

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
IMPROVEMENT OF
COMMUNITY-BASED
SERVICES IN THE W. BALKANS

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WHAT ARE COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES?

INTEGRATED, FLEXIBLE, QUALITY, HUMAN-CENTERED SERVICES, TAILORED TO THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS, THAT ENABLE PEOPLE TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY IN THE COMMUNITY. INDEPENDENT LIVING MEANS THAT ALL THOSE WHO ARE AT RISK OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION, AND ALL THOSE CURRENTLY IN INSTITUTIONS, CAN ENJOY THE SAME RIGHTS AND CHOICES AS EVERYONE ELSE IN SOCIETY, WITH APPROPRIATE LEVELS OF SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY.

CORE PRINCIPLES OF INDEPENDENT LIVING

- EVERYBODY HAS THE RIGHT TO SERVICES TAILORED TO THEIR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS
- SERVICES SHOULD ENABLE SELF-DETERMINATION, THE RIGHT TO MAKE DECISIONS AND PROMOTE FULL PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY
- SERVICES SHOULD BE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL WHO NEED THEM
- SERVICES MUST BE BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL
- SERVICES SHOULD SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS, ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE, ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION, HEALTHCARE, FOOD, TRANSPORT, AND THE LABOUR MARKET THROUGH SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
- EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO ACCESS TO INFORMATION
- SERVICES SHOULD BE EMPOWERING, ENHANCING CLIENT CONTROL AND VOICE
- SERVICES SHOULD NARROW THE GAP BETWEEN POLICY AND PRACTICE AND BE SUBJECT TO REGULAR INDEPENDENT MONITORING BASED ON AGREED QUALITY STANDARDS

THE CURRENT SITUATION

- ACROSS THE REGION TOO MANY PEOPLE ARE IN DEHUMANISING INSTITUTIONS WHO COULD ENJOY A MUCH BETTER LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY
- THERE IS A PREVALENCE OF CASH TRANSFERS OVER SOCIAL SERVICES
- DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION IS A STRATEGIC PRIORITY IN ALL COUNTRIES BUT PROGRESS HAS BEEN UNEVEN
- FINANCING OF COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES IS PREDOMINANTLY PROJECT-BASED AND NOT ALWAYS SYSTEMATIC
- INEQUALITIES IN ACCESS TO SERVICES ARE LARGE (PEOPLE W DISABILITIES, RURAL COMMUNITIES, ETHNIC MINORITIES, THOSE IN POVERTY)
- THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR POLICIES IS WEAK

KEY CHALLENGES

- LACK OF GOOD QUALITY DATA AND LACK OF USE OF DATA FOR EVIDENCE BASED POLICIES
- LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF PEOPLE WHO LEAD COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES – MAYORS, MUNICIPALITIES
- LACK OF ACCESS TO GOVT FUNDS AND SPECIFIC BUDGET LINES
- LACK OF EQUAL RIGHTS IN PRACTICE
- LOW SELF ESTEEM OF SOME BENEFICIARIES – THOSE LONG TERM IN INSTITUTIONS
- NO LONG TERM SUPPORT – CRISES OR LOSS OF MOMENTUM IN REFORMS
- LACK OF PREVENTIVE SERVICES & GATEKEEPING MECHANISMS

KEY CHALLENGES II

- LACK OF FINANCIAL CAPACITIES AT SOME SYSTEM LEVELS
- LOW CO OPERATION & TRUST BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS
- INSUFFICIENT WELL QUALIFIED, MOTIVATED AND TRAINED PROFESSIONAL STAFF
- PREJUDICE, STIGMATISATION AND TRADITIONAL NORMS
- DANGER OF RAISING UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS
- LACK OF PRIORITY TO SERVICES – LACK OF INCENTIVES AND INTEREST

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- CREATE ADEQUATE STATISTICAL DATA AND USE IT FOR EVIDENCE BASED POLICY MAKING
- PROMOTE MULTI STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKING LONG TERM
- FULL PARTICIPATION OF BENEFICIARIES AT ALL STAGES
- MENTORS FOR THOSE IN SUPPORTED LIVING LONG TERM EG YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING CARE
- ESTABLISH QUALITY STANDARDS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING OF BENEFICIARIES
- UNIFIED PROTOCOLS AND STANDARDS FOR INTER PROFESSIONAL WORKING EG CASE MANAGEMENT, ASSESSMENT
- RIGHTS TO PERSONAL ASSISTANT MUST BE REALISED IN PRACTICE

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS II

- STATE MUST RECOGNISE THE ROLE OF NON STATE PROVIDERS
- ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE AND EX USERS AS SERVICE PROVIDERS AND MENTORS
- CREATE SPECIFIC BUDGET LINES FOR DEINSTITUTIONALISATION AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES AND REORGANISE FUNDING MECHANISMS
- MORATORIA ON NEW USERS IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE
- REGULARLY REVIEW AND CLOSE GAPS IN SERVICE PROVISION

KEY STAKEHOLDERS & PARTNERS

- SERVICE USERS
- FAMILIES
- CENTRES (FOR SOCIAL WORK, EMPLOYMENT, ETC.)
- MINISTRIES (OF FINANCE, SOCIAL WELFARE, ETC.)
- LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS
- NGOS
- INSTITUTES FOR TRAINING AND MONITORING
- DONORS
- MEDIA
- ACADEMIA
- SOCIAL PARTNERS
- SOCIAL ENTERPRISES
- HEALTH PROVIDERS, ETC.
- RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS