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Creation of Local Action Plan with reference to disability issue.

The problems of the people with disability (PDs) are accepted as a priority in the entire world, especially after the adoption of the Standard Rules of UN for equal opportunities of the PDs in 1993 and with the UN convention on the rights of people with disability, adopted on December 13th 2006 and signed by Macedonia on March 30th 2007.

The increased public awareness, on the disability as question which is part of human rights, points out to change from medical to social model. Disability is no longer regarded as a medical issue which should only be dealt with by the experts from the field of medicine and through social strategies, but it is regarded as an issue which is part of the human rights and is to be viewed through the use of positive measures and inclusive strategies.

This change of paradigm points out to change in the responsibility with regards to disability as an individual responsibility of the change, according to which the person should no longer be

only be treated and cured by the specialists in the field of medicine but be part of social responsibility; the individual does not handicap, it is the society that creates the handicap and thus this stance should be altered. The goal of the social model is to remove the social barriers and barriers which are part of the environment, in order to enable people with disability to live an independent life and enjoy the same rights as the remaining citizens. This change of paradigm emphasizes the physical, societal, social factors as well as the behaviour of the environment, which influence the people with disability.

PDs in Macedonia are still more regarded as object of mercy than as people with human rights, as the rest of the population. The local authorities have not been able to consider the rights of the PD during the planning, decision making or allocation of resources. In combination, these factors lead to undermining the rights and, on occasion, to open exclusion of part of the inhabitants from the society. Many public building are still not accessible, whereas the institutionalization, which is realized in inhuman conditions, is still in practice.

Having in mind the fact that the PDs are most often part of the vulnerable groups in the society, the developmental projects should be planned and realized in a manner which considers the issues of disability.

The equal value of all human beings is the fundamental principle in creation of our society. All people possess knowledge and experience of importance to the society. Thus, the society should be created in a manner that enables all people to equally provide their contribution to the development of the society and to enjoy the full participation in the social life.

There is no need to emphasize that the PDs should not be excluded from this process. PDs are citizens who enjoy the same rights and responsibilities as the other citizens.