopje*
- *Time period: 01.11.2017- 31.08.2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: The main need of the old people is to strengthen their physical and mental capacities for dealing with the everyday challenges related to ageing. In order to be able to cope with all of the challenges, they need help and support through counselling and training.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 euro*

Target group

The selected group are people over 60 that have capacities for personal growth and development. In order to be able to practice the training for personal growth and development, it is crucial to have a healthy mental potential for following the activities.

Problem the project addresses

Mental health problems of people of the older age are mostly undiagnosed as a result of the fact that in the Republic of Macedonia there are almost no institutions and specialization intended for working with mental health of older people.

At the same time, the number of educated therapists and counsellors who have passed appropriate education for psychotherapy is very low, the services in this area are not yet within the public institutions and they are not covered by the health insurance.



Objectives of the project

The main goal of the project was to increase the awareness of the influence of mental health on the quality of life in the late adulthood as well as to implement different models and methods for improving the current situation. The specific goals were to increase the knowledge for recognizing and managing the emotions and different psychological conditions; to improve the communicational skills and methods for managing conflict situations; to understand the consequences of the emotional prison and to practice techniques for preventing and developing the emotional health.

Main activities

Workshops on the different topics: Psychology of aging, Stress management, Communicational skills and conflict management, Emotions and communication, Emotional health, Bodily processes and their influence on the mental process that were implemented by using interactive methods and practical tools where older people had an opportunity to recognize and develop different capabilities for preventing and improving their mental health.

The creation of workshops that were implemented within the project “Active living” was the result of years of experience with different clients and groups by the gestalt therapists involved into the project. We created the book “Active living” which is the first book in Macedonia created to be the guidance for the current and future therapists, counsellors and professionals in the field of mental health of how to use different humanistic methods and tools in order to effectively and efficiently work with older people.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

We managed to create the complete program for working on the emotional growth and development of older people as well as to develop the creative methods for dealing with the main challenges in the late adulthood.

The participants learned how to deal with stress and negative emotions as well as to ask adequate people and institutions for help when needed. They become aware of ageism, discrimination and abuse and were educated on how to behave if something like that happens to them.

They learned that the rest of their lives are their responsibility and that they can choose to live actively and with dignity or can remain passive and ignorant.

We created the first book for professionals that work in the field of mental health with practical guidance, tools and recommendations for implementing the adaptive approach when working with the clients in the late adulthood.

Recommendations

The key to the application of Gestalt therapy in working with people of the third age is the mutual relation between the therapist and the client, that is the contact between a therapist and a client who is self-healing. In doing so, it is crucial for the therapist to be free from all prejudices and generalized opinions on people in the older age, since, most frequently, they are the biggest obstacle that can affect the effectiveness of the treatment. Additionally, the therapist should have extensive knowledge of the culture of different ethnic groups, especially if he works in multicultural and multi-ethnic environments. People in the older age who live in a family environment and have support from the family have completely different needs from people in the older age where such type of support is missing.



LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY STRUGA

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Seniors can do it too!*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Ohrid, Struga, Debrca*
- *Time period: December 2017 – August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: Older people are the most excluded group in the society. Younger people are emigrating, and older people are left alone. Target municipalities do not have organized care for older people or retirement homes.*
- *Total project budget: 4,403 euro*

Target group

People over 60 from Ohrid, Struga and Debrca. We have chosen this target groups as in these municipalities there is no organized system of care for older people nor there are retirement homes.

Problem the project addresses

Access to information about health, legal issues, how to prepare healthy food.

Access to tailor made physical trainings adapted to older people – currently there is no place where older people can exercise.

Objectives of the project

Older people are empowered to deal with their health challenges and the communities are aware of social exclusion of older people

Main activities

- Educational campaign “Seniors can do it too”
- 16 yoga workshops for seniors
- Four mini courses for preparing healthy meals
- Six presentations for preventive medicine
- At least five media appearances
- These activities were implemented within 7 months in Struga, Ohrid and/or Debarca.



Activities were chosen, as in target municipalities there is no possibility for older people to hear or participate on these kind of workshops. We believe that having access to information about preventive medicine, healthy food, and exercises will improve older people’s health, and provide opportunities for them to interact and feel less isolated.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

More than 400 older people participated in the workshops. They felt respected and included because someone showed interest in their wellbeing. Particularly effective were cooking lessons as older people learned to easily prepare healthy food, as well as learned how food can help reduce some of their health problems. Also yoga workshops were very popular, as older people said that for the first time they felt comfortable to exercise. Other exercising courses are dedicated to young people so older people do not participate.

Tango workshop was very well accepted. We should have organized more dance workshops.

Main challenges were related to the winter period in which it was difficult for older people to participate due to weather conditions, frozen streets, cold weather. The activities that demanded older people leave their homes would be better implemented in warmer periods (spring, autumn). Summer is also not a good period as it is very hot.

It would be good to have organized tours for older people visiting some nice places as they would relax and meet their friends in a nice setting.

We also feel more workshops related to legal issues (inheritance etc.) would have been very well received.

Recommendations

Yoga or some other adequate exercising program is very beneficial for older people. They need to be with people of their age, as they feel uncomfortable to exercise with young people in same room.

Healthy cooking is very attractive to older people.

Dance workshops brought lot of happiness and joy to older people.

Recommended dynamics is once a week.

You should provide transport for older people who live more far.

Spread information via posters - Best way to spread information is to place posters (written with big letters) at pharmacies, local grocery shops, doctors' offices.

Once the first workshop is done take everyone's telephone number and in the future communicate with them via telephone. It takes a lot of time, but older people feel so good when someone is inviting them to events or just talks to them regularly. We have created a data base of 200 contacts and kept inviting older people via telephone for every workshop.



SUMNAL

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Creating a better future*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Chair, Topaana, Skopje*
- *Time period: November 2017 to August 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: The goal of the project was to involve older people in the society and their socialization. Through the socializing of younger and older people, the project contributed to the historiography and preservation of material culture of the Roma, recording the testimonies of older people.*
- *Total project budget: 5,000 euro*

Target group

The target group in the project are socially excluded older members of the Roma community who have much to give and transfer to young people, but, no one pays attention to them, due to their material or financial condition leading to their social exclusion. At the same time, this target group was selected in order to socialize, but also to acquire skills and knowledge from the fields of information technology and smartphones, and other fields, through different the thematic workshops.

Problem the project addresses

A specific problem related to the social inclusion of older people, is their socialization and involvement in the society, as well as socializing of the older people with young people in order to exchange intergenerational opinions, experiences and knowledge on various topics in the field of social protection, care for older people, access to technology and the use of smartphones in modern society. Also, many of them are not included in the social and cultural life which includes the preservation of traditional Roma culture.



Objectives of the project

Overall objective of the project

Older people contribute actively contribute to preservation of the material and spiritual culture of the Roma and the contemporary Macedonian society by transferring their knowledge, skills, testimonies and experiences to the young generations.

Specific objective of the project

Creating a sustainable, efficient model for transferring knowledge and skills that will bring together younger and older generations that will facilitate understanding and help to establish social relationships between people belonging to different age groups.

Main activities

The project was implemented through 6 main activities:

- Informing the community and creating lists of participants in the project by including older excluded persons at social risk and young members of the Roma community.
- Arrangement of the space for social club for socializing of people, conducting education and training for active participation

- Design and implementation of a set of joint training courses for using the internet and the smartphones.
- Implementing a set of 20 thematic workshops.
- Joint work in script writing and selection of short documentary themes.
- Organization and implementation of events for the promotion of short documentaries in the areas of the Republic of Macedonia where the Roma population lives.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

50 older people as well as 50 young people from the community took an active part in the implementation and realization of the project. A social club for intergenerational cooperation and communication was created in order to promote active citizenship among young people and older people. Out of the total number of participants, 50 older people are able to use information technology and mobile phones in order to obtain services and various information relevant to them. 50 young people from the community took part in the workshops and helped older people to



learn the basics of mobile phone and Internet use. 20 thematic information workshops on various topics held by experts were organised. 437 people participated, out of which 337 older people and 100 young people from the community. A short documentary film was created as a result of the joint collaboration. This activity as part of the project was very interesting for older people, because it promoted the model of intergenerational cooperation and showed them they can influence certain elements of public and social life.

Recommendations

Social protection of older people is important but equally important are socialization and integration in the society, inclusion of older people in the social and cultural life. Encouraging and maintaining the creativity of older people, encouraging and maintaining matrimonial creativity, the power of sharing experiences as well as using and fully developing the potentials of older people in the environment in which they live are all good ways to increase their social inclusion.

The promotion and implementation of national policies for older people should be in accordance with European Union standards and policies;

WOMEN'S ORGANISATION PEHCHEVO

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: With coffee we talk about life – sometime and now*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Pehcevo*
- *Time period: 01.11.2017-31.08.2018*
- *Very brief description of the context: The need for social support for older people increases with the changing health, cognitive and emotional status. The imbalance between needs and opportunities in the social environment negatively affects the well-being of older people. They often need little help, but there is no one to give it.*
- *Total project budget: 4.943,93*

Target group

Most of our beneficiaries living in rural areas are older people who have lived alone for a longer period of time. Their social inclusion in day care centers is almost impossible due to distances: they need transportation and this is financially unsustainable.

Our target group had the opportunity to socialize, talk and get support for basic life needs. What our target group needs is a little attention and opportunity to talk to each other or to a younger person from the environment.

Problem the project addresses

As people get older, their social roles and relationships are changing. Older people need social integration with the environment, especially if they live alone. A lonely life leads to the loss of the critical context for social integration with the environment.

The need for social support for older people increases with the changing health, cognitive and emotional status.

Objectives of the project

Providing social support to older people in accordance with the changing health, cognitive and emotional status.

Main activities

Organization and realization of 20 meetings and socializing with older people in their homes, with the project team, consisting of a doctor, a nurse, a social worker and a teacher. In the team we always had young people who listened with attention to the life stories told by older people. It was obvious from the faces of older people what it meant to them to have someone to talk to.

We also realized a final event in Pehcevo, with musical numbers (choir of the Association of Pensioners in Pehcevo) and the event where we presented the report on the results of the project, was attended by 90% of the participants in the meetings.

Older actively participated in organisation of meetings, especially when those were organised at their homes.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

With our activities we became loud and made the situation of older people in our community visible;

We have shown that the older and lonely people, frequently living notably below the poverty line, especially in the rural areas.

We made their needs visible through the meetings held with relevant stakeholders in our community.

It is evident that most of older people are female, and one of the reasons for their invisibility is gender inequality, as a tradition.

The National Strategy for older people, also provides a form of accommodation of older people in foster families, but this has not yet been put into practice. We recommend that the criteria for registering potential foster families be reduced to local opportunities.

The effect of our activities will also be visible through sending the reports of registered weaknesses in the system of care for older people to the local community decision-makers. We will follow up by asking for them to be addressed, and to increase the level of civic participation of older people in the decision-making bodies on matters of public interest.

Recommendations

Our recommendation is in every city, in every village to identify such older people in need, they will be surprised how much we can learn about life from them, of course through a “coffee conversation”.

Older people need socializing. Only material allowances and support are not enough; social integration is important for people with a pronounced intellectual capacity who can use it in the social environment. Participants in the meetings expressed great pleasure with this type of meetings.

We can quote statements that are the same for all environments where we were hanging out:

“How did you remember to beautify our lives?”

“We forgot to talk, because there is no one around to talk to;”

“We are two, we are powerless and we began to fight all day, from the great love that we had for a lifetime, we begin to hate each other;”

“The days are long, very long as are the nights when there is no one to come into your house.”

“Oh my God, Sabri, that is you? Please, come, visit me, because I can not visit you... “and so on.

Microprojects summaries - Montenegro

Out of 21 applications, 12 projects were selected for support.

DEMOCRATIC CENTRE OF BIJELO POLJE

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: „Contribution to the inclusion of older people in society”*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Municipality of Bijelo Polje*
- *Time period: 10 months*
- *Very brief description of the context: All data shows that older people are in an unenviable position and that significant numbers among them receive insufficient care. By adopting Local Action Plans primarily in the municipality Bijelo Polje, additional support services for older people will be developed and the special services in the social protection system intended for older people provided by the institutions in Bijelo Polje will be promoted and brought closer to them.*
- *Total project budget: 4,967 Euro*

Target group

Direct target groups are older households and lonely older people who live in the Municipality of Bijelo Polje. This project also includes indirect target groups consisting of representatives of institutions dealing with social and health care in these municipalities. Also indirect target groups are NGOs in the Bijelo Polje and Berane municipalities, the media and all citizens living in the areas of these municipalities, as well as organizations that need to deal more responsibly with the problems faced by the older people.



Problem the project addresses

Generally low standard of living directly reflects on the quality of life of the older people. Due to the physical impossibility of additional business, on the one hand, and special health needs, on the other hand, older people are condemned to poverty. In addition to the need for materially better living conditions and social inclusion, the needs of older people are adequate health care, the existence of entertainment, sports and cultural content appropriate to their needs and interests and raising the level of awareness and moral responsibility for everyday care for older people. The realization of these needs can only be ensured in the long term only by popularizing the idea of the older people as equal and active members of the community that are in the age of reduced life energy due to biological aging, but possess accumulated knowledge that must not be ignored.

Objectives of the project

The objective of this project is to increase the level of use of social support services for older people, as well as to contribute to increasing the participation of older people in the creation of public policies in the Bijelo Polje and Berane municipalities. The specific objectives of this project are: increasing the level of information provided by older people to the providers of social protection services, contributing to a sustainable model of providing social care services for older people and raising the level of knowledge and skills in the decision-making process at the local level.

Main activities

- Conducting research and preparing a study of the needs of older people.
- Visiting households of older and lonely people by volunteers of the NGO “Democratic Centre Bijelo Polje”.
- Organizing the Forum of older people and trainings for them.
- Creation of promotional material.

Outcomes and the lessons learned:

- Increased awareness of older people about social care services.
- Better mechanisms for using social support services.
- Increased level of information on how to participate in the decision-making process.

What activities were particularly effective?

Submitting an initiative for the elaboration of a sustainable model of providing social care services for older people.

Education of 15 persons on how to participate in decision-making processes.



What could have worked better?

Education in the rural areas and promotion of social care services.

What were the main challenges and how were they overcome?

Lack of interest of older people to engage in project activities.

Distance of rural areas.

The lack of interest of the media to follow the activities.

Recommendations

- Continuous activities on encouraging older people to get involved in the decision making process.
- Inclusion of the older people in the social processes.
- Fulfilling leisure time for older people - organizing volunteer gatherings.
- Promotion of social inclusion services.

In the rural areas the majority of older people are not educated and therefore do not even want to integrate into social processes. Therefore, it is necessary to continuously communicate with these persons and work on breaking prejudices. It is also necessary to create an activity where older people will realize that they are part of social processes and they need to participate in projects.

EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC INITIATIVES - EDI

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Active together"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: NGO "European democratic initiatives" - Kotor*
- *Time period: 10 months*
- *Very brief description of the context:*
- *The "Together Active" is a multidisciplinary project that focuses on improving the quality of life of older people and fulfilling their leisure time with various creative activities through art programs that will contribute to the greater involvement of older people in the community through their active participation and efficient use of existing programs. By involving older people in art workshops, we strive to encourage creativity, contribute to their greater socialization, create a sense of usefulness, improve their mental health, achieve a subjective sense of contentment, maintain their self-esteem, as well as mental and physical activity, achieve a sense of greater autonomy.*
- *Total project budget: 4,960.86 Euro*

Target group

The target group of the project are: older people (female and male) over 65/67 years old from Kotor municipality. The target group of the project are particularly persons from socially vulnerable population, persons with disabilities, older people who live in a single household or those neglected by their families.

Problem the project addresses

By achieving the project goal, we will enable older people to be no longer merely recipients of services, but become providers of services, which will significantly contribute to the improvement of their mental health, achieving a subjective sense of life satisfaction, maintaining self-esteem, maintaining mental and physical activities, greater autonomy, better organization of time including spending time on creation of paintings and creative works.



Objectives of the project

The overall goal of the project is to reduce vulnerability and contribute to improving the quality of life and increasing the social inclusion of older people in the community (their natural environment) and strengthening the active participation of older people through the implementation of art and creative programs.

Main activities

- Organizing educational workshops;
- Organizing workshops for carnival masks;
- Informing the general public about the project – media campaign

Art workshops encourage creativity of older people and enable them to independently or in an organised way continue to work on creative endeavours even after the project is completed. For some of the participants this was the way to engage in activities they have been interested in but did not have time or opportunities in previous years.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

In the beginning of the project implementation, the number of participants in the art workshop was rather low. Older people were unsure about their creative energy and did not see the purpose of their participation. However, with the repeated workshops, the numbers increased and the older people started expressing their creative inspiration.



What activities were particularly effective?

More than half of the participants of the creative workshops were persons with disabilities, some of them with serious mobility issues. Most of them loved to work with clay as it enabled them to make different shapes, characters.

What could have worked better?

Motivating older people to participate in the creative workshops was difficult in the beginning. We feel that organising visits to art exhibitions would have helped as the participants would feel inspired and get ideas that way.

What were the main challenges and how were they overcome?

The main challenge during the workshop, especially at the beginning, was to convince older people that they can do it. It was done through a warm, friendly conversation. Some older people in the beginning just came to socialise and did not want to engage creatively, but this also changed with time.

Recommendations

Organizations that want to replicate this project must do it with love, with great dedication, always paying attention to all participants and through making sure to talk to them inspire them to creatively use their free time and create something nice and useful for them and for others.

Implementation of the project “Together active” contributed to:

- the improvement of social care for older people, development of awareness and broader aspects for the need to create the best conditions for older people;
- older people spending their free time in various activities, socialising and feeling useful.

“The art workshops help us spend our free time well. Sometimes we just don’t know what to do with all the free time we have and it passes very slowly. Now, that we can get together and work together, the time goes faster.” – One beneficiary

GORICA

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "My garden in the green heart of the city"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Podgorica*
- *Time period: December 2017 – august 2018.*
- *Very brief description of the context:*
- *The project offered the older people the space in which, through regular physical activities and in cooperation with other people of similar age – as well as in interaction with young people – they creatively contributed to the preservation and maintaining of public green spaces.*
- *Total project budget: 4,950 Euro*

Target group

Older physically active people. Older people want to work actively in the environment and are happy to work with younger generations that promote generational and intergenerational cooperation, volunteer work and active aging.

Problem the project addresses

The main issue solved by the project is the involvement of older people in the ecological and volunteer activities of the community.

Objectives of the project

The problem of intergenerational cooperation, be it in volunteering or in business cooperation, is evident in our environment. The project will significantly contribute to the mitigation of this problem, especially as the project will continue last for many years and many groups of older people will be involved in project activities. There are several problems that this project will try to solve (lack of lifelong learning activities, loneliness, and lack of physical activity of older people ...), and we consider that the main problem that will be solved by the implementation of this micro-project is the insufficient involvement of older people in the ecological/ volunteer activities in the community.

Also, since the issue of a healthy environment is more pronounced day by day, and the need for constant development of environmental awareness is necessary, the goal of the project is to develop ecological awareness, to actively participate in the maintenance of urban green areas and the development of volunteerism. Skills and knowledge will connect younger and older generations, facilitate understanding and creation of social connections between generations, and we are convinced that the project can be replicated in other Montenegrin cities.

Main activities

- Removal of invasive plant species and shrinkage of the terrain.
- Preparation of earthen substrate.
- Procurement and planting of the necessary plant material.
- Garden maintenance.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

The project is part of the first "Mediterranean Garden" in Podgorica (Montenegro). From the abandoned part of the Gorica hill, we have created an oasis of peace, education and relaxation.

What activities were particularly effective?

Volunteer actions

What could have worked better?

We are fully satisfied with the realization of all project activities.

Recommendations

Together, older people and youth, they can work on the green areas in urban settings and enjoy them together.

Provide at least three key lessons learned:

- Solidarity
- Enthusiasm
- Love for nature



HUMANITARIAN

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Social inclusion of the single older people from rural area of municipality of Niksic*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Niksic*
- *Time period: 1.12.2017- 30.9.2018.*
- *Very brief description of the context*
- *Implemented in 6 Municipal Communities in a rural area. The project team included volunteers and representatives of MC entities. Activities included 370 visits to older people, 621 phone calls, 18 meetings, 6 workshops, 90 individual educational conversations and the Round table. Nine procedures for achieving of social and protective rights were initiated. The media coverage included a show on national TV, two guest spots on local TV, two articles in newspapers and five radio announcements.*
- *Total project budget: 4,998 Euro (5,708 with some additional funding)*

Target group

Target group consisted of 91 single older people from rural area in 6 MC, 70 members of MC entities and 20 representatives of educational, health and religious institutions. Older people were chosen from a group of previously identified 311 socially vulnerable ageing households; The 91 single older people were in the most difficult situation due to their loneliness among all other problems. Representatives of MC entities were included with a view to increasing their capacities and motivation for participation in implementation of the project activities.



Problem the project addresses

Project addresses: loneliness, health care, poor material conditions, difficulties in exercising one's guaranteed rights and insufficient participation of older people in social events. The comment of the sculptor Mijo Mijušković when receiving an award for his work – **The biggest award for a man of 85 years is CONVERSATION** – best illustrates how loneliness affects older people. Focus group members complained mostly about the lack of conversation. They used to tell the visitors things like „Stay a little bit more!“ and asked „When will you come again?“

Objectives of the project

Overall objective:

To increase the level of integrated social protection of older people and quality of their life in their natural environment.

Specific objectives:

To minimise the sense of loneliness, lack of perspective and being neglected of 91 single older people from rural area of municipality of Niksic.

To increase capacities of entities in 6 Municipal Communities from the rural area of the municipality of Niksic for activation and taking part in implementation of the activities that will contribute to social inclusion of older people in their areas.

Main activities

- Psycho-social support for single older persons through home visits and phone calls. It was the most significant activity for beneficiaries because they did not feel lonely at least during our visits.
- Creating preconditions for phone communication of the single older person. During first visit they had been given leaflets and instructions for their usage. Important numbers on the leaflets enabled them to communicate with other people of „the same destiny“.
- Organisation of one-day educational workshops and individual conversations for older people and representatives of MC entities in 6 local communities on the subject „Active ageing in the natural environment“. As the attendance was low, the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older people (visiting Montenegro and, following the suggestion of the Red Cross of Serbia, contacting the TASIOP project partners) suggested the usage of individual educating of older people in their homes which produced very good results.
- Organisation of the Round table on the subject: „Situation and problems of older people from rural area and opportunities for their resolving“. Members of the Focus group took really active part in the work. The comment of Janičić Slavojka: **“Well, now we are not alone anymore”** is a positive indicator of successful implementation of the project.
- Design of info-materials and media campaign.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Project implementation created a set of positive changes for both the single older persons and local communities. The single older persons are not lonely as they used to be, the level of their self-confidence and the knowledge on active ageing in the natural environment increased. Project team gained their trust which turned into an ongoing friendly relationship. Capacities of MC entities also increased. Montenegrin public, responsible state authorities and Organisations were acquainted with situation, problems of the older persons from rural area, as well as demographic changes via national TV. The approach was based on reverence, with complete elimination of bureaucratic and clerical method and avoidance of classic lectures with emphasis on optimistic view on their future life. Given the fact that NGO HUMANITARAC implemented 3 large EU projects and over 80 local projects from social field, this micro project was not particularly challenging. It turned out that severe weather conditions can be limited factor which resulted in delay of some visits.

Recommendations

- While working with older people please show respect for their situation and their way of living, and avoid bureaucratic approach. Avoid classic lecturing. Try not to talk about „dark sides of life“.
- Give priority to development of positive view of their future life.
- Do not show unpleasant feelings even if you find older people living in a very bad hygienic conditions.
- Older people in Montenegro are very hospitable so do not reject when they offer you a treat (coffee, juice).
- When visiting older people living in rural area, always bring the stick, get adequate clothes and shoes (high-heel shoes are not recommended).



IMPULSE

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Social and psychological support to older persons*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Municipality of Niksic*
- *Time period: 01.12.2017. – 01.10.2018.*
- *Very brief description of the Context:*
- *The aim of the project was organization of socio-educational and counselling workshops for the purpose of providing concrete help and assistance to older people in resolving their current problems. All beneficiaries of the project were beneficiaries of Day Care centre for older people in Niksic. By introducing new, missing activities within the services provided to older people by Day Care centre older persons were strengthened and better integrated in the society and they managed to overcome loneliness and social isolation.*
- *Total project budget: 4,940 Euro (with additional outside funding the total budget is 8340 Euro)*

Target group

Direct: persons over 65 (existing beneficiaries of services of Day care centre).

Indirect: families of older persons using services of the DCC; families persons receiving the service; local community.

This target group was selected due to analysis in which we identified that these type of services are lacking in the community.

Problem the project addresses

This target group lacked information related to health care system and health care issues which were provided for them through health care workshops as well as through socio-educational workshops. Their isolation in terms of spending their time at home was improved through both organization of workshops, organization of trips as well as organization of tournaments held in the Day Care centre.

Objectives of the project

The aim of the project is organization of socio-educational and counselling workshops, as well as activities that are lacking for beneficiaries in the Day Care centre. Through organization of these workshops beneficiaries are better informed and provided with concrete assistance in resolving their problems, as well as resolving problems that they may have with their families.

Apart from socio-educational and counselling workshops, entertaining activities were organized such as trips to different destinations, visit to the Niksic theatre as well as activities that were aimed to preserve motoric and mental capabilities of older people such as: chess, book reading and darts.



Main activities

- Organization of four socio-educational workshops with health care topics (once a month, 90 minutes).
- Organization of 12 socio-educational workshops with different topics (three times a month in duration of 90 minutes).
- Two visits to the theatre.
- Organization of two trips: to Pluzine and Zabljak.
- Organization of mini photo course for older persons.
- Organization of photo exhibition with pictures from the trips.
- Organization of everyday activities such as chess, book reading etc.

These activities were chosen due to the fact that this target group is dealing with issues of isolation. The aim of activities was to preserve their motoric and mental capabilities and overcome the isolation. We engaged professionals (doctors, psychologists etc.) for the purpose of providing more information to older persons so that they can overcome their difficulties in terms of health and better integration in the society.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Older persons became more satisfied and better integrated in the society. They improved knowledge on prevention of illnesses frequent in the older age.

They came in closer contact with volunteers of Red Cross which made them feel more valuable and not forgotten. This contributed to reduced sense of feeling loneliness and isolation.

Workshops with doctors were considered as the most effective by participants as well as the outdoor trips.

It is worth noting that the number of beneficiaries at the trips was much larger than at workshops which shows that older people need to be better motivated for these activities.

Acknowledging their wish to participate at the photo course workshops, we included the outdoor trips in previous consultation with the Red Cross of Montenegro. We planned trips to a theatre in Podgorica but could not persuade and motivate older people to go. Therefore we changed the visits to theatre in Niksic and connected the activity of the photo course with the outdoor trip.

Recommendations

We would recommend more activities in the open since that is what they expressed as the most favourable activity as well as getting direct consultations with doctors from different fields. Older persons also pointed out that they liked the socialization with young volunteers since it makes them feel useful and knowledgeable because they can share their experience and knowledge with young people.



MY WAY

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: The initiative for the social inclusion of older people in Old Royal Capital Cetinje*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Old Royal Capital Cetinje*
- *Time period: 01.12.2017 - 01.10.2018*
- *Very brief description of the Context:*
- *This project was implemented in order to provide bigger and more active inclusion of the older people in everyday social events and activities of the Old Royal Capital Cetinje. It also contributed to the bigger sensibility of the local community and creation of a positive image of older people in the Old Royal Capital Cetinje, their potential and significance. The group psychological workshops, psychological support and assistance to older households, psychosocial workshops, panel discussions, entertainment activities, contributed to the improvement of the quality of life of older people in the Capital of Cetinje.*
- *Total project budget: 4,414 Euro*

Target group

The target group were older people over 65, who are not institutionally cared for. These are old people with very poor social life, low level of emotional and social security, older people living alone, older people in a state of social need who do not receive help from other organizations. The target group was selected to improve their position as well as the quality of their lives, with particular emphasis on providing support and attention to older, hard-moving individuals in single-parent households.

Problem the project addresses

The project contributed to more intensive involvement and participation of all actors at local level who deal with older population from different aspects (health institutions, social care institutions, and civil sector, individuals). Also, the implementation of activities contributed to, more attention paid to older people living in single households.

Objectives of the project

The overall goal of the project was to reduce the vulnerability and increase the social inclusion of older people in the Old Royal Capital Cetinje.

Objectives of concrete activities

Reduced level of loneliness and isolation of older low-mobile persons (singles) and increased quality of their lives; Providing support to older people in their self-organization and functioning; Improving the degree of social inclusion and participation of the older people in the life of the community; Greater and better level of information of the older people in the direction of taking health and preventive activities in order to control cardiovascular, rheumatic, mental and metabolic diseases. Promotion of active aging and motivation of the older people to participate in public life.



Psychosocial support for older people to stay as long as possible in their surroundings, reducing the need for various forms of institutional assistance, as well as motivating them to use their physical and mental potential.

Main activities

- Lectures and panel discussions.
- Psycho-social workshops for older people living in single households
- Psychotherapeutic Group workshops - self-help groups
- Short trip for participants of group workshops

Psychosocial support is of vital importance, and it is important to integrate it into the activities of the environment. Indeed, older single households have been recognized as particularly vulnerable, exposed to social isolation, emotional distress, and therefore the activity of psychosocial support workshops has been selected. Discussions and panel discussions are excellent mechanisms and models of connecting older people with eminent lecturers from academics and doctors of medical sciences who will talk to them, give them guidelines, expert opinions and recommendations. A short trip was organised to Rijeka Crnojevića, as a pleasant activity with the emphasis on socialising for 30 older people.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

- Higher degree of social inclusion of persons over 65 in the social events of the community in which they live (60 older persons).
- Reduced level of loneliness and isolation of older, low-mobile persons (singles) and an increase in the quality of their lives (10 older people over 75).
- Home-based help and psychosocial support for the ten older people living alone.
- A more effective way for older people to know their own psychosocial potential, identifying deficiencies that need to be alleviated or eliminated, and the potentials that need to be developed. (35 older people)

The main challenge was to overcome feelings of embarrassment or discomfort in older people (especially single women), as well as gaining trust of this target group.

Recommendations

In order to achieve continuity of attention and to lead an adequate and overall care for older people, especially over 75, who live alone, it is necessary to continue the project with all the activities that we have implemented so far, with the frequency of holding psychological workshops and assistance in single households. Also, in order to reduce the feeling of isolation and marginalization, it is necessary to introduce some other activities that would additionally and directly involve older people in the social life of the community, such as various artistic and creative workshops (healthy food, yoga, painting, acting, dance, knitting), followed by exhibitions, events, and other program activities to present their products or skills which would be created or learned during workshop maintenance.



OUR AGE

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Social inclusion of older people, acquiring basic computer skills"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Podgorica*
- *Time period: December 1st, 2017 – September 30th 2018*
- *Very brief description of the Context:*
- *According to Monstat (Statistical Office of Montenegro) data for 2017, internet is available to 71% of households in Podgorica. However, less than half of the inquiry respondents aged 65-74 are actual internet users. The older people require comprehensive instructions on how to use modern technologies, but there is no single systematic approach to those who want to become e-seniors. Only occasionally, the corporative sellers of IT equipment and network providers offer courses to older people, their potential consumers.*
- *Total project budget: 4,985 Euro*

Target group

Older people, members of the Pensioners' Association

Problem the project addresses

Senior citizens are encouraged to use IT devices and trained to use word processors, internet and e-mail. They were also encouraged to contribute to web-site www.nasedoba.me content. Web-site www.nasedoba.me informs the community on senior citizens' issues and presents them as creative and constructive members of the society. The web-site is being maintained by the project.

Objectives of the project

Older people who attended the courses are now better informed and socially connected. They are actively fulfilling their needs and claiming their rights. Each trainee provided their feedback on the course. One of the testimonials says »When I have just started attending the course, I was *tabula rasa*. Now a whole new world has emerged in front of me.« - a retired university professor (age 86). Additionally, the website is promoting older generations' potential (not only their problems).



Main activities

Senior citizens do recognize the benefits of the modern communication technology, especially when it concerns the contact with their children and relatives, various social and administrative services, but first they need clear instructions on how to use the tools. The general information and data sharing in our organization was not efficient enough, while the majority of the participants had used phones with basic functions only. Now for them it is easier to share information and invite friends to join certain activities. Exchange of ideas and solutions became quick and transparent.

How did they address the problem?

In three groups 28 older men and women learned how to use word processing software, internet and e-mail. They were members of Association of Pensioners Podgorica (16) and of NGO Our Age – Our Time (12). Also, web-site www.nasedoba.me has been regularly maintained. During the period of project implementation more than 70 articles were published, 10 of them relating to this particular project. According to our idea of social inclusion of the senior members in our community, we plan to provide further instructions for computer literate members to give their creative contribution for the web-site, as a follow up.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

- All the members within our organization now communicate electronically.
- The influence was exceptionally beneficial and innovative to the Association of Pensioners, initiating significantly more efficient use of their technical capacities. The course has provided more creative contents and a platform for new activities.
- Besides, some of The Association members got interested and engaged in social activities of NGO Our Age – Our time.
- 28 older people now use informational technologies for communication, reading news, using social and administrative services, browsing etc.
- The principle »Older people are a resource, they are not a burden« is publicly promoted.
- There is an article about the computer course trainer - a young lady, at <http://nasedoba.me/doziviljeno/racunajte-na-nas/> written by one of her students. She quotes what the trainer had written on her FB profile: “No hard feelings all, but the 50+ group make my favourite students! Their energy hasn’t run out yet. Do not ignore the potential of the people with such rich professional and life experience.”



As one of the results of the course attending, the students were able to create their own email accounts and have their evaluation impressions sent and finally published at www.nasedoba.me website, which made them exceptionally proud of their achievement. All of the impressions were positive, and few of them were of this kind: “I encourage you to have such a course organized repeatedly. Having in mind that people of our age are slow learners, yet they forget easily, it would be perfect to make it again at some point.” – a student, who attended the training twice (over 70).

What were the main challenges and how were they overcome?

Irregular attending due to the poor health of the senior students or their family members.

Different levels of previous knowledge have influenced the concept of the lessons. The trainer has done her best to minimize those differences and provide the essential instructions for each student, according to their individual needs.

Recommendations

- Students should be classified according to the level of their previous knowledge per group.
- Courses should be performed at such places where studying activities of older people can gain high visibility.
- Advanced students should have the opportunity to practice their skills and get acquainted with new programs.
- Even though older people are slower learners than an average young person, they can acquire just as much knowledge and new skills at their own pace.
- They often fear that they are inferior and they are in need of additional motivation and encouragement for using computers.
- Older people have very much differentiated interests regarding computer programs they want to learn.

PARENTS

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Grandparents for active development*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Podgorica*
- *Time period: December 2017- October 2018*
- *Very brief description of the Context:*
- *In Podgorica there are over 30,000 inhabitants aged 60+. Although the situation is better in the urban area in relation to the situation in rural areas, the situation is still alarming. Montenegrin society is rapidly aging, and our institutions are less and less concerned about how they will implement certain systemic solutions to improve the position of older people. Looking at the priorities of the Strategy for the development of the social protection system of older people, we will see that almost nothing has been done for the improvement of their rights. Our goal was to improve program of the Centre through the involvement of the grandparents to become our active members.*
- *Total project budget: 4,876 Euro*

Target group

The project envisaged involvement of older persons over 60 years old from Podgorica, with the different profiles and backgrounds, who was interested in actively participation in program of Development centre in order to contribute to the community. Parents and children has been involved in workshops and other joint activities.

Problem the project addresses

The project addresses the problem of insufficient involvement of people 60 years in the active life of the community and the inability for us to see all the wealth of knowledge, skills and experiences that older people can convey to younger generations. Grandparents as family members are mostly viewed through the prism of childcare, but not as someone who can actively contribute in many other ways. On the other hand, children need non institutional education in the form of creative and educational workshops, which we provide them through the work of the Development Centre.



Objectives of the project

Project “Grandparents for active development” aimed to involve older people in the education activities of the Development Centre in order to increase the social inclusion of older people and active participation in the community life. The overall goal is implemented through two specific objectives: increasing capacities of older members of community to actively participate in the educational programs of the Development Centre, through the design and implementation of a special educational program for grandparents and grandchildren; raising public awareness on importance of older people and their active involvement in the life of the family and the community in general.

Main activities

- Education for older people for preparation and implementation of creative-educational workshops.
- Realization of six months creative-educational program within the Development Centre as well as one public workshop within the Family Fest.
- Realization of program learning support for children from socially disadvantaged families with help of older volunteers.
- Realization of public debates „Grandparents in families“ and promotional activities.
- Empowering transgenerational dialogue, and above all promoting the concept of lifelong learning, as a basic value in life of a human being. Human ability to transform and change the world through learning, was our main reason for choosing those activities.

How did they address the problem?

Our idea was to include as much as possible the capacity of older members of the community and to create a link that will overcome the intergenerational gap, not only with children, but also in the context of the whole family and family relationships.



Outcomes and the lessons learned

Older persons that were involved in the project become more engaged in community, they recognized what they could bring to their families and how they can be involved in other activities in community.

What activities were particularly effective?

Except workshops with kids, debates and transgenerational public talks were very important, because grandparents had the opportunity to talk to younger generations in a new creative and constructive manner. In this way, they heard each other, they respect feelings of each other, which increased the level of understanding and tolerance among the generations.

What could have worked better?

Learning support program is part of the project's activities for which grandparents have not been interested. Low motivation for this activity according to grandparents was a long period of time in their life that passed from the last time they engaged with the school curriculum and the program. This indicates the fear that they are not competent to provide more serious learning support.

What were the main challenges and how were they overcome?

Main challenge in project was low motivation of older people to be involved in project. We overcame this situation partially through cooperation with organization for older people and we gathered a group of 10 grandparents to be involved in project.

Recommendations

We think that most important thing is to listen and understand the needs of the community – the needs and interests of old people. Also joint intergenerational activities and finding common topics and interests is useful.

Maintain regular communication and motivation of older people, in the form of talks, support and assistance in the realization of activities, which stimulates a greater degree of self-confidence and work satisfaction.

In advance, the participants should be informed about all the activities, to make scheduling in advance, in order to ensure they have enough time for preparation, which leads to quality workshops.

Be up to date with their needs and always look for feedback, regarding activities, conditions and their suggestions.

ASSOCIATION OF BLIND PEOPLE OF MONTENEGRO

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: Inclusion of third age*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Podgorica (but we have activities in Bijelo Polje, Berane, Niksic, Kotor, Bar, Herceg Novi)*
- *Time period: Dec 2018- Sept 2019*
- *Very brief description of the context:*
- *The objective of the project is to improve the inclusion of the older people with disabilities in Montenegro.*
- *Total project budget: 4.370 Euro*

Target group

The target group of the project are older people with disabilities, men and women. Among them are singles, and those with families, older persons who are involved in socio-cultural activities, as well as older persons who are passive.

Problem the project addresses

During the realization of the project, we have dealt with many aspects of life, from everyday activities to more specific ones (literature, sports/ recreational activities, digital technologies). The project contributed to the wider social community getting acquainted with the problems that older people in Montenegro have, and suggestions on how to reduce the problems. A brochure has been designed with a view to getting acquainted with the rights of older people with disabilities. Young persons with disabilities also participated in order to reduce the gap between older and young persons.

Objectives of the project

Enhancing social inclusion and participation in the life of the community has been achieved through the transfer of skills and knowledge between the young and older people, Increased involvement, loneliness, lifelong learning has created more accessible services for older persons as well as greater involvement in social events.



The pursuit of higher self-esteem, inclusion, integration, and the fight against loneliness was achieved through sports/ recreational activities and raising awareness of the wider social community.

Main activities

- Eight workshops of Intergenerational Cooperation on Digital and Information Technologies were held. The topic of the workshops is the use of digital and information technology.
- Three workshops of creative writing have been held. Two literary evenings were held.
- Two lectures, delivered by ophthalmologists and nutritionists were held. The aim is to improve information and strengthen the confidence of older people with disabilities. One workshop was devoted to the direct contacts of older people with the doctors, where some parameters were measured.
- Through lectures on cooking, and human rights older people have acquired new knowledge and skills that will help them to more actively participate in the community's social life.
- A system for playing a game of Darts with voice support was set up in Podgorica. Darts tournament is a great opportunity to socialize, to fight loneliness, to increase involvement, to strengthen the confidence of older people with disabilities.
- A short brochure with practical models for social inclusion of older people with disabilities was presented to the stakeholders and public through a public round table discussion.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Project activities contributed to social inclusion. Our participants expressed their satisfaction and happiness. First of all, they liked meeting with younger people and discussing various topics. Workshops on health issues were extremely well received. During the Human Rights Workshop, a television crew of the national television visited us. (<http://www.rtcg.me/tv/emisije/informativni/trecedoba/204699/trece-doba-27052018.html>).



At the creative writing workshops, our participants were the most active. One participant published a book during the project's lifetime. The setting up of the voice controlled system for playing the game of Darts contributed to the continuous socialising of older people and youth. More than 40 older people were involved during the project implementation and more than 10 younger people. We will endeavour to continue intergenerational socializing activities.

Recommendations

We recommend all organizations to include older members. Older people are more experienced, and their knowledge can be of great use to us. If they choose to take some of our activities, it is desirable to include young persons in order to make older people feel inclusive, involved. Organize more workshops, on different topics, to meet the different needs of older people.

One of the key lessons is to include all the interested older people and even if they are not over 65. The second key lesson is to take action on working days, when families of older people work, and can not spend time with them. Also, when you engage in activities, take account of sustainability, and that some activities may continue after the project is completed. The space in which you organize activities can also be outdoors.

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "GerijARTrija"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Herceg Novi*
- *Time period: 01/12/2017-30/09/2018*
- *Very brief description of the context:*
- *In Herceg Novi people over the age of 65 make for 22% of the population and the trend is increasing. According to data of the Municipal Organization of Pensioners, 3,020 of the pensioners (almost half) have incomes below the minimum wage (193 Euro). Despite the Municipality of Herceg Novi paying rent, utilities, and fees for transportation for local Pensioners Association of Herceg Novi, there are no adequate programs for quality leisure time for older people.*
- *Total project budget: 4,950 Euro*

Problem the project addresses

The project proposal is designed following the Development Strategy of older people social protection for the period 2018- 2022. Aging is viewed as active, productive, healthy and positive. Older people are perceived as a resource for social and economic development. Analysing needs of potential participants of our activities, we concluded that the opening of the public kitchen and provision of venue and free continuous creative and recreational activities are what the older people in our local community have advocated for for a long time.

Objectives of the project

The main goal: to encourage innovative services for older people in Herceg Novi with a focus on the creative use of free time and a healthier attitude towards age.



Specific Objective 1: Through accessible space, workshops, meetings, therapeutic sessions, open kitchen as well as participation in exhibition and in public debates, older people will be significantly more active in the local community. Older people will be supported to contribute and to advocate for reducing their social isolation and ensuring a better position in the society.

Specific Objective 2: The pilot model will connect the younger and older people to create social links between generations, and this model will be presented to municipal institutions in order to be replicable in other communities.

Main activities

- Gathering of interested participants, volunteers and project team
- Meetings with relevant stakeholders in order to agree on an expectations of cooperation
- Media promotion – informing public about the project;
- Announcing call for participation in workshops: the schedule of workshops and presentations of facilitators
- Sculpting workshops – getting new skills; the therapeutic process of sculpting in clay;
- Painting workshop – Therapeutic process of painting
- The organization of the exhibition – art works presented to community;
- Recreational workshops
- Open kitchen: preparing dishes through socialization
- Movement workshops with the aim of improving the physical fitness of participants; exercises adapted to older people
- Chess workshops in order to improve mental fitness, as well as socializing
- Light walking tours in the nature
- Prevention of depression and getting used to older age – sessions with objectives of increasing self-esteem and will;
- Roundtable – marking the International Day of Older Persons; getting together all stakeholders that can help to improve the living conditions of older people in our city;
- Evaluation (with a view to ensuring the replicability of the project)



Outcomes and the lessons learned

- 15 meetings with volunteers and team and two partner meetings in Podgorica were held.
- 20 meetings with colleagues, workshop facilitators and professional consultants were held.
- Established cooperation with 13 individuals, NGOs, organizations and institutions involved with the project.
- Designed and shared PR material with the Association of Pensioners in Herceg Novi.
- Visibility package: project logo, posters and flyers, as well as pre-press for cotton bags and cups were designed.
- 18 workshops for painting and sculpting, 9 movement workshops, 8 therapy sessions, 4 chess workshops, 4 cooking sessions, 2 walking tours, exhibition of creative works and a round table.
- More than 150 direct participants and 300 indirect participants.
- A total of 16 media reports.

Recommendations

The cooperation of all stakeholders is necessary in the implementation of any program to be practiced as a service. Research of the needs of older citizens must be the priority. In our local community citizens (especially older) are still suspicious about the civil sector and believe that only institutions can implement programs and services relating to the improvement of quality of life. However, the feedback we received from participants and the media were “Here’s who is thinking about older people in Herceg Novi”, “Urban Nova for senior citizens”, “You take care of our needs.” In this way we have built trust and credibility for our programs. Furthermore, the successful implementation has led to regular participants openly expressing their satisfaction (“I did not know I had so much creative energy”). Also, setup of connections and construction of safe zones contribute to our participants to have the strength to overcome their fears and push the boundaries of their comfort zone. (“At first I thought I will not expose myself publicly, but you’ve made me strong and secure in myself and my work.”) Also, anyone who is piloting services cannot expect big changes at the beginning. Recording the micro changes on a personal level, the level of an organization and a community, as well as talking about the changes with the participants makes the process alive and awareness of the changes stronger. In short, the project team has been growing with the participants and we shared our experiences, continuously consulted the participants, but also give them feedback on the recorded changes.

TRUST

Title and information on the project

- *Project title: "Dobar dan kako ste?"*
- *Community/municipality of project implementation: Bar*
- *Time period: December 2017-October 2018*
- *Very brief description of the context:*
- *It is commonly believed that age is synonymous with illness. But this is not true and should be debunked. The main objective of this project is to raise awareness of the community about the problems of older people, who are most often lonely, sometimes abandoned by their loved ones.*
- *Total project budget: 4,960 Euro*

Target group

Older people - in the area of Bar, urban and suburban areas

Young people: children and youth from elementary and secondary schools.

Problem the project addresses

Debunking the stereotype that ageing equals illness, adding quality time to the older age.

Objectives of the project

The main objective of this project is to raise awareness of the community about the problems of older people, who are most often lonely, sometimes abandoned by their loved ones.

Main activities

- Competition for children and youth "Dobar dan, kako ste?": looking at the attitude of young people towards older people.
- The program of visits to older people to show that these people are still vital, working and productive, and that a lot can be learned from them.
- Care program: counselling, workshops in villages and suburban areas, blood pressure and blood sugar checks.
- Organization of socializing, short trips and activities that are realized in cooperation with other NGOs.



We selected these activities because they are part of the continuous work on this topic. It is not the first time that we have implemented a similar project and activities, and for now they have been proving to be well targeted. Activities carried out by young people and organized for and with older people are always interesting and useful for both age groups.

Outcomes and the lessons learned

Our intention to challenge stereotypes related to ageing proved to be correct. In their works children did not depict older people as ill, but as active in their community and as those who need children can socialize with and learn from. Competition for children and youth “Dobar dan, kako ste?” was a particularly successful activity.

Psychological counselling and workshops could have worked better. Despite our initiative, the selected doctors and experts from medical institutions in Bar, despite media promotion and the flyers we used to promote the workshops, we were not able to attract the expected number of people for psychological counselling and workshops. When the topic was cancer, people were also sceptical.

Recommendations

- Within the implementation of similar projects, a smaller number of activities should be planned.
- Have realistic expectations
- Focus on a smaller number of activities
- Have patience for the older people and the organizations they are gathering.



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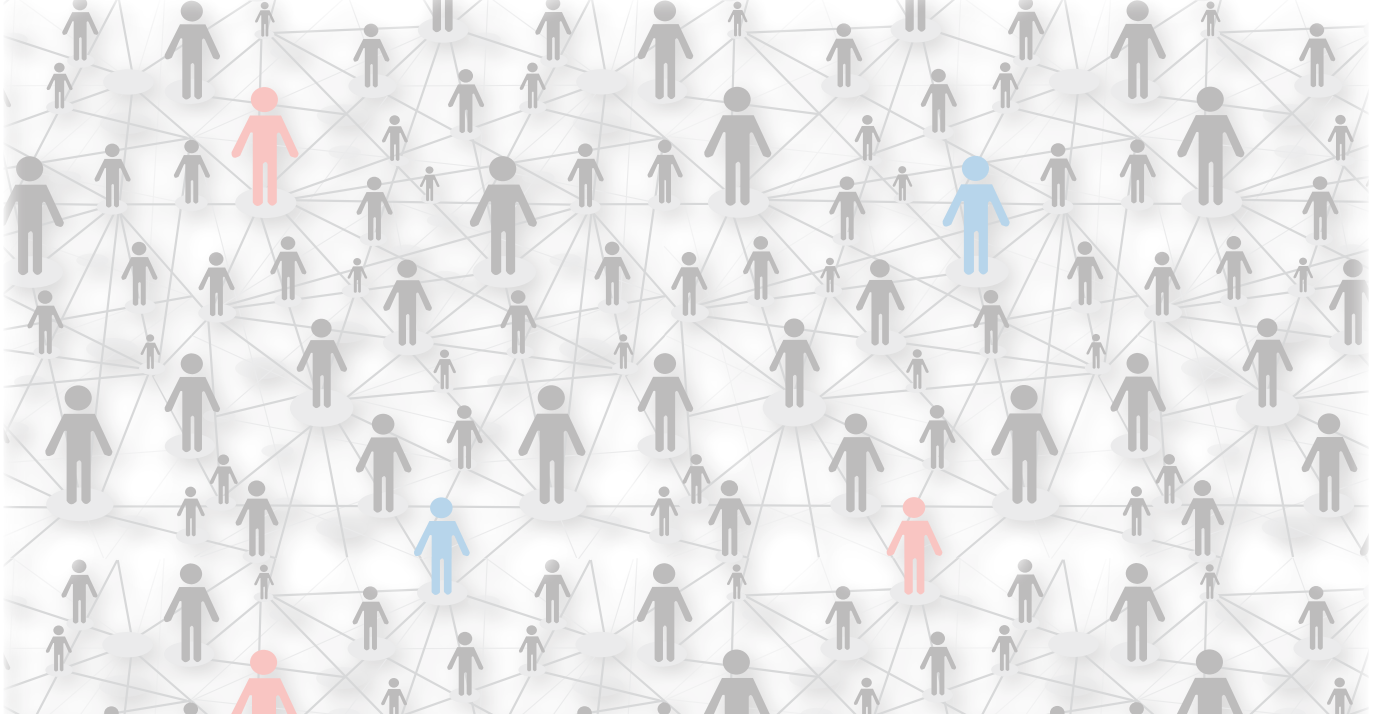
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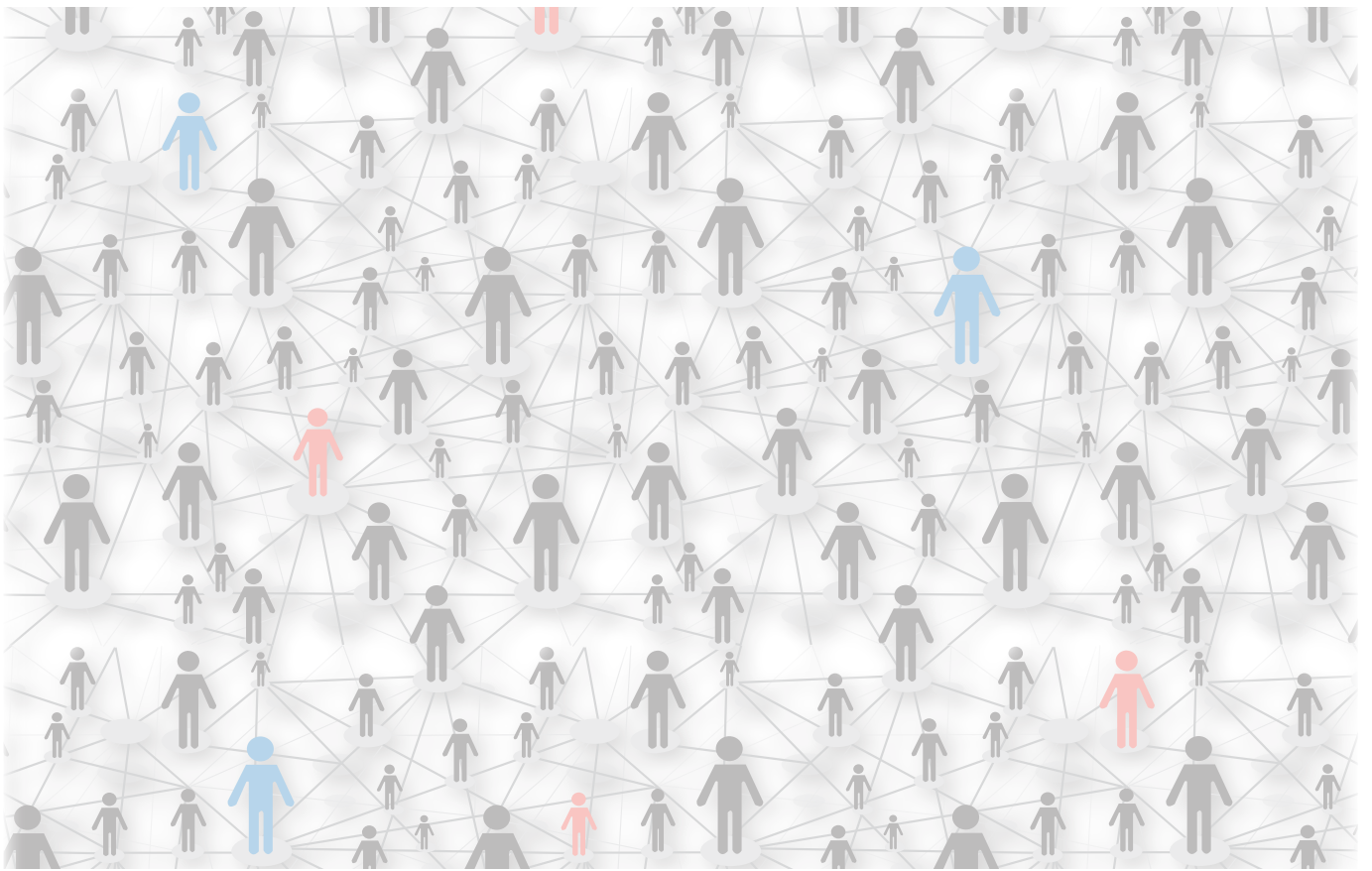


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