

Online platform on community-based services

Serbia / Youth with Disabilities Forum

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

Through an online database the project brings together – and shares information among – existing and new community-based service providers for young people with disabilities in three areas: education, employment, and social protection. Networking among individuals and organizations on the local level helps to improve the quality of their services and to better assist the target group.

“The final users are directly involved in making future plans, which is one of the most important aspects of the program’s sustainability.”

—Sladjana LEVIC, Project Coordinator

FACTS & FIGURES

- 59 questionnaires were completed in 4 local governments to collect information on service provider's capacities, accessibility, human resources, type of service provider (civil, public, private), sources of finance, frequency and quality of services, and type and number of beneficiaries.
- According to research results, 21 new and 38 existing service providers were identified. More than 40 service providers entered their profiles on the project’s online database.
- The project’s web portal is visited by up to 1,000 persons per month.
- To date, 109 final users – young persons with disabilities and their families – have benefitted from the service’s implementation.

PROBLEMS TARGETED

Local governments lack the capacity to implement laws and regulations to conform to the new national Law on Social Protection. Also, there is an insufficient number of active service providers, and there is no sustainable mechanism for long-term implementation of community-based services.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

A survey and research were undertaken on the current situation in Serbia regarding community-based service providers and policy advancement, with the objective of providing solid evidence on the necessity to enlarge and strengthen these areas. In the second phase, an info portal was developed to provide insight into the development of support services and their territorial representation, and to serve as a guide on available support for current and potential donors as well as for service providers. Finally, five community-based services were newly established to cater to the needs of young people with disabilities and their families. In this process, cooperation of service providers and local government was recognized as a key factor for sustainability.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

The project initiated cooperation among local stakeholders, which will enable continuous ongoing consultation to improve the lives of persons with disabilities at the local level. The programs developed for capacity-building will be implemented in other projects, in other cities and local communities, since the need for such training programs was seen during the project implementation.

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