



ANNUAL REPORT 2020



HANDIKOS

SHOQATA E PARAPLEGIKËVE DHE E PARALIZËS SË FËMIJËVE TË KOSOVËS
ASSOCIATION OF PARAPLEGICS AND PARALYSED CHILDREN OF KOSOVA
UDRUŽENJE PARAPLEGIČARA I DEČJE PARALIZE KOSOVA

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FOREWORDS

HANDIKOS was created in response to the difficult situation of people with disabilities in Kosovo. Studies showed that in developed societies, the provision of social care is considered an important aspect of the role of the state, so the benefits of care are part of the rights of the individual, an approach that in turn provides success or failure of care for people with disabilities, which for many reasons is crucial to the well-being of society.

According to the **National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, the current situation of people with disabilities does not meet the full realization of fundamental rights and freedoms on an equal footing with others. Therefore, all entities are responsible for guaranteeing this right which is achieved only by eliminating any kind of obstacles and barriers that create difficulties in respecting the principle of non-discrimination against people with disabilities. In this context, we emphasize that Kosovo institutions still have a lot of work and effort to do.

The year **2020** has been challenging for everyone, a year which has brought great difficulties and which is characterized by **COVID-19**. Faced with this situation still unknown to all mankind, we as an organization have been pushed to mobilize and adapt the plans of each project or program, even going beyond them with the sole purpose of finding the most accessible ways and forms, to support people with disabilities, through advices and/or services but also through direct support with various devices. Unfortunately, **COVID-19** has not spared neither people with disabilities nor the staff and/or early volunteers who were engaged in our association years ago, such as R. K., and F. Z.

Despite this situation, **HANDIKOS** has continued to work on enhancing the well-being of people with disabilities, lobbying and advocating for an inclusive society with equal conditions for all.

Our main goals during **2020** have been focused on four (4) objectives:

- Advocacy and lobbying towards the protection and advancement of the **rights** of people with disabilities in their inclusion in the legislation of Kosovo;
- Continuity of the provision of **services** for children and adults with disabilities, which are primary and more than necessary but which still remain a challenge;
- Supporting people with disabilities and their families throughout the **pandemic**;
- **Capacity** building of people with disabilities on their human rights and as well the **capacities** of HANDIKOS's staff.

People with disabilities face many challenges and barriers in our country, among which still remain: access, education, employment, welfare and respect and promotion of their rights, based on Kosovo legislation and other international documents. When we mention those challenges, however, we must mention in particular the challenges that HANDIKOS faces on a daily basis, due to the 100% project based functioning, without any permanent support, especially when it comes to services that are not yet provided by local institutions.

“People with disabilities should be an integrated part of society as a whole and they should be offered the opportunity towards individual independence, where through their experience, abilities and capacities to contribute to the development of our state.”

Afrim Maliqi
Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Annual Report – 2020 presents an overview of HANDIKOS' achievements during **2020** within the implemented programs. The reported data are based on HANDIKOS' achievements in implementing projects supported by local and foreign donors. Through the services provided throughout the year for children and adults with disabilities as well as their parents/families, HANDIKOS has continued its mission to advance the situation of disability in the country. Furthermore, over the course of a year, HANDIKOS' tireless work has significantly impacted the preservation of the social well-being of people with disabilities and their families during **COVID-19**.

Over the year, HANDIKOS has provided direct services to **30 children** with disabilities and **38 adults** with disabilities in the Prishtina region. At the same time, assistive devices services were provided to **501 people** with disabilities in Kosovo. HANDIKOS during 2020, as in previous years, through legal advices has influenced the fulfillment of human rights for people with disabilities. Over the course of one (1) year, 600 legal advices have been provided to people with disabilities throughout Kosovo, 60 of which have been complaints and lawsuits.

The main focus during this year has been the support towards disability community in maintaining their health during the pandemic, so in addition to direct services, children with disabilities, adults and their families have been supported through information sessions, informative and friendly video animations, distribution of food, hygienic, health and didactic materials, in order to maintain health and facilitate their functioning at home.

The close cooperation that **HANDIKOS** continues to maintain with civil society organizations, organizations of people with disabilities, international organizations, local and central institutions, society, and the disability community itself, has significantly influenced the ongoing functioning, addressing the needs of people with disabilities, as well as advancement of their situation in society. **HANDIKOS** continues to work for an inclusive society, with full recognition and realization of human rights for people with disabilities.

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY

HANDIKOS (Association of Paraplegics and Paralysis of Kosovo) was established in 1983, at the initiative of Mr. Halit Ferizi, then president of the association and later leader of the disability movement in Kosovo, along with a group of citizens with disabilities. The main objective was to "improve the rights and living standards of people with disabilities in Kosovo", through actions related with health, social protection and employment.

Since its establishment and to date, HANIDKOS has been supported by a significant number of international and local organizations which have enabled HANDIKOS to exist for more than two (2) decades. In its beginnings, HANDIKOS has received great support from: "Handicap International", "OXFAM", the Finnish Agency FIDIDA, the Government of Finland, the Embassy of Finland, the Italian Organization "Onlus Wamba-Athena", "Onlus Roberto Bazzoni", Save The Children", "UNICEF", European Agency for Construction and Reconstruction, supporters who have enabled the mission and vision of HANDIKOS.

Despite the lack of local statistics on the number and prevalence of disability in the country, in its database, HANDIKOS counts more than **18,000 members** with physical disabilities and combined, of different ages, genders and ethnicities throughout Kosovo. HANDIKOS has provided social services in the community and homes for children and adults with disabilities, as well as their families. Moreover, throughout this experience, HANDIKOS has also focused on advocacy and lobbying for the recognition and respect of human rights for people with disabilities in Kosovo by intervening in the public awareness as well as in laws and bylaws.

HISTORY

HANDIKOS over the years has modeled and offered various sets of rehabilitation programs which have supported all people with disabilities in the country and their families. All these are provided through the **Community Based Rehabilitation program - CBR**, a program which HANDIKOS has been providing since **2002** in Prishtina, Podujeva, Gjilan, Ferizaj, Gjakova, Prizren, Suhareka, Malisheva, Vushtrri, Peja, Istog, Mitrovica; within which, numerous sets of advocacy services and techniques have been implemented. Recently, **HANDIKOS** within the **CBR** program is modeling the bio-psycho-social approach in all its services, an approach which sees the person at the center, from different perspectives.

Despite the actions that have been taken in recent years, people with disabilities in Kosovo continue to face various challenges in all aspects of life which prevent them from achieving human rights and a dignified life as reflected in the **Constitution of Kosovo** and other legal acts of the country.

Based on recent research by the World Health Organization, it is estimated that about **15%** of the world's population has at least one disability. In Kosovo, according to the latest census, there are about **93,288** people with disabilities.



HANDIKOS throughout **2020**, has adapted all its support programs for children and adults with disabilities based on the guidelines and recommendations of local institutions to prevent the spread of **COVID-19**, a situation which has significantly affected the typical course of organization. Throughout this year, HANDIKOS has continued the implementation of its **Development Strategy (2018 - 2022)**. Respectively, all the work of **HANDIKOS** during **2020** is determined in strategic principles and objectives.

Throughout the year, various alternatives have been provided and implemented, which have facilitated the implementation of current programs and the fulfillment of its strategic objectives, preserving the health of the people with disabilities and beyond.

OUR VISION

An inclusive society, with full recognition and realization of the equal rights and opportunities of people with disabilities.

OUR MISSION

Achieve positive and lasting changes in the lives of people with disabilities, through representation, protection of rights and their support.

Within its **Development Strategy (2018-2022)**, HANDIKOS has foreseen those strategic objectives:

1. **Participation** - increase the participation of people with disabilities in public and political life;
2. **Employment** - increase the participation of people with disabilities in the labor market;
3. **Education & Training** - increase the participation of people with disabilities in inclusive education and lifelong learning;
4. **Social Welfare** - promote dignified living conditions for people with disabilities;
5. **Health** - improve access to quality health services; &
6. **Organizational Development** - capacity building of HANDIKOS and partner organizations.



PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY HANDIKOS DURING 2020

- **Promoting inclusion in consultative processes for government and public administration reforms in the disability sector at local, national and regional level - Inclusive Kosovo (2019-2023)** - supported by the European Union Office. The project is implemented by HANDIKOS, in partnership with Disability Partnership Finland, Threshold, the Kosovo Association of the Deaf and Kosovo Association of the Blind with support from the European Union.

The main goal of the project is an inclusive society in which people with disabilities can realize their full potential and live a dignified life as equal citizens. Within the project, the following objectives are foreseen:

- Government and public administration reforms are inclusive for PWDs;
- Strengthening various levels of government to draft, review and implement an inclusive disability legislation;
- Strengthening the DPOs dialogue with the parliament and the Government at local and national level; &
- Improving the joint advocacy of DPOs and their networks.

- **Promoting violence prevention in all settings for children with disabilities in Kosovo (2017-2021)** - supported by Save the Children and SIDA.

The overall goal of the project is promoting and addressing CWD's needs through improvement of cross-sectoral coordination and promotion of necessary measures to mainstream disability in all legislation, policies, strategies, practices and systems. During 2019 this project had two main objectives:

- Formal and Informal Local Child protection systems are strengthened and functional to provide good quality, accessible, flexible and gender sensitive preventive and responsive services;
- Promotion of child-focused social accountability and child participation measures to improve inclusion of CWDs and provision of appropriate CWD specific services.

- **Advancing capacities for the rights of children (2020-2022)** - Supported by European Union - Office in Kosovo, and implemented in partnership with SOS Children's Villages.

The overall goal of the project is to contribute to the empowerment, promotion and protection of children's rights in social services and the provision of services to children by civil society organizations. The project during 2020 is oriented towards three key objectives:

- Increasing the skills and knowledge of the Centers for Social Work and Civil Society Organizations for the promotion and protection of children's rights;
- Providing social services for vulnerable children and their families through psycho-social services;
- Promoting and initiating a multidisciplinary approach to children's rights as well as capacity building of Community Based Rehabilitation Centers.

PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY HANDIKOS DURING 2020

○ ***Advancing the situation of children with disabilities in Kosovo (2019-2020) supported by UNICEF.***

The main goal of the project is advancing the situation of children with disabilities in Kosovo in the field of protection and active participation through the advancement of current legislation relevant to children with disabilities and access to high quality services based on the principles of the bio-psycho-social model. Within this project is intended to:

- Incorporate the CBR program model based on the principles of bio-psycho-social approach in the Inclusive Law and in the upcoming lay changes to the local legislature, relevant to children with disabilities;
- Strengthen school initiatives to advance/provide access to their schools for children with disabilities (of all categories);
- Increase the visibility of issues related to children with disabilities in Kosovo; and
- Strengthen the network of CBR Centers in Kosovo in addressing issues relevant to children with disabilities.

○ ***Advancement of human rights, participation in society and conditions for independent living for People with Disabilities in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkans, supported by Threshold Finland.***

The overall goal of the project is advancement of human rights, participation in society and conditions for independent living for people with disabilities in Kosovo. The project aims to:

- Advance capacities of People with Disabilities and DPO's in order to improve their living standards;
- Empower People with Disabilities and DPO's to actively participate in collaborative mechanisms at local, national and international levels in order to integrate their rights into development policies at all levels;
- Increase the awareness of institutions and society for the rights of people with disabilities and promote the Advocacy of Human Rights between people with disabilities at the local and national level.

○ ***Enhancing welfare of people with disabilities and promoting equal opportunities (December 2020 - March 2021) - supported by Ministry of Work and Social Welfare.***

The main goal of the project is to provide quality community-based social services for children and adults with disabilities as well as to support their families in coping with disability in everyday situations. Through this project it is intended to achieve:

- Improving the social welfare of people with disabilities;
- Improving the social welfare of parents of children with disabilities.

PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY HANDIKOS DURING 2020

○ **Advancing social welfare of people with disabilities within the Region of Prishtina** (December 2020 - May 2021) - supported by Municipality of Prishtina - Directorate of social welfare.

The main goal of the project is to improve the social welfare of children with disabilities in the Prishtina Region while aiming to:

- Improve the social welfare of children with disabilities;
- Improve the social welfare of adults with disabilities;
- To increase the awareness of family members in the protection of people with disabilities from the spread of COVID-19.

○ **Inclusion of people with disabilities within labor market through the production of reusable and environmental friendly bags** (October 2020 - April 2021) - supported by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in Kosovo, and implemented in partnership with The Balkan Forum.

The project essentially aims to promote equal opportunities for all, with an emphasis on employing people with disabilities and promoting environmental protection alternatives. The following results are planned to be achieved within the project:

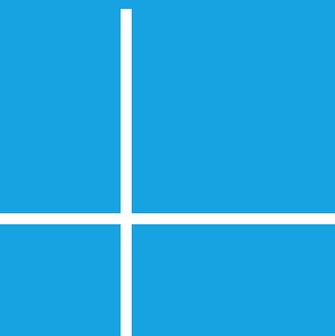
- 10 people with disabilities gain skills and implement them in the production of reusable environmentally friendly bags;
- 10 people with disabilities have been hired and produced at least 3,000 reusable bags;
- Increases the awareness of society, businesses and policy-makers about the harms of using plastic bags;
- At least 10 stores have been dedicated to preserving the environment by promoting and selling reusable bags.

SERVICES PROVIDED

HANDIKOS throughout 2020 has continued to provide services for children and adults with disabilities, family members, parents, caregivers, the community in general and Kosovo society.

The services provided to the community in the first quarter of the year were provided based on the models that HANDIKOS has piloted and programmed over the years, thus providing holistic support based on bio-psycho-social approach as well as focusing on the independence of children and adults with disabilities. All support provided to the community that HANDIKOS represents was adapted to virtual platforms, following the guidelines of local institutions to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The following section presents the key achievements during 2020 in providing social and family services for children and adults with disabilities.



DAILY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

HANDIKOS during the implementation of services provided under the Community Based Rehabilitation Program, with the support of projects implemented throughout **2020**, funded by local and foreign donors, has managed to directly support **30** children with disabilities in the region of Prishtina. The key services provided throughout this year have supported the holistic development of children with an emphasis on daily skills, cognitive, physical and emotional development. The services provided throughout **2020** have been adopted to current circumstances with the **COVID-19** pandemic.

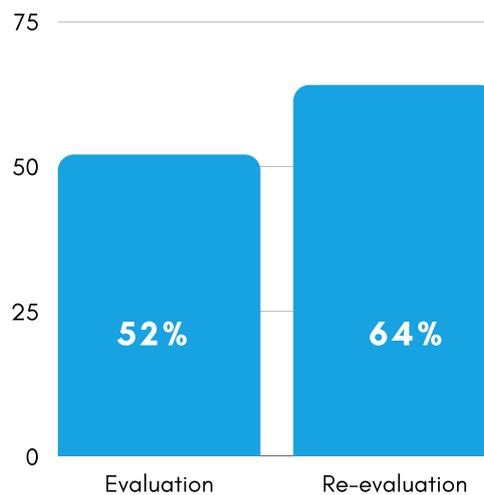
HANDIKOS has continued the regular assessment of children with disabilities by the HANDIKOS multidisciplinary team focusing on the child as well as analyzing the perspective of parents and other service providers (when applied). Based on the evaluation results, individual intervention plans have been compiled for each beneficiary child, while their review has been done on a **three (3) month** basis by applying the re-evaluation process in all areas of development. The process of child support throughout the reporting year was developed through the usage of virtual platforms, the distribution of didactic materials and the commitment of parents to support the development of children at home, a process which has contributed to supporting the development of children with disabilities. All this is reported on a monthly basis for each beneficiary child, while those reports has been shared with parents/caregivers, updating them with the monthly progress for their children.

Data from the basic child assessment and those from the last re-assessment conducted in **December 2020** show satisfactory results of working with children with disabilities over **one (1) year**, despite the challenges faced by the beneficiary children, service providers as well as parents involved in this process.

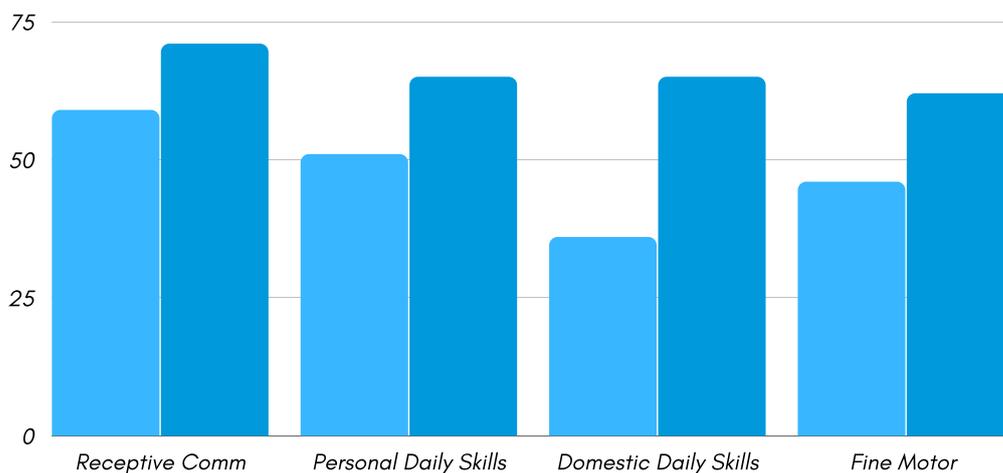
Demographic statistics for children

30 children with disabilities	Disaggregated by gender	
	Girls	Boys
	11	19

The services provided during **2020**, were oriented towards supporting the **development of children** in the field of communication (expressive & receptive), daily skills (personal, domestic & community), socialization (play, fun & coping), motor skills (groceries & fine). During **one (1) year** within the services provided are supported the areas of development elaborated above, while from the average of development calculated in the initial assessments for the beneficiary children from **52%** (basic level of skills) is raised to **64%** (progress achieved in one **(1) year**) **with 30 children** with disabilities.



Areas in which significant progress has been identified during 2020 are *receptive communication, daily personal & domestic skills* as well as *fine motor skills*:



 Evaluation

 Re-Evaluation

Support for children with disabilities throughout **2020** has been significantly affected by the **COVID-19** pandemic, which has determined the nature of work as well as the planned progress for each area of intervention. Consequently, **HANDIKOS** since April 2020, using its resources, has managed to strengthen service delivery through other implemented alternatives which have supported the service delivery cycle for beneficiary children.

During one (1) year in the line of supporting the development of children at home, as well as parents during the process of supporting their children, **257 didactic materials** were provided, which were selected based on individual objectives for each child. The didactic materials were distributed in a rotation system, where the children had access to them as long as they worked on a certain objective.



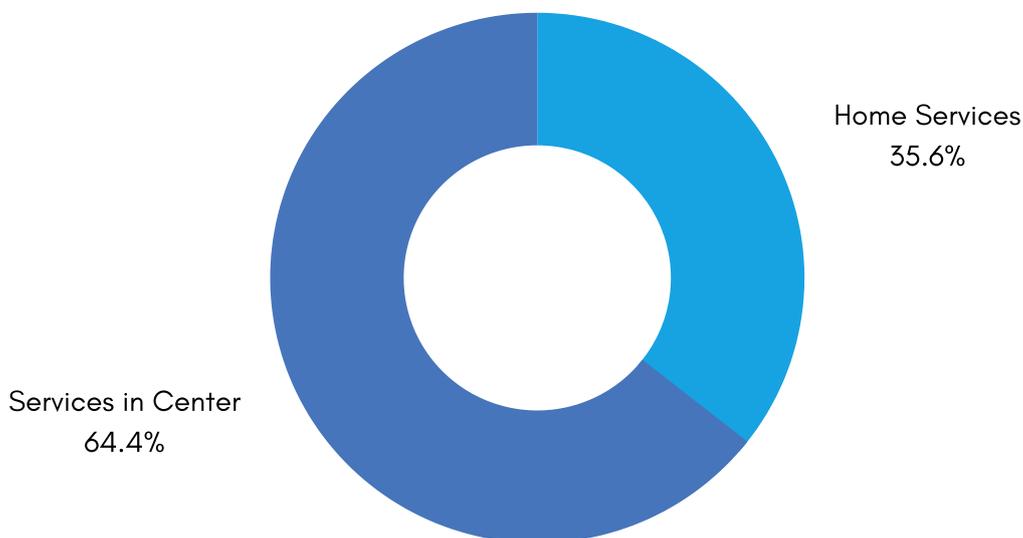
HANDIKOS throughout the year, with its resources, has managed to produce **62** video tutorials, which have been distributed to the community through the social networks of the organization. The video tutorials have been produced in order to provide home alternatives to support the children, each time using materials that every home is supposed to have. **HANDIKOS** has reached an average of around **500** viewers for each video published for this purpose.

DAILY SERVICES FOR ADULTS

HANDIKOS has continued its work with and for people with disabilities throughout 2020. Depending on the implemented projects, HANDIKOS managed to work for adults with disabilities towards independent living and skills for independence. **COVID-19** has significantly made it difficult to provide services, as it has not been easy to adapt current programs within virtual forms.

Over the year HANDIKOS has managed to support **21** people with disabilities (20W & 18M) directly through the provision of social services for independent living and recognition and functioning of their abilities. Beneficiaries involved in the direct forms are aged **21-56** years. Key achievements are relevant to increasing the knowledge of people with disabilities in coping with disability in everyday life; recognition of human rights for people with disabilities; coping and protection from **COVID-19** infection; as well as in the field of social and psychological well-being.

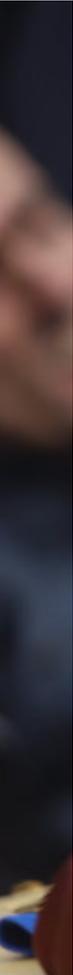
On the other hand, **HANDIKOS** has also provided services at home, for people with disabilities who were estimated to have difficulty in receiving services at the Center. During **one (1) year** from this service have benefited **21** people with disabilities (13W & 8M) from the region of Prishtina. This has raised the awareness of people with disabilities about human rights which are protected by applicable laws, as well as opportunities to receive services from relevant or other institutions.



To support people with disabilities, **HANDIKOS** has also developed video tutorials which aimed to support independent and active living throughout the **COVID-19** pandemic. During 2020, **seven (7)** video tutorials were published in order to provide various alternatives for using the current situation in favor of independent living. The videos published on the social networks of **HANDIKOS** have reached a viewership of 1000 viewers on average.

HANDIKOS has also held virtual information sessions during **2020** with **63** people with disabilities (**37W & 26M**) from the Prishtina region. They have significantly influenced the awareness of the community in emotional management during the **COVID-19** pandemic, the awareness of the use and identification of their skills as well as the preservation of their health and others around. Moreover, these sessions have also affected the level of community understanding of the guidance and advice provided by the line institutions, which had to be adapted to a disability-friendly nature.



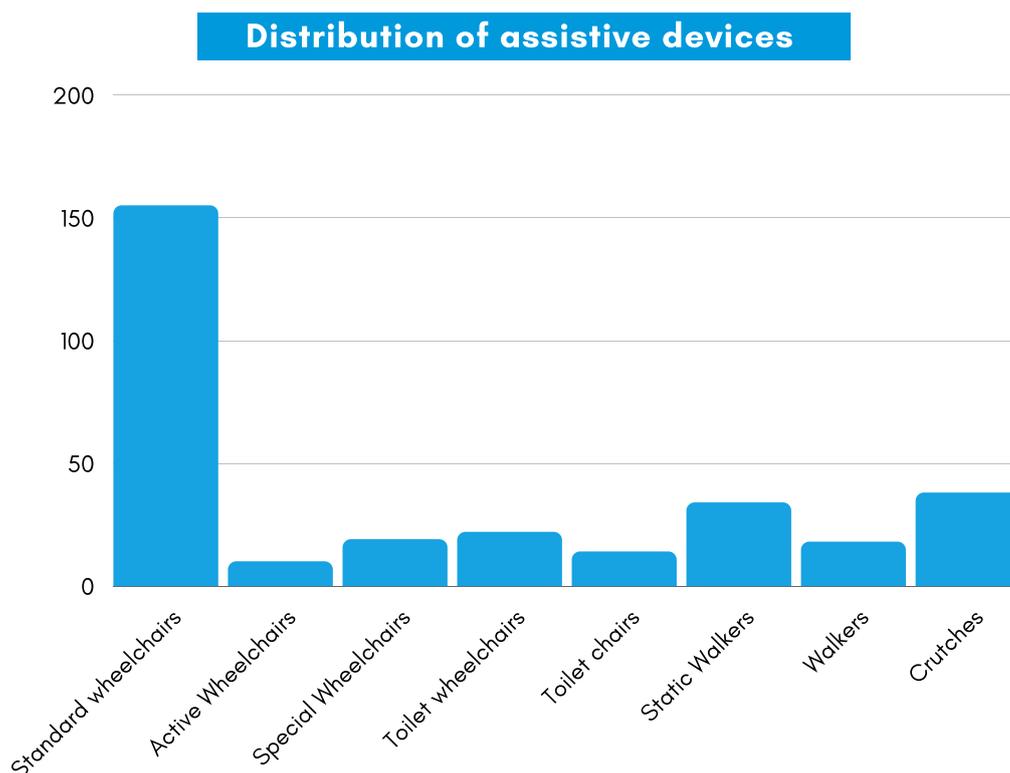


ASSISTIVE DEVICES SERVICES

HANDIKOS has continued to support **people with disabilities** in Kosovo through the provision of services for assistive devices, a service which has enabled and contributed to the independence of people with disabilities, moreover has directly contributed to the fulfillment of our mission.

Over the course of a year, HANDIKOS has managed to directly support **310** people with disabilities (**166W & 144M**) in Kosovo through the provision of various assistive devices. Of these, **38** were children with disabilities and **272 adults**. During this year, standard wheelchairs, toilet chairs, crutches and walkers have been mainly distributed.

Each beneficiary is initially **evaluated**, through evaluation inventories that **HANDIKOS** possesses, inventories that reflect the needs of the person for the usage of the assistive device, as well as the specifications of the type of assistive device and its dimensions. The assistive device is assembled and adapted to the needs of its user, while they are **trained** in the proper usage of the assistive device, the maintenance of health during the usage of it and also the maintenance of the device itself.



Throughout this year, [HANDIKOS](#), in addition to other areas of cooperation with the Network of Community-Based Rehabilitation Centers in Kosovo, has also cooperated closely in providing services for assistive equipment. During 2020, HANDIKOS has provided **72 wheelchairs** and **69 other assistive equipment** for movement. Furthermore, during this year, within the donations received (assistive devices), 360 assistive devices for assistance in reading were distributed to organizations representing the people with visual disabilities. The assistive devices distributed to people with disabilities throughout 2020 were donated by the "[Latter Days of Jesus Christ](#)" Foundation and private donors.



LEGAL SERVICES

HANDIKOS has continued to provide the legal counseling service to all people with disabilities in the country throughout 2020. Furthermore, for people with disabilities, as one of the most vulnerable groups, confrontation with discriminatory and biased situations has been very evident throughout the **COVID-19** period.

Legal services provided during the reporting period are mainly relevant to cases of discrimination, denial of basic human rights and other irregularities which relate to the difficulties of people with disabilities in enjoying the benefits guaranteed by law.

As a result, throughout 2020 HANDIKOS has provided more than **600 legal advices** to people with disabilities in Kosovo and their families. Within these more than **60 legal advice on complaints and lawsuits** were provided.

HANDIKOS has also addressed complaints to the Ombudsman Institution for not including people with disabilities in economic recovery after **COVID-19**; protection from discrimination; & the exclusion of some people with disabilities from pension schemes.

Moreover, during 2020, **HANDIKOS** assisted and strengthened the lawsuit filed against the Municipality of Prishtina for discrimination, the first of its kind in the country.



OTHER SERVICES

HANDIKOS all year long, in addition to providing services that directly contributed to its strategic objectives, has also provided services that have been adapted to the circumstances of dealing with the pandemic of **COVID-19**.

The services provided throughout this year aimed to advance the capacities of children and adults with disabilities in various fields; increase the capacity of parents and family members of people with disabilities to support them at home; as well as increase the capacity of formal and informal service providers to support children with disabilities.

Information sessions

Throughout 2020, HANDIKOS has held **56** information sessions in **28** schools in the municipalities of Prishtina, Gjakova, Ferizaj and Mitrovica, aiming to inform children about disability issues with a focus on preventing prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination against children with disabilities. As a result, **1038 children (577G & 461B)** were informed about the rights and challenges that children with disabilities face. To further strengthen this and to advance the access of service providers towards children with disabilities, HANDIKOS throughout 2020 has also provided **26** information sessions on disability specific communication techniques and also on promoting violence prevention against children with disabilities for **497 (414W & 83M)** service providers from education, health and social sectors.



In order to support parents of children with disabilities, throughout **COVID-19**, HANDIKOS has conducted three (**3**) information sessions with **120** parents (77W & 43M) using virtual platforms which have been easily accessible by parents. The purpose of these sessions was to inform parents about ways of supporting children at home; the adapted ways on how HANDIKOS can support them under these circumstances; as well as how to prevent the spread of **COVID-19** and to maintain the health of their children. Moreover, the above mentioned sessions have also affected the maintenance of a stable emotional state of the parents themselves during the crisis period. On the other hand four (**4**) information sessions with **63** adults with disabilities (42W & 21M), were conducted in order to *translate* the guidelines for preventing the spread of **COVID-19** into a disability friendly language, also to offer alternatives of staying active during quarantine.

Trainings and workshops

HANDIKOS has continuously worked closely with the community it represents in capacity building in various fields, including other partner organizations, with which is jointly aimed to advance the situation of people with disabilities in the country.

During this year, HANDIKOS has organized a training with **31** people with disabilities (14W & 17M) in order to provide alternatives for independent living and the realization of human rights for people with disabilities.

HANDIKOS has organized 10 trainings with **102** children with disabilities (56G & 46B) in order to increase their capacity to identify potential abusive situations, deal with them and report them.

Throughout this year, children of the **Advocacy Group "HËNA"**, in addition to numerous commitments to address the needs of children with disabilities, were also active participants in the three-day workshop in order to increase the capacities of the group in the field of advocacy and lobbying. Part of this workshop were **13** children with disabilities (5G & 8B) from the municipalities of Prishtina, Gjakova, Ferizaj and Mitrovica.

HANDIKOS during 2020 has conducted one (1) training with parents and service providers in the municipality of Gjakova on the principles of Positive Discipline in Daily Parenting. Part of the training were **14** participants (13W & 1M). While the impact of training on participants is evident in **328 children** (157G & 171B).

One of the most valuable assets of **HANDIKOS** continues to be the provided support towards the representatives of organizations of people with disabilities in the country with special emphasis on **Community Based Rehabilitation Centers** in Kosovo. During 2020, HANDIKOS has continued to work closely with all representatives of these Centers in order to address the needs of people with disabilities in the best possible way throughout **COVID-19**.

Furthermore, during 2020 HANDIKOS has organized a training aiming to increase the capacities of managers of Community Based Rehabilitation Centers with **24** participants (10W & 14M) in order to advance their knowledge in the field of advocacy as well as the use of advocacy techniques to ensure the financial **sustainability** of the services provided by the Centers to address the needs of children and adults with disabilities in the country.

At the same time, HANDIKOS has held four (**4**) workshops which included 20 municipalities of Kosovo, with a total of **39** participants (15W & 24M), representatives of **Disabled People Organisations (DPO)**. The main purpose of these workshops was to support the capacities of DPOs on advancing internal organization governance as well as administrative development, which supports the involvement of DPOs in policy-making processes relevant to disability in the country.

HANDIKOS has also worked closely with DPO representatives throughout the **three (3) day capacity** building workshop for fundraising organizations, with **24** participants (9W & 15M) from local and central organizations in Kosovo.

Also, **23** representatives of DPOs (7W & 16M) have worked together, during the 3-day workshop organized by HANDIKOS in drafting the Joint Advocacy Plan which aims to support the cause of DPOs to **advance the situation of people with disabilities**.



Response to the COVID-19 pandemic



HANDIKOS since mid-March 2020, has shifted its work mainly to virtual platforms, continuing to be close to people with disabilities and their families in various forms. Initially, HANDIKOS was engaged in translating any information provided by the institutions on protection against the **COVID-19** virus and prevention of its spread into a disability-friendly language. As a result, through posts developed and published on social networks, **HANDIKOS** has managed to raise the awareness of people with disabilities in maintaining their health and preventing the spread of **COVID-19**.

With the help of local and foreign supporters, during 2020, HANDIKOS has provided support for **150** people with disabilities in Kosovo with medical supplies, as well as hygiene packages for **37** children from the region of Prishtina. Furthermore, HANDIKOS has provided **290** food and hygiene packages for **290** families of persons with disabilities in Kosovo.

Children with disabilities in Kosovo were constantly facing difficulties to learn through virtual platforms of the Ministry of Education. As a result, HANDIKOS with the support of its donors has managed to provide technological equipment for **85** (35G & 50B) children with disabilities, which has enabled them to attend learning on virtual platforms, as well as attending virtual services offered throughout 2020.

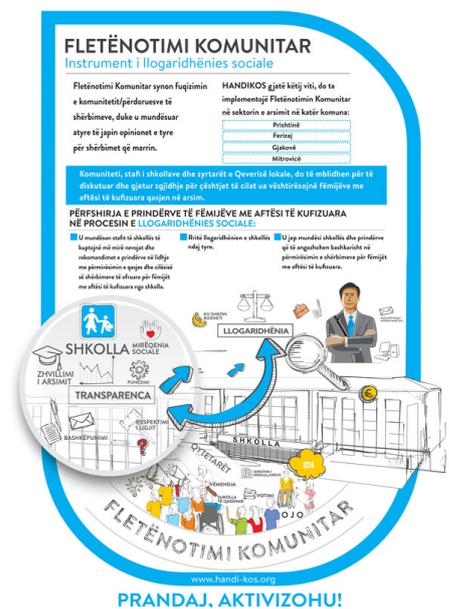
HANDIKOS has also distributed **10,500 face masks** and more than **200 hand disinfectants** throughout 2020, the distribution of which has been facilitated by Community-Based Rehabilitation Centers in Kosovo. Also **25** people with disabilities (13W & 12W) from the region of Prishtina have received packages with information material, face masks, disinfectants and other equipment which have facilitated the preservation of health throughout the pandemic.

Promotional videos, posts and information on an ongoing basis have been posted on HANDIKOS' social networks, which have kept the community informed about developments in the country about pandemic management, dealing with its aftermath and staying active during the quarantine period. During one **(1) year** HANDIKOS has reached over **600 thousand people** through posts published on social networks.



HANDIKOS during 2020 has also implemented the **Community Scorecard** Process, where at the request of parents of children with disabilities, the education sector has been selected, as an area which is considered to be a priority for children with disabilities. Within the process, HANDIKOS has managed to include the municipalities of Prishtina, Gjakova, Ferizaj and Mitrovica, with a total of **107** participants (service providers, children with disabilities and parents of children). The purpose of the process was to activate service recipients and providers in addressing issues that affect the situation of children with disabilities in the **education sector**.

Children, parents and education representatives have worked together to prioritize the issues they should address over the next period, through the development of action plans. The issues prioritized for this period were mainly related to *assistants and support teachers, transport, assessment, implementation of IEP, parent teacher cooperation and didactic materials*. During 2020, HANDIKOS has managed to provide didactic material support to the four (4) schools targeted throughout the process.



HANDIKOS continues to work with and for people with disabilities, empowering them to actively participate in society. Throughout this year, HANDIKOS was part of local public hearings as well as working meetings of line directorates at both local and central level, to reflect the needs of people with disabilities in the process of drafting policies and regulations, which address **human rights** with particular emphasis on people with disabilities.

Furthermore, HANDIKOS has empowered people with disabilities out of the Prishtina region, in close cooperation with the network of **Community Based Rehabilitation Centers** in Kosovo. As a result, **1,829** participants (649W & 1177M) were part of the meetings of the Municipal Assemblies and those of the various committees held during 2020.

Throughout 2020, **HANDIKOS** has continued to support Community-Based Rehabilitation Centers in ensuring the financial sustainability of the Centers, with particular emphasis on the sustainability of services provided to children and adults with disabilities. For this purpose, HANDIKOS during 2020 has held seven (7) two-day regional workshops, in **seven (7) main** regions of Kosovo with **112 participants** (69W & 43M). The participants were staff members of the Centers themselves, representatives of the municipalities involved in the region (municipal welfare and health directorates) as well as municipal assembly members.

HANDIKOS has also trained **10 people with disabilities** (6W & 4M) in the field of **tailoring**, with special emphasis on sewing multi-purpose bags. The trainees will continue the second part of the training next year and will start piloting the sewing of multi-purpose bags to contribute to the elimination of the use of plastic bags.



ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING INTERVENTIONS



ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING INTERVENTIONS

Throughout 2020 **HANDIKOS** has continued working in the field of advocacy and lobbying to advance the situation of people with disabilities in the country, with a special emphasis on promoting equal rights and a dignified life for all. Over a year, HANDIKOS has launched and implemented various campaigns that have essentially addressed the human rights of people with disabilities, access, education, participation and violence prevention.

As an already annual event, this year also **1st of March - International Day of Wheelchair Users** was marked, which is characterized by the parade of children and adults in wheelchairs along the main square of Pristina with **300** participants with the motto "*Mos ma kufizo lëvizjen!*". The event was followed by other messages which portray the living of wheelchair users in Kosovo, such as: "*Ne k'shtu lëvizim!*"; "*Edhe unë kam rrota por nuk e ndot ambientin!*"; "*Ku shkel këmba jote, të shkelë rrota jem!*"; "*Veç punën, se karrigen e kom!*"; "*Rampë për rrota!*" etj.

The 1st of March campaign ended with a joint dance with all those present, while the event was covered by the media. All of this has reached a visibility of over **60,000** people on social media.

HANDIKOS continues to work closely with all of its partners in child protection with an emphasis on children with disabilities. This is also reflected in its intervention and advocacy programs. This year, HANDIKOS in partnership with the Children's Group "HËNA", ROR, Syri i Vizionit and Save the Children have launched the campaign "**Unë pa dhunë!**". This campaign has conveyed messages of children to promote a safe environment for all children, especially for the period we left behind, a period which is estimated to have increased the number of cases of domestic violence. The campaign was accompanied by video and photo messages of the children themselves, and it reached over **32,000** viewers through social networks.

Inclusive education continues to be one of the key objectives of **HANDIKOS**, an objective which is strengthened every year through the provision of certain services for children with disabilities, as well as for parents, service providers or even policy-makers. HANDIKOS during 2020 has launched the campaign "**School opens the the world!**" aiming to raise public awareness about the inclusion of children with disabilities in the regular education process; the difficulties that children face throughout this process; as well as the promotion of alternatives which facilitate the process of inclusion of children in the education system.

The campaign ended with the launch of one (1) installation in Pristina Square, with the same theme. The installation further invited representatives of various institutions to commit to the inclusion of children with disabilities in education. Overall, the campaign has managed to reach over **200,000** people, while the commitment to inclusiveness has been declared by more than 50 representatives of institutions of the line.

On the occasion of marking **3rd of December - International Day of People with Disabilities**, HANDIKOS has held two conferences in order to strengthen the voice of persons with disabilities. Both conferences highlighted the situation of children and adults with disabilities in the country, with particular emphasis on their situation throughout **COVID-19** and the challenges they have faced. The conferences were conducted through virtual platforms, where the number of participants involved directly was about **100**, while the same was followed by the general public through live video on Facebook where a attendance of **3000** viewers was achieved.

Other

HANDIKOS throughout the year using its resources has managed to be close to citizens with disabilities in various ways and periods. Through cooperation with Community Based Rehabilitation Centers and DPOs, during the year, numerous advocacy interventions have been implemented, in order to raise public awareness about issues related to disability. An open discussion with **20** participants (9W, 11M) was held in Lipjan in order to raise awareness about discrimination against people with disabilities. Open discussions were held in the municipality of Suhareka as well, with the topic "Raising awareness of institutions and the community about the right of movement of people with disabilities". Discussions were led by people with disabilities themselves. In the same line, in Mitrovica were distributed informative brochures about Administrative Instruction 33/2007. Meanwhile, in Prishtina, an awareness video was launched with the motto "Aty ku s'ka qasje, ka diskriminim!", which has reached **123,000** views on social networks.

HANDIKOS with the support of donors, this year has managed to carry out local interventions in order to raise awareness on inclusion of children with disabilities in all settings. In the municipality of Ferizaj, one (1) **accessible swing** has been placed for children with disabilities, while in the municipality of Gjakova, three (3) such swings have been placed. It is estimated that more than **150 children** with disabilities of targeted municipalities will benefit, through these interventions.

PUBLICATIONS

The year 2020 is considered to be successful in the implementation of **HANDIKOS**'s annual programs as well as the impact and progress achieved in its strategic objectives and programs. Throughout the year, **HANDIKOS** with its partners has worked closely in validating and factualizing the situation of people with disabilities in the country.

- The report **"Where does Kosovo stand?"** was published- a report which has informed decision makers and other stakeholders about the gaps and shortcomings of the Kosovo legal framework compared to the United Nations Convention and applicable European laws. The full report can be downloaded here: http://handi-kos.org/wp-content/uploads/2004/05/Report_SHO-29_04_20_95548.pdf
- HANDIKOS has also facilitated the access toward people with disabilities from the community and institutions of the line, through the publication of research **"Welfare of people with disabilities during COVID-19"** - This publication included information on disability and COVID-19, stress management tips during the pandemic, and advice for family, community, and policymakers in addressing disability-related issues. Detailed research can be downloaded here: http://handi-kos.org/wp-content/uploads/2004/05/Hulumtimi_final_COVID-19_592381.pdf
- HANDIKOS for more than one (1) year has worked closely with the Municipal Directorates of Education in seven (7) regions of Kosovo with **144 schools** in order to assess the level of accessibility they provide to children with disabilities. Out of **50,550** students enrolled in the assessed schools, it was reported that **2%** of them are children with disabilities, while no school has been identified that offers full accessibility standards for free movement of children with disabilities in Kosovo.
More than 56% of the assessed schools do not offer standard ramps, and only 7% of them have accessible toilets for students with disabilities. The detailed report can be downloaded here: <http://handi-kos.org/wp-content/uploads/2004/03/RAPORTI-I-VLERE%CC%88SIMIT-TE%CC%88-QASSHME%CC%88RISE%CC%88-SE%CC%88-NDE%CC%88RTESAVE-SHKOLLORE-TE%CC%88-NIVELIT-FILLOR-DHE-MESE%CC%88M-TE%CC%88-ULE%CC%88T-PE%CC%88R-FE%CC%88MIJE%CC%88T-ME-AFTE%CC%88SI-TE%CC%88-KUFIZUARA-NE%CC%88-KOSOVE%CC%88.pdf>

- HANDIKOS during 2020, all its work and achievements towards advancing the situation of people with disabilities in the country has validated and factualized through the publication of the **Annual Report on Disability - Where does Kosovo Stand?** - This report summarizes and highlights the situation of people with disabilities in Kosovo throughout **COVID-19**, in the education sector, accessibility, employment, participation and international cooperation. The report highlights the key difficulties that children and adults with disabilities have faced throughout 2020 with particular emphasis on the difficulties and implications resulting from the **COVID-19** pandemic. The report can be downloaded here: http://handi-kos.org/wp-content/uploads/2004/03/404-535_Raporti_Vjetor_AK_03_Dhjetor_2020.pdf
- Lately, **HANDIKOS** has finalized its one (1) year work on promoting the prevention of violence against children with disabilities through the publication of the "**Brief Report on the Usage of the Disaggregated Database for Children with Disabilities Involved in Domestic Violence**" - This report shows that no child with disability involved in domestic violence has been reported in the disaggregated database managed by the Ministry of Justice. On the other hand, the report highlights the difficulties regarding the use of the database, with special emphasis on the difficulties as a result of **COVID-19**. The detailed report can be downloaded here: <http://handi-kos.org/wp-content/uploads/2004/03/RAPORT-I-SHKURTE%CC%88R-RRETH-PERDORIMIT-TE%CC%88-BAZE%CC%88S-SE%CC%88-TE%CC%88-DHE%CC%88NAVE-PE%CC%88R-FE%CC%88MIJE%CC%88T-ME....pdf>



SHOQATA E PARAPLEGJIKËVE DHE E PARALIZËS SË FËMIJËVE TË KOSOVËS
ASSOCIATION OF PARAPLEGICS AND PARALYSED CHILDREN OF KOSOVA
UDRUŽENJE PARAPLEGIČARA I DEČJE PARALIZE KOSOVA

St. "Nekibe Kelmendi", no. 80, Prishtina

Tel: 049 970 588

Email: handikosehandi-kos.org

Website: <http://handi-kos.org/>