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Enhancing social protection
by empowering COS in BiH



This project is implemented by
CARE International

ENHANCING SOCIAL PROTECTION BY BUILDING CAPACITIES OF CSOs IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

2018 – 2020



Project partners



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ABOUT THE PROJECT

CARE International is a international non-government organization implementing programs for fighting poverty and social injustice in more than 90 countries throughout the world. CARE's aim in the Balkans is to ensure recognition and fulfilment of social, economic and political rights of the vulnerable and marginalized groups, thus contributing to sustainable peace in the region.

Project **“Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina”** is contributing in strengthening the weak social welfare and social protection, as well as access to rights and social inclusion for the marginalized and most vulnerable. Poor economic performance and high unemployment cause shocks in the country's social welfare system which largely effects the socio-economic position of citizens,

especially most vulnerable and marginalized.

The state and non-state service providers are under-capacitated and underfunded. The project is implemented by CARE International, which has a vast experience in developing capacity of CSOs and advocating in cooperation with CSOs for various causes in BiH.

The project seeks to protect the most vulnerable population groups, but also to provide benefits for all BiH citizens. Hence the goal of the project is to professionalize and enhance mandate and role of civil society actors (CSOs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina by building their capacity to provide services for marginalized and vulnerable population and by enabling them to actively participate in design and implementation of relevant policies.

Project objectives “Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina”

1

Strengthen the organizational capacity and governance of 7 targeted civil society organizations (CSOs) in BiH

2

Provide services to 7 targeted organizations in order to meet the needs of their users

3

Strengthen the position in the field of advocacy and policy improvement in the areas where 7 target organizations operate

The organizations involved in the project are:

- Association “Amica Educa” from Tuzla
- Association “Budućnost” from Modriča
- Association “Društvo ujedinenih građanskih Akcija (DUGA)” from Sarajevo
- Association “Something More” from Mostar
- Sarajevo Open Centre (SOC)
- Association for the Promotion of Roma Education “Otaharin” from Bijeljina
- UCPD Cerebral Palsy and Dystrophy Association from Goražde



Results achieved in the first two years of the project implementation: “Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in BiH”



Updated 7 strategic and action plans for organizations involved in the project



7 organizations are equipped with computers and office furniture



7 young people from BiH have successfully completed their engagement in the project implementation from January to December 2019



Representatives of 7 organizations on a study trip visited the same or similar organizations in the Czech Republic



Updated old and created new websites for organizations participating in the project to ensure better presentation and engagement with target groups



9 Czech interns completed their work in civil society organizations in 2019

INTRODUCTION

CARE International is implementing the project **“Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina”** within the framework of the socio-economic inclusion program. Beneficiaries of the project are seven non-governmental organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina which, due to the area they are dealing with and the categories of beneficiaries whose rights they are fighting for, have been selected to participate.



The need for the project arose because government institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina were unable to provide adequate social protection services to marginalized and most vulnerable population groups. This creates an opportunity for civil society organizations (CSOs) to become involved and provide services to the population in need.

Organizations being involved in the project are those that help marginalized and vulnerable populations which require special access and attention, for example the LGBTIQ population, Roma, women victims of domestic violence, people with rare diseases and specific disabilities. Major part of these organizations are the ones with which CARE International in Bosnia and Herzegovina has already collaborated on certain projects and activities. These are organizations that are recognized in the local communities in which they operate.

“Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina” is a project through which seven organizations work to design and develop advocacy strategies and initiatives to address the unfavorable legal environment. The project provides an opportunity for organizations in support of the enhancement of organizational capabilities, improving existing ones and designing new activities with the aim of improving the social status of beneficiaries.

CARE International Balkans and CARE Czech Republic, together with the seven organizations with which they are implementing the project, are grateful to the Government of Czech Republic, which recognized the importance of the project and decided to support it. The project is currently nearing the end of its second year of implementation and we have a year left to work. The great results that the project notes show the importance and needs of local organizations and are an indicator for donors in making good assessments when investing in support to local CSOs.

Sumka Bučan, Director of CARE International Balkans

AMICA EDUCA

Improving mental health in the local community

Providing social services for vulnerable social groups within the Family Counseling Center which is recognised and involved in the system of the social protection system is the most important line of action for the NGO Amica Educa. People with disabilities, people who have suffered discrimination, and families with dysfunctional relationships are the beneficiaries of a counselling and workshop organized by the Amica Educa Association.



Prejudices and taboos related to the mental health of individuals are largely present in BH society. Mental health problems are an increasingly common problem facing the BiH population. Due to the pervasive poverty in the country and priorities in meeting existential needs, the psychosocial functioning of the individual has been marginalized.



Amica Educa employs a team of valuable professionals in the field of psychosocial work. Users thus receive support, knowledge and skills to enhance personal and business competencies. The organization is surrounded by a friendly atmosphere where you feel like you have been with them for the first time. The experts at Amica Educa support the individuality of the users and contribute to the popularity of this organization in the local community of Tuzla and its surroundings. Gender equality and lifelong learning are guidelines that contribute



Mental health in BH population

“The socio-economic empowerment of women is the focus of Amica Educa’s work. Gender equality is one of the most visible obstacles we face in our work in the local community” said Selma Alicic, director of the Amica Educa Association. The influence of the patriarchal tradition is still largely present in BH society. The role of women is exclusively helping, while economic independence, social and political engagement is exclusively linked to men, Alicic concluded.



“I am happy that my first work experience is related to a proactive organization. With the team of professionals at Amica Educa Association, I can learn a lot about professional approach to work and creative and responsible approach to project tasks” said Damir Omerbegović. Omerbegovic is an intern employed through the project “Improving Social Services through Strengthening NGOs in BiH”.

to empowering individuals and foster positive change for service users.

Over the past 23 years, the organization has won the hearts of local communities with quality content. The main activities of the Association are counselling psychotherapy work, prevention of socially unacceptable behaviours and workshops that encourage the development of cognitive, functional and social skills. Amica Educa’s focus is on socio-economic empowerment of women, and workshops that contribute to the decommissioning of stress, relieving depression and anxiety, improving psycho-physical health and adopting healthy lifestyle habits.



Project results “Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina”

- Conducted advocacy activities aimed at establishing better links with cantonal institutions. Cooperation between government and non-governmental sector resulted in better support for users of the association and vulnerable categories

BUDUĆNOST Modriča

Economic empowerment of women victims of domestic violence

Protecting women victims of domestic violence is the primary focus of the Citizens Association Budućnost from Modriča. They base their activities on advocacy for changes to existing laws and passing new laws, legal and psychological support for victims, and conduct campaigns aimed at raising public awareness of the problem.



Existing support programs are not tailored to the real needs and opportunities for women victims of violence. For example, victims of domestic violence are recognized by the Employment Service through a self-employment support program, but cannot meet the criteria to achieve their rights because they do not have their own assets and co-financing resources.



“Most of the victims in the safe house are returning to a violent family because they are economically dependent. They do not work, have no income, and as such, cannot leave the circle of violence and provide a better life for themselves and their children” said Ana Cvijanovic, Expert Associate for Economic Empowerment at the Future Association.

Eko Budućnost, a general agricultural cooperative, is a social enterprise whose goal is to market local products on the domestic and foreign markets. Women and children, victims of domestic violence working in a cooperative, buy and process fruits and vegetables from local farmers. The cooperative was founded by Budućnost Association, which is a glimmer of hope in the local community in Modriča for numerous sad stories about human destinies, all with the aim of economically empowering women victims of violence.



“With the support of CARE for the last two years, we have been able to improve a number of processes within the organization. The project has made the greatest contribution to OPZ Eco Buducnost” said Jelena Mišić, director of Budućnost Association.



Association Budućnost has been operating for 23 years and has completed its work through a full range of activities in the field of support for victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. At the S.O.S. phone that is open 24 hours can call anyone who needs help. The Safe House accommodates women and children victims of domestic violence, with whom occupational and after care activities are carried out. Within the Resource Center they provide free legal aid and psycho-social counselling. Activities at the Men's Center provide therapy and counselling to perpetrators of violence and cooperate with men's associations.



After volunteering at the Men's Center, I got the opportunity to do an internship, Dejan Lazarević, an intern at Buducnost Association, started his story. I am happy for the opportunity and proud of all the knowledge that my team members have provided me during my internship. I am sure that after this experience I will have the skills to be competitive in the labour market, Lazarević concludes.

Project results “Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in BiH”

- A working team that conducts occupation for women victims of domestic violence but also makes a profit has been strengthened.



DUGA

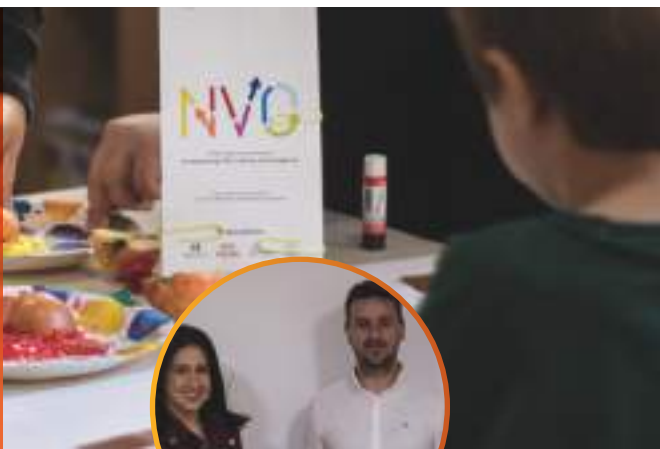
For open and inclusive BH society

The Association DUGA (United Civic Action Society) supports children and young people with disabilities in cooperation with parents and teaching staff. Through its programs, DUGA advocates the inclusion of every child in the local community. Through their work and dedication over the past 25 years, they have encouraged positive changes in BH society. It is an organization based in Sarajevo and operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The three areas on which they base their



professional work and engagement are 1. Educational and rehabilitation services for children 2. Improving the skills and attitudes of parents, educators and teachers 3. Participating in the development of strategies



to improve the quality of child support services. DUGA has been operating for 25 years and to date has provided psycho-social and educational-rehabilitation support for +5000 children and young people. Training programs on educational inclusion through workshops of the DUGA Association were attended by +3000 teachers and representatives of the local community. Valuable professionals who are part of the DUGA Association work in a way that they evaluate an individual child at a preschool or school institution where they are checking which children need support and upon the evaluation they start working with the child. Emphasis is placed on the collaboration of experts with parents and teaching staff through work. Collaboration encourages the advancement of children in a particular area. The DUGA Association achieves significant results in the local communities in which it operates.



Online lessons for parents are the next step that we plan to implement through the project “Improving social protection by empowering CSOs in BiH” in collaboration with CARE International. The plan is to give parents guidance and specific tasks that they will practice at home with their children through online lessons,” said Arnes Sabanovic, a speech therapist who has been working at the DUGA Association for five years. Sabanovic concluded that this would be a way to improve the involvement of parents in working with children, which is just as important for the progress of an individual child as working with professionals.



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“The fundamental problem in BH society is the attitude of the individual towards the other and the different.

In a situation where a child with a developmental disability finds themselves in a collective such as a classroom, the child needs different support and time planning devised by the teacher, different teaching aids and methods. But the most important question is how do we perceive the person next to us, how do our children experience the people who need support, how does the child experience the teacher, and how is the school?” Said Anka Izetbegović, director of the DUGA Association. Izetbegovic concluded that with the right approach, we can all together support children with disabilities and their parents.

Project results “Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in BiH”

- The organization’s staff is empowered by participating in certified trainings, ensuring the extension of training services for government and private companies
- Provided capacity for commercial speech therapist services on the market

NEŠTO VIŠE

Leaders of the BH society in Permaculture

Permaculture is a culture of living and signifies the creation and respect of the living space in which we live, work, move and act. Taking care of people, the environment and all living things with respect are the principles of following permaculture work and action.

Members of the Citizens' Association Nešto više together with the local community and volunteers, apply a permaculture way of designing gardens, which makes them unique in Herzegovina. They are the first non-governmental organization in BiH whose team will receive the prestigious title of permaculture designers, an international certificate that is valid worldwide.



Not far from Mostar, in Humilisani there is an eco-estate where the social enterprise EkoDizajn Ltd was founded by the Citizens



Association Nešto više. It is a space that captivates you with its scents and beauty through a wonderful story of coexistence and concern for nature and natural resources.



Social enterprise EkoDizajn offers clients the services of designing edible gardens and selling healthy and organically grown food. They nurture a socially responsible attitude towards employees and clients, and deal with the social inclusion of marginalized groups through educational, occupational therapy activities. They use the principles of regenerative agriculture in managing their estates.

Citizens' Association Nešto više has been active in BiH for 22 years, and for the last ten years they have focused their work on rural development and on education in the field of



permaculture and regenerative agriculture. They are the proud initiators of the first permaculture festival in BiH. The festival was held in Mostar in 2019 and the aim of the festival was to bring together all the experts and individuals involved in permaculture in one place. Through its programs and projects, the Association is also focused on economic empowerment and employment and programs of practical work in the profession for the unemployed. They work with and for people with disabilities, nurture gender initiatives and empower women through their work.

The empowerment of the individual is at the heart of all the activities of the Association. Nešto više is an organization that raises the quality of life of every person who deserves a healthy opportunity to develop and tap into their potential. Strong and aware individuals have the power to develop healthy local communities. Healthy communities can build a sustainable future in Bosnia and Herzegovina, guided by the ethics of permaculture: caring for people, caring for the planet, and fair distribution.

Permaculture as a lifestyle

“Permaculture can be a response to the hardships of BH society. It offers practical solutions and tools to help you improve your quality of life step by step. We can change a lot if we start from ourselves as individuals. The way we make decisions and leave our mark on society and the environment on a daily basis can give us the feeling that we can still influence our lives and advance them.”
Alexander Bundalo, Director of the Citizens Association

Project results “Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in BiH”

- Created 2 new workshops in the field of green economy (energy efficiency, renewable energy) and sustainable development (composting)
- Improved services for work with people with disabilities and adapted to maintain occupation therapies for users at the eco estate in Humilisani
- A facade was built on the eco estate in Humilisani and the facility was equipped with furniture to accommodate associates and users



OTAHARIN

Integration of Roma into BH society

Citizens' Association for the Promotion of Roma Education "Otaharin" from Bijeljina is one of the first organizations to establish a system of integrative involvement of Roma people into BH society. Following the needs of their beneficiaries, they worked on the development of programs and interventions that directly influenced the promotion of health, education, housing and employment of the Roma population. A just society and equal opportunities for all citizens are the goal to which the Otaharin Association contributes with its activities.

Anti-Gypsyism = Racism

Anti-Gypsyism is a specific form of racism. It is an ideology based on racial superiority, a form of dehumanizing and institutional racism supported by historical discrimination. It is expressed by violence, hate speech, exploitation and stigmatization. Through its activities, UG Otaharin insists that anti-Gypsyism be recognized as a key obstacle to the integration of Roma and the improvement of their quality of life in BH society.

Agro - plan llc. is a socially responsible company founded by Otaharin Association. It employs five Roma women who are in



social need. Planting fruits and vegetables in greenhouses, picking, preparing and marketing them is a difficult task. A small but valuable team within the Agro -plan social enterprise for the first time in their lives has the opportunity to experience financial independence through regular work. A team of experts gathered in the Otaharin Association with heart and soul is involved in all the activities they have been conducting with local community users for the past 14 years. They are active in the field of social, economic and educational inclusion and integration programs of Roma, as well as in programs for strengthening and promoting equality and human rights. They advocate the adoption of new and changes to the existing legal frameworks and the development of effective action plans to address the needs of Roma at the local, entity and state levels.

“Departmental Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not recognize the importance of cooperation and partnership with civil society organizations in the field of social service delivery. The work and merits of non-governmental organizations in improving the conditions of the socially disadvantaged population have not been sufficiently valued” said Dragan Jokovic, director of UG Otaharin. Jokovic concluded that organizations such as the Otaharin Association are crucial to maintaining a minimum standard of living for those in need.



Project results “Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina”

- The 3-acre resource center on which organic fruits and vegetables are produced is equipped and functional. In the resource center there are 3 modern greenhouses of 500 m² each. The resource center is also used by other organizations in Bijeljina to hold workshops and meetings
- The association’s team is empowered and educated to start organizing a Roma Festival modeled after the Chamoro Festival organized in Prague, Czech Republic



SOC SARAJEVO OPEN CENTRE

Safe place for the LGBTI population

Empowering lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans * and intersex (LGBTI) persons and women is the goal of the Sarajevo Open Center (SOC), which is an independent, feminist civil society organization. SOC operates through two programs: LGBTI rights and women's rights. The SOC + program works on European integration issues, advances in the realization of human rights and promotes the development of civil society.



Peer-to-peer and psychological counseling for LGBTI people is the only ongoing program to support LGBTI people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. SOC is the only organization in BiH with a program of legal counseling and legal representation for LGBTI persons. The team of experts involved in SOC are an example of how and how many individuals can and should be tolerated,

without prejudice and judgment against others and different. SOC is an address where LGBTI people have the opportunity to enjoy a safe space for events and gatherings to empower the LGBTI community in BiH. Fighting for women's rights is a program under which the SOC assures to achieve a minimum representation of 40% of women in the legislative and executive bodies at all levels of government in BiH. Advocacy and lobbying are tools used by the SOC at national, European and international levels, alone or with partners, to indicate the implementation of existing laws and policies and to seek the adoption of new, necessary legislative measures. Equality Academy is a training program for government representatives. Žarana Papić's Feminist School is the only non-formal academic feminist educational program through which a significant base of supporters for feminist and LGBTI issues has been created. Advocacy for implementing existing legislation and enacting new legislation





is an area in which the SOC has recorded numerous results. Most often, it is about advocating for the legal regulation of hate crimes and hate speech, rights and obligations arising from the life partnership of persons of the same sex, and access to the rights of trans * persons. SOC is the only organization in Bosnia and Herzegovina that is struggling to make cases discrimination and violence against LGBTI persons come to the courts and prosecutors. Thanks to the activities of the SOC, the Ombudsman institution has made numerous recommendations for the benefit of the LGBTI community in BiH.



“SOC is the perfect organization for one individual at the beginning of their career. We are learning to live and work without prejudice against people, and that the fight for rights is continuous,” said Nejra Agic, program assistant for communications and public relations and trainee through the project “Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in BiH”.



Project results “Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in BiH”

- New activity “Business Forum” aims to bring together LGBTI people to cooperate with representatives from private sector in order to improve the conditions and relationships of LGBTI people in the workplace

 **SARAJEVSKI
OTVORENI
CENTAR**





UCPD

The Cerebral Palsy and Dystrophy Association



The Cerebral Palsy and Dystrophy Association (UCPD) of the Bosnian-Podrina Canton of Gorazde is a humanitarian organization that has been operating for 23 years and has implemented over 80 projects so far. The association works on the early detection of the disease, as well as eliminating the causes of its occurrence and helping the patients and their families.



Life Assistance llc. is a social enterprise for the occupation and employment of persons with disabilities. Within the company, they organized a workshop where they make slippers, canvas bags, linen, aprons, travel pillows and decorative pillows. The basic product is obtained from PREVENT, which has positioned itself in the local community as socially responsible.

In the company Life Assistance llc. four people with disabilities and members of the association are employed, and two more

are employed through the Professional Rehabilitation Fund. The sale of the products provides funds for the activities of the CPD Association, which is the founder of the social enterprise Life Assistance llc. The goal of the CPD Association is to become self-sustainable through the sale of products they make in the workshop.

“I am happy to be part of a small, but valuable and active team, from which I will learn a lot about the professional approach to business and processes within the association and social enterprise in the coming period,” said Zuzana Lužna, a Czech volunteer intern under the project “Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in BiH”.



A better and more accessible life for people with disabilities is one of the most important goals of this association, which is full of life and breathes with the local community and is recognizable in Gorazde for its positive work results. CPD likes to say that every house in Gorazde and its surrounding has slippers that are made by the CPD Association, which is the best indicator of local community support for the work of this association.



“It is difficult in today’s BH society to combat discrimination and prejudice against persons with disabilities. It is difficult to prove through work on a daily basis that people with disabilities can live and feed their families from their work,” said Mirsada Ćulov, director of the CPD Association. Ćulov added that she dreams of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which persons with cerebral palsy and dystrophy, along with all persons belonging to marginalized population groups, will live as equal members of the community and have their place in society.

Project results “Enhancing social protection by building capacities of CSOs in BiH”

- The project has secured licenses for the export of products created in the workshop of the social enterprise Life Help llc. This will ensure the placement of products in foreign markets



UDRUŽENJE OBOLJELIH OD CEREBRALNE PARALIZE I DISTROFIJE
Bosansko-podrinjski kanton Gorazde





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