

EVALUATION REPORT SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND CHILD PARTICIPATION



NGOM MU!

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SIDA - Swedish International Development Agency AG - Advocacy Group

CWD - Children with Disabilities

CSC - Community Score Card

SCIK - Save the Children in Kosovo

DPO- Disability People Organizations

CSO - Civil Society Organizations



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HANDIKOS is strongly committed to addressing the protection needs of children with disabilities through the necessary coordination and holistic approach, in order to integrate disability into all legislation, policies and strategies to combat violence and abuse against children with disabilities in all settings. From 2017 to 2021, HANDIKOS has implemented the project "Promoting violence prevention in all settings for children with disabilities in Kosovo" in partnership with Save the Children in Kosovo and with the support of the Swedish International Development Agency. The project aims to promote and address the needs of children with disabilities (CWD) by improving cross-sectoral coordination and promoting comprehensive measures to create a safer and without corporal punishment and humiliating environment (NFP) for children with disabilities, by involving and targeting all actors who play a role in a child's life - from families, peers and their representatives, communities, service providers, professionals and institutions to the general public. HANDIKOS aims to achieve this goal, by fulfilling two objectives of this project:

1. Improving the quality of inclusive child protection systems policies & practices, and increasing awareness, knowledge and inter-sectorial cooperation among communities and service providers to prevent and respond to cases of violence against children with disabilities in all settings. Through this objective¹, HANDIKOS aims to protect children with disabilities from violence, harassment and other forms of victimization through awareness programs and capacity building of all key actors in the lives of children such as: Positive Discipline Program for parents; Lectures on prevention of discrimination, prejudice and stereotypes against persons with disabilities for peers; Information sessions on communication techniques and specifics of children with disabilities in Standard Action Procedures for protection from domestic violence, for service providers; as well as the Violence Prevention Training Program for children with disabilities themselves.

¹ The impact of this objective is reflected in other HANDIKOS documents.



2. Promoting child-centered social accountability and child participation to improve the inclusion of children with disabilities and provision of appropriate CWD specific services. As part of the second objective of this project, HANDIKOS aims to encourage the solution of local problems, empowering right holders and service users (children with disabilities and their parents) to share their views and impressions with service providers through their involvement in social accountability processes, namely in the Community Score Card process. Furthermore, within this objective, HANDIKOS has aimed to support and empower the advocacy group of children with disabilities to advocate on issues that concern them and to participate in child participation mechanisms. HANDIKOS through this evaluation report aims to present the impact of the project implementation to direct beneficiaries, which are children with disabilities (CWD), parents of children with disabilities as well as service providers and other stakeholders. This evaluation has applied a combined methodology of secondary data review and primary data collection. Overall, the impact of the second objective has specifically been positive and at the right level to achieve the establishment of cooperation and dialogue between service users and service providers. Through the activities of this objective, not only has the improvement of services for children with disabilities been achieved, as well as the cooperation with service providers, but the awareness and mobilization of children to raise their voice and advocate for issues that have been greatly increased for matters concerning them as well as being part of the decision-making.

It is strongly recommended that such projects be extended to municipalities and other institutions, to further raise awareness of communities and service providers, as well as to improve services for children with disabilities at the national level.



INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

HANDIKOS (Association of Paraplegics and Paralysis of Children of Kosovo) in order to assess the impact within the project "Promoting the prevention of violence in all settings for children with disabilities in Kosovo", has created this summary work report for 5 years of the organization in the field of social accountability and child participation. So, this report aims to present the impact of project implementation and accountability to project donors and beneficiaries, focusing on the second objective of the project: "Promoting child-centered social accountability and child participation to improve the inclusion of children with disabilities and provide professional and adequate services to them".

1.2 DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Fulfillment of children's rights and the participation of children with disabilities (CWD) continue to be problematic and not addressed with priority by relevant institutions and the broader community. Moreover, information on needs is often unsatisfactory and lack of resources and competencies affects the quality of services provided. However, much remains to be done to establish more comprehensive child protection systems, develop appropriate monitoring tools, adequately allocate resources, and improve the legal and policy framework for CWD protection.²

With the support of Save the Children in Kosovo (SCiK), HANDIKOS has implemented the project "Promoting the prevention of violence against children with disabilities in all settings in Kosovo" from 2017 to 2021. The project aims to promote and address the needs of children with disabilities (CWD) by improving cross-sectoral coordination and promoting inclusive measures to create a safer environment and free of physical punishment and humiliation for children with disabilities, including and targeting all actors who play a role in a child's life - from families, peers and their representatives, communities,

²HANDIKOS Proposal Project, 2021



service providers, professionals and institutions to the general public. HANDIKOS aims to achieve this goal, by fulfilling two objectives of this project:

1. Improve the quality of policies and practices of comprehensive child protection systems and increase awareness, knowledge and cross-sectoral cooperation between communities and service providers to prevent and respond to cases of violence against children with disabilities in all settings. Through this objective, HANDIKOS has aimed to protect children with disabilities from violence, harassment and other forms of victimization through awareness programs and capacity building of all key actors in the lives of children such as: Positive Discipline Program for Parents; Lecture on prevention of discrimination, prejudice and stereotypes against persons with disabilities for peers; Information sessions on communication techniques and specifics of children with disabilities in Standard Action Procedures for protection from domestic violence, for service providers; as well as the Violence Prevention Training Program for children with disabilities themselves.
2. Promoting child-centered social accountability and child participation to improve the inclusion of children with disabilities and provide professional and adequate services to them. As part of the second objective of this project, HANDIKOS aims to encourage the solution of local problems, empowering right holders and service users (children with disabilities and their parents) to share their views and impressions with service providers through their involvement in social accountability processes, namely in the Community Score Card process. For this purpose, Community Score Card (CSC) is used to get feedback from service recipients and to improve communication between them and service providers. CSC was conducted at regular intervals each year to monitor performance and identify other ways to improve service delivery performance.



Furthermore, within this objective, HANDIKOS has aimed to support and empower the advocacy group of children with disabilities to advocate related to their rights and to participate in child participation mechanisms. This was carried out initially through the creation and functioning of the advocacy group "Hëna" led by children with disabilities and continuously supporting and strengthening their capacities in mechanisms of participation and advocacy activities, in order to improve and monitor services. HANDIKOS through this evaluation report aims to present the impact of the project implementation to direct beneficiaries, which are children with disabilities (CWD), parents of children with disabilities as well as service providers and other stakeholders. The second objective, which is also the focus of this evaluation, aimed to achieve four key results of the program:

1. Social accountability dialogue practices used to improve access to quality child protection services: Promoting social accountability - Community Score Card;
- 2.2.a Disability People Organizations (DPOs) and Community Based Rehabilitation Centers (CBRCs) have the capacity to use and promote social accountability tools to enable the establishment of responsive systems that take into account children's priorities;
- 2.2.b Children, families and service providers understand and actively participate in the social accountability dialogue;
3. Child-led Groups have the capacity to enable their meaningful participation in decision-making processes- Strengthening CWDALG - HËNA.



1.3 SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY - COMMUNITY SCORE CARD

Social accountability is an approach that relies on civic engagement and their direct or indirect participation in seeking accountability from service providers and public officials.^{3,4} CSC is a citizen-led social accountability tool that enhances citizen involvement and voice and complements conventional accountability mechanisms by service providers, such as policy controls and balances, accounting and auditing systems, administrative rules and legal procedures.⁵ By establishing mutual accountability and co-responsibility of citizens and their governments, the tools of social accountability show citizens that they can play a critical role in improving the services they receive. Through facilitated focus groups and joint meetings, the CSC process offers service users the opportunity to provide systematic and constructive information to service providers about their performance.⁶ It also enables service providers to learn directly from the community which aspects of their services and programs work well and which aspects need improvement.⁷ As part of the initiatives to improve the services provided to children with disabilities, until recently such social accountability mechanisms have not been practiced, involving children with disabilities, their parents or legal guardians and service providers, to the implementation of this instrument by HANDIKOS is a new practice in Kosovo.

³https://www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/Social_Accountability_stocktake.pdf

⁴https://www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/Social_Accountability_stocktake.pdf

⁵<https://www.care.org/news-and-stories/resources/the-community-score-card-csc-toolkit/>

⁶https://www.civicus.org/documents/toolkits/PGX_H_Community%20Score%20Cards.pdf

⁷<http://familyplanning.care2share.wikispaces.net/>



1.4 MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Involvement and empowerment of child participation in decision-making processes is of particular importance by enabling children to express their views and opinions in decisions related to the services provided to them.⁸ The principle of child participation is enshrined in Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which recognizes the right of children to be involved in decisions affecting them in accordance with their developing capacities.⁹ Most children with disabilities do not have the right to be heard and their opinions and views seriously considered.

Prior to the interventions of this project, children with disabilities were rarely involved in such dynamic initiatives as youth forums, children's parliaments, peer education or media projects, nor were they involved in rights campaigns or consultations in relevant research. The CRC explicitly states and requests that the governments of the countries actively and continuously consult with children with disabilities through their representative organizations, during the design and implementation of programs and policies in order to exercise their rights.¹⁰ Although in Kosovo, there are legal frameworks and strategies that cover the field of participation of children with disabilities in decision-making processes such as the Law on Child Protection Law No. 06/L-084, Article 46 "Responsible authorities guarantee the participation of the child with disabilities in all levels of policy making and legislation through information adapted according to the type of disability, age and ability of the child to understand", situation in reality there is a significant lack of participation of children with disabilities in decision-making processes.¹¹

⁸ <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/Storage/Consultations/40542-UpdEn.pdf>

⁹ www.hants.gov.uk/rh/comm/

¹⁰ https://sites.unicef.org/disabilities/files/Take_Us_Seriously.pdf

¹¹ <http://hk.adxpositive.com/category/projektet/>



In order to enjoy the right of participation of children with disabilities in decision-making processes and social accountability mechanisms that aim to improve and monitor services provided to children with disabilities, considering their requests and needs, HANDIKOS within the second objective of the 5 year project (2017-2021) has intervened in:

- Encouraging the local problem-solving through the involvement of children in social accountability processes;
- Establishment and functioning of advocacy groups led by children with disabilities;
- Supporting children with disabilities-led advocacy initiatives to monitor and advocate for improved services and governance of children with disabilities;
- Capacity building for participation in legal reform processes;
- Awareness of the rights of children with disabilities;
- Improving communication and establishing a spirit of cooperation between service providers and recipients.



**EVALUATION GOAL,
AUDIENCE, OBJECTIVES
AND THE SCOPE**

2.1 KEY GOAL OF THE EVALUATION

The main purpose of this evaluation report is to present the impact of HANDIKOS's 5 years of work in the field of social accountability and child participation. So, this report aims to present the impact of project implementation and accountability to donors, beneficiaries, institutions and the community, focusing on the second objective of the project: “Promoting child-centered social accountability and child participation to improve the inclusion of children with disabilities and provide professional and adequate services to them.”

2.2 AUDIENCE

The main audiences for this report are the community (children with disabilities and parents/legal guardians of children with disabilities), organizations of persons with disabilities, service providers at the local and central level, policy makers and donors as well as other stakeholders in protection of children with disabilities and promotion of their rights.

2.3 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

- Evaluating the impact of HANDIKOS in the field of social accountability and child participation;
- Providing recommendations on the sustainability of the results achieved, including the actors who contributed to the achievement of these results as well as the protection of children in general;
- Learning from the implementation and improvement of child protection programs for children with disabilities.



2.4 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. What impact has the project had on improving services through the implementation of the process of social accountability and advocacy interventions?
2. What impact has CSC mechanism had on empowering the community and service providers?
3. How have the project interventions affected the increase of the participation of children with disabilities in the decision-making processes and the strengthening of their role in the protection of children's rights?
4. How sustainable are the activities of CSC and the participation of children with disabilities?
5. What lessons does the project experience offer to stakeholders?



METHODOLOGY

This impact evaluation used a design of the combined research method. The purpose of the combined research method is to bring out the positive aspects of both research paradigms to better answer the research questions. Research through these methods has triangulated knowledge from the analysis of secondary data from reports, primary qualitative data and comparison with the initial assessment, taken from a representative sample of children, parents and child protection stakeholders to answer the evaluation questions.

The evaluation included educational, health and social institutions, the community as well as the staff in the four target municipalities (rounded in blue) Prishtina, Gjakova, Mitrovica and Ferizaj.



3.1 SAMPLE OF PARTICIPANTS

Municipality	Prishtina		Ferizaj		Gjakova		Mitrovica		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Children	1		1		1	2	1	2	8
Parents		1						2	3
Schools		2			1	1	1	1	6
MFMC	1								1
CSW	2						1		3
Staff		2		1	1		1		5
Total	4	5	1	1	3	3	4	5	26

3.1 DATA COLLECTION, PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

Data collection was performed through:

1. Review and comparison of relevant literature and materials (including project proposals, reports and achievements, initial evaluation);
2. Key informative interviews;
3. Focus group discussions;
4. Validation of the data with the staff.



Instruments/tools for data collection

■ Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants in the health and social services sectors. Through these interviews, information was gathered about the impact of CSC, the participation of children, the acceptance of this concept by service providers and how they see this mutual cooperation. Such an approach has enabled other issues relevant to the objective of the evaluation to be addressed (see Annex B).

■ Focus group with the children of the group "Hëna"

The focus group was developed with the members of the Hëna Group in order to identify the attitudes of children with disabilities about the impact of the project in their lives, with a focus on directly improving services, listening to their voice on issues that have preoccupied them, as well as how to get involved in decision-making processes. Such an approach has led to a perception of the majority opinion about the impact of the project and the involvement of children in advocacy and decision-making processes (see Annex A).

■ Focus group with parents

The focus group was organized with the parents of children with disabilities, in order to get their impressions about the involvement of the community in decision making. Through this focus group, information was obtained on the impact of the project on improving services for children, participation in such processes, as well as empowering children and parents themselves in raising their voice and increasing participation in decision-making processes.

■ Focus group with participants from the education sector

The focus group with school principals, support teachers, class teachers and school psychologists, aimed to identify their opinions as service providers about the benefits of CSC and the impact of this process on cooperation with children and parents of children with disabilities, as well as on improving services and participation of children with disabilities.



■ Focus group with HANDIKOS staff

A focus group was organized with HANDIKOS staff directly involved in the project implementation. Through this focus group, information was gathered on what the staff sees as the greatest achievement of the project, the sustainability of the project, the challenges and the progress of activities, such as those of CSC and the participation of children with disabilities as well as those of advocacy initiatives.

The following section provides an overview of project implementation and is important to provide the reader with sufficient knowledge to contextualize the evaluation findings.

The rest of this section answers the evaluation questions focusing on whether CSC and child participation have made the difference identified in the logical framework.



FINDINGS

1. WHAT IMPACT HAS THE PROJECT HAD ON IMPROVING SERVICES THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS AND ADVOCACY INTERVENTIONS?

Outcome 2.1 Social accountability dialogue practices used to improve access to quality child protection services: Promoting social accountability - Community Score Card

Outcome Indicator 2.1	Yes (according to the final evaluation and reports)	No (according to final evaluation and reports)
# of service providers, parents and children contributing to the social accountability dialogue	✓	
# actions taken by service providers to improve accountability related to children (citizens and civil society)	✓	
# actions taken by service providers to improve services provided for children as a result of accountability activities	✓	
# number of action plans developed	✓	

Through this result HANDIKOS aimed to encourage the use of social accountability mechanisms by right holders and service users (children with disabilities and their parents) as well as service providers in order to identify and address problems or service improvement through joint dialogue and joint planning towards improvement. Through the evaluation of this result it is intended to understand how the practices of social accountability have influenced the improvement of services for children with disabilities.



In 2017, for the first time CSC was presented in three municipalities targeted by the project: Prishtina, Ferizaj and Gjakova. As a new concept for the context of Kosovo and stakeholders, during the first year of implementation, initially CSC was introduced, its concept, its purpose, the preparation of participants in the CSC and familiarity with this process. During this year, all phases of CSC have been completed and action plans have been finalized. CSC was conducted in the field of education and has included schools: "Ismail Qemali" (Pristina), "Zekeria Rexha" (Gjakova) and "Ahmet Hoxha" (Ferizaj). In the process of CSC and the development of action plans in the field of education, the following were involved: service providers (MED, school directorates, school staff) and the community (representatives of DPOs, Parents Advocacy Group and Advocacy Group of Children with Disabilities Hëna). Meanwhile, in the municipality of Mitrovica for the first time the CSC process has started to be implemented in 2018, in the resource center for Teaching and Counseling "Mother Teresa".

The main results of CSC in the education sector I

- Transformation of two attached classes (Ferizaj and Gjakova) into source classes (See Annex D)
- Construction of an accessible toilet for children with disabilities in PSLS "Ismail Qemali" by the children of the Hëna group (See Annex D)
- Transfer of children with disabilities from the attached class to the regular - mainstream class
- Development of individual education plans (IEP) for all children with disabilities
- Realization of the right for home-school transport and vice versa for children with disabilities and not only
- Informing staff and parents about the rights and services for children with disabilities
- Teacher training on IEP design
- Referral of children and assessment by municipal assessment teams
- Increase of cooperation between regular and support teachers
- Transformation of the special school into a resource center
- Increasing the frequency of child support in mainstream schools by traveling teachers
- Functionalization of the kitchen and improvement of the food quality in the Resource Center
- Improvement of hygiene level at schools



In 2018, at the request of the Advocacy Group of children with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities, CSC was implemented in the health sector, in order to address the identified issues and improve services for children with disabilities. CSC was implemented in the target municipalities of the project and included: MFMC (Prishtina), FMC1 (Ferizaj) and MFMC (Gjakova).

The main results of CSC in the health sector

- Exhibition of the list of essential medicines in the premises of the FMC as well as the schedule of doctors and the provision of health services as a form of transparency to the community
- Providing physical access to MFMC in Prishtina and Gjakova, where as a result of the initiation within the CSC, the elevators have been functionalized and accessible toilets have been created for persons with disabilities (See Annex D)
- Capacity building of service providers regarding communication techniques with children with disabilities and their specifics in protection from domestic violence
- Capacity building of health staff of visits on the identification of CWDs, rights and services for children with disabilities
- Conducting research on needs and financial costs to ensure access to health institutions in the 3 target municipalities, and sharing findings with relevant departments
- Improving the signage in MFMC Prishtina as a form of facilitation of orientation for persons with disabilities through orientation tables (See Annex D)
- Informing parents about the benefits of the one doctor one family principle
- Submission of requests for the addition of medicines to children with disabilities in the essential list of medicines
- Compilation of requests for filling the mobile team and providing the vehicle for field visits for children with disabilities
- Increasing the cooperation with the providers of health services in the municipality related to the referral of children with disabilities



In 2019, CSC was implemented in the social services sector. In close cooperation with the CSW, the children's advocacy group and their parents, have identified as very necessary the improvement of social services provided to children with disabilities, community awareness and promotion of service seeking.

The main results of CSC in the social welfare sector

- Capacity building of staff on the types of disabilities, communication techniques with children with disabilities and the specifics of children with disabilities in protection from domestic violence
- Increase the cooperation of CSWs with relevant NGOs in order to coordinate work and services for children with disabilities
- Establishment of child-friendly areas within the CSW in Prishtina (See Annex D)
- Carrying out regular home visits by the CSW in Prishtina
- Providing a vehicle for the functioning of field visits for children with disabilities in the CSW Mitrovica
- Piloting of the Social Charter - Booklet for children with disabilities which contains the basic forms/documents of 3 sectors where children with disabilities receive services: welfare, health and education in order to more easily track the progress of children but also increase transparency on the part of service providers. Increasing the promotion of services and the role of the CSW by the officials of the centers themselves
- Regular information of parents and children about the services provided by the CSW and their rights
- Continuous information of school students in the 4 target municipalities on the services and the role of the CSW in child protection through information sessions and promotional materials developed
- Visual presentation of the service package at the CSW, on the walls of the center, and their child-friendly versions (See Annex D)

Taking into account the results achieved during the first year of implementation of CSC in the education sector, as well as the great need of educational institutions for support, HANDIKOS in cooperation with the Hëna group and the parent advocacy group, in 2020 the process of CSC started in other educational institutions of the target municipalities.



The main results of CSC in the education sector II

- Support for the creation of the resource room in PSLS “Hilmi Rakovica” Prishtina (See Annex D)
- Re-functionalization of the municipal assessment team in Mitrovica through requests within the CSC
- Establishment of a support team within “Migjeni” Primary School, which will assist support teachers in identifying, planning, coordinating and supporting children with disabilities.
- Providing home-school transport and vice versa for children with disabilities in the 4 target schools, by informing service providers and families of children with disabilities about the right to transport
- Training of 100 teachers on the design and implementation of IEP and equipping children with quality IEP compiled during the training in Gjakova.
- Informing parents about the importance of IEP, assessment team and rights through the distribution of information package on the rights of children with disabilities
- Supporting target schools with didactic material in order to support children with disabilities
- Organizing the schedule of children’s sessions with the support teacher and informing the parents about these sessions at PSLS "Hilmi Rakovica" in Prishtina
- Increase cooperation with Handikos Gjakova in terms of providing services to students who have passed the legal age to be part of PSLS.
- Improving the hygienic conditions of PSLS "Migjeni", through the creation of a checklist for cleanliness control, as well as information sessions with students

It is worth mentioning that all the results achieved over the years within the various processes of CSC have been achieved through continuous follow-up meetings for years, which have further strengthened the cooperation of HANDIKOS with relevant institutions in order to improve services for children with disabilities. From focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with the community and service providers, when asked about what has been achieved through participation in social accountability processes, both sides highlighted the improvement of services in the education, health and that of well-being. As a community, respectively children with disabilities and their parents, service providers (schools, FMCs, CSWs, etc.) have expressed that services have improved and this form of dialogue has structured a lot of cooperation, from identifying problems for the community to jointly addressing through the development of action plans and implementation of activities aimed at improving the identified services.



Parents and children:

“For example, we have managed to provide free transport, then we have managed to improve access to the toilet in schools, we have closed the attached classrooms, and we have turned them into source classrooms, we have placed signals in MFMC for other services, which came out of the meetings when we have identified and prioritized the indicators.”

Service providers:

“Through CSC, we as service providers find it easier to address the problems that communities have. This has helped us a lot to improve the services, especially with the structure and our work. For example, in our school, through CSC, we managed to add three support teachers for children with disabilities.”

“In our school, through CSC, and cooperation with children with disabilities, their parents and HANDIKOS staff, we have provided transportation, we have created the resource class, we have provided didactic materials, we have made it easier to access the toilet, etc.”

“In MFMC, we have placed signals for access to the facility and we have created easier access. I think that CSC has made us aware as a provider of services and opportunities for improvement. The community is always open to addressing their concerns to the MFMC and together we try to find solutions.”

“Through CSC, the cooperation with the advocacy groups of children with disabilities has increased a lot, and as a result we have worked on the promotion of the services we offer as a center for these children. Very soon, in cooperation with HANDIKOS, another promotional video will be released about the services offered here at the CSW and what we as a center for social work (CSW) do for the protection of children.”

HANDIKOS implementation staff:

“For us as staff, the main result is the empowerment and involvement of children with disabilities and their parents, and especially awareness of their rights to services and obligations and responsibilities of relevant institutions. It is amazing for us to see the progress of these children and parents from 2017 until today. For example, today in all of the target schools, transportation is no longer a problem.”



2. WHAT IMPACT HAS THE CSC MECHANISM HAD ON EMPOWERING THE COMMUNITY AND SERVICE PROVIDERS?

Outcome 2.2.a: DPO's and CBRCs have the capacities to use and promote social accountability tools to enable the establishment of responsive systems that prioritize children

Outcome 2.2.b Children, families and service providers understand and actively participate in the social accountability dialogue.

Outcome Indicator 2.2	Yes (according to the final evaluation and reports)	No (according to the final evaluation and reports)
# number of municipalities involved in advocacy interventions	✓	
# number of family members (including children) who are aware of the importance of Social Accountability Dialogue through CSOs	✓	
# number of interventions performed by children and community	✓	
# of children, families, service providers who actively participate in the social accountability dialogue process	✓	
# of social accountability processes supported / facilitated by CSOs	✓	



The overall purpose of this outcome is to contribute to the inclusion of children with disabilities in social accountability processes and the provision of adequate specific services for children with disabilities. One of the main facts that emerges from the results of this evaluation is that CSC has managed to successfully contribute to the empowerment of children with disabilities through involvement in social accountability processes and improving services specific to them. In the impact that the project has had on the inclusion of children with disabilities in social accountability processes, in order to improve service delivery through dialogue and cooperation with service providers, which is the main goal of CSC, this evaluation is focused on understanding the meaning and the impact of this process on children and children's parents/legal guardians. Specifically, this evaluation aimed to understand the level of awareness about the importance of their participation in such processes and to raise their voice about the concerns they have as well as their efforts to improve services in the education, health and social services sectors through CSC and advocacy.

Throughout the development of focus groups and interviews, evidence indicates a positive impact on children. All children participating in the focus group, as well as their parents, think and agree that CSC as a mechanism of social accountability has helped them a lot to understand the rights they have, the responsibilities and roles of institutions and how to influence in the matters they concern or the services they want to improve.

What is the situation in terms of empowerment of children with disabilities in social accountability? The fact that emerges from this perspective is that the CSC has enabled members of the participating communities to exercise their rights and responsibilities in relation to service delivery. When asked, "Are you satisfied with the way CSC has enabled you to get involved in identifying problems related to children with disabilities, monitoring the services provided by service providers?" in one of the focus group discussions, members provided the answers in the following summary:

"Through Community Score Card, we have had the opportunity to express our concerns and perspectives on the services provided to us and also to make plans to improve them" - (Child - member of the group Hëna).



"The Community Score Card has enabled us to understand that we need to raise our voices on issues that concern us and that our rights should and can be enjoyed, and also that institutions have an obligation to implement the rights and provide the services that belong to us by law." - (Child - member of the group Hëna). Regarding the increase of skills to implement CSC and address the issues that concern them, whether children and their parents or even service providers, the data from this evaluation indicate that CSC has had a positive impact on a high degree. When asked: "Do you think that your skills to implement CSC to address your problems have increased?" parents and children respond as in the following summary:

"Before there was not much cooperation, with schools or centers of family medicine or social work, now the cooperation is much better. CS has greatly influenced this aspect. **(Child - member of the group Hëna)**

Earlier, we did not know about CS, the complaints were more between the parents and never went further, but now we as a parents council with the knowledge and experience from CS, know how and where to address the issues." **(Parent of a child with disabilities)**

"CS, has made us aware as parents a lot." And not just us, but our children as well. For example, my child is not silent anymore if one of his rights is violated. He raises his voice and demands that his right not be denied. **(Parent of a child with disabilities).**

Under this objective, CSC aimed to establish cooperation between the participating communities (in this case children with disabilities and their parents) with service providers, to discuss services, improve them and review and address the needs of communities. Evidence from this evaluation shows that CSC has had success in creating reports and collaborating practices between service providers and beneficiaries.

The face-to-face meeting of CSC offers this space of cooperation. This is a CSC step that brings together participating communities and service providers for a discussion of concrete changes that together



they can implement them immediately to improve a service. This discussion is based on perceptions and feedback on the quality, efficiency and transparency of services.

The face-to-face meeting has increased the ability of communities to dialogue and influence service providers, and it is not surprising that when community members are asked "What do you like about CSC?" they said that they like CSC not only for the fact that it has created space for dialogue but also that it has improved relations with service providers and helped to achieve the required changes. More specifically, they expressed the following:

"CSC has enabled us to express our concerns and those of our children. I like it because it has also enabled children to be trained and accountable for their rights. "

"Through participation in this process, we have established very good relations with schools, MFMC and CSW. This has been very welcome for us as service users (parents + children) who together identify needs, make action plans and improve services." **(Parent of a child with disabilities) & (Child - member of the group Hëna)**

Meanwhile, service providers said that CSC has created a structured form of cooperation. CSC has helped us a lot, it has increased our capacity and knowledge to include children with disabilities, and through our participation in CSC we have structured our work better. Many things are easier for us, even easier for us when both the parent and the child are involved **(Teacher)**

CSC for us as MFMC, has been very welcome because it has empowered us in terms of knowledge and the way I should handle the requests of children with disabilities. For example, this year we have not had the opportunity to ask for more budget, but e.g. next year I intend to include children with disabilities in budgeting the activities of our MFMC. **(Deputy Director at MFMC)**



3. HOW HAVE THE PROJECT INTERVENTIONS AFFECTED THE INCREASE OF THE PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND THE STRENGTHENING OF THEIR ROLE IN THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS?

OUTCOME 2.3: CHILD-LED GROUPS HAVE THE CAPACITY TO ENABLE THEIR MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES - STRENGTHENING CWDALG HËNA

Outcome Indicator 2.2	Yes (according to the final evaluation and reports)	No (according to the final evaluation and reports)
# workshops to empower advocacy groups led by children with disabilities (Hëna Group)	✓	
# of persons participating in workshops aimed at strengthening AG-CWD	✓	
# of supported child-led advocacy initiatives (advocacy interventions of Local DPOs, CWD-led Groups and Parent Advocacy Groups)	✓	
# of joint AG-CWD workshops	✓	
# of functional AG-CWDs	✓	
# of Hëna Group meetings	✓	
# trained mentors	✓	



The overall goal of this result is to create, functionalize and continuously support the Advocacy Group Led by Children with Disabilities in participating in decision-making processes. Specifically, through this result, the aim is to strengthen the capacities of the Advocacy Group Led by Children with Disabilities (Hëna) in order to increase meaningful participation in decision-making processes. This evaluation aimed to understand the effect that the interventions of this project have had on building the capacity and participation of children with disabilities in decision-making processes and on the ability to influence processes that affect their rights.

The main achievements of the Advocacy Group of Children with Disabilities (Hëna) during 2017

- Establishment and functioning of an Advocacy Group led by Children with Disabilities consisting of children from three targeted municipalities (Prishtina, Ferizaj, Gjakova)
- Development of regulations for the functioning of AG-CWD, strategy and action plans
- Conducting formal and informal workshops in order to address the needs and activities of the project
- Implementation of advocacy initiatives for the creation of resource classes
- Organization of the conference for the inclusion of children with disabilities in education

The main achievements of the Advocacy Group of Children with Disabilities (Hëna) during 2018

- Participation in social accountability processes in the respective municipalities
- Implementation of advocacy campaigns on the importance of implementing the principle of one doctor-one family and addressing the needs of children with disabilities at the level of primary health care
- Implementation of advocacy campaigns on the importance of physical access for children with disabilities
- Conducting meetings with the central level (Ministry) and the local level (Municipality) (See Annex D)
- Capacity building of children through trainings/workshops organized by HANDIKOS on: children's rights (CRC); active citizenship & participation: budgeting at the municipal level, etc.

It is of particular importance to mention that as a result of the formation and increase of advocacy and participatory capacities of the Hëna Group, the children members of the Hëna Group in the respective



municipalities have engaged, advocated and participated in important decision-making processes and in many other out-of-project initiatives, such as:

- Participation in public debates
- Participation in municipal budget hearings
- Participation in the meeting of the celebration of the Day of Persons with Disabilities in Brussels
- Participation and representation of children with disabilities in the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo in marking the day of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, etc.

The main achievements of the Advocacy Group of Children with Disabilities (Hëna) during 2019

- Implementation of advocacy initiatives in order to promote child protection and governance of children's rights in targeted municipalities with special focus on:
 - Promotion of the package of social services provided within the CSW. As part of this initiative by Hëna Group, the community, schools and other stakeholders were informed about the services provided at the CSW and brochures and other information materials were distributed.
 - Promoting the role of the CSW in child protection. As part of this activity, an awareness campaign was also conducted on the role of the CSW in the protection of children.
 - Organizing a campaign on the importance of involving children with disabilities in physical activities in schools.
 - Development of a mural with the theme of child protection - STOP violence against children! (See Annex D)
 - Creating an accessible toilet in the school "Ismail Qemali" through a mini-project won by the group
- Hëna Group members participated in many local, national and international events / conferences thus representing the voice of all children with disabilities
- Capacity building in advocacy, communication, presentation, stress management through trainings offered by HANDIKOS. All of these trainings have served the members to develop action plans, strategy, to communicate needs and address challenges, and of course to carry out all advocacy activities that have ultimately impacted the improvement of services.
- Conduct meetings to review action plans and discuss activities, challenges and plans for 2020.



The main achievements of the Advocacy Group of Children with Disabilities (Hëna) during 2020

- Organization of the campaign "I, without violence" in cooperation with the ROR group, in order to raise awareness for the protection of children from domestic violence during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Equipping the park "Liria" in Ferizaj with accessible swings for children with disabilities, as a form of promoting the importance of creating equal opportunities for play, as one of the basic rights of children (See Annex D)
- Compiling and publication of the online magazine Hëna in order to promote the work of Hëna group, to raise the voice of children with disabilities and to raise public awareness about the rights of children with disabilities
- Advocacy for the provision of didactic materials for schools
- Involvement of Hëna Group members in the three day workshop in order to increase advocacy capacity, including techniques for identifying, prioritizing and addressing issues that concern them.
- Membership of Hëna group members in other advocacy groups for children's rights such as ROR, Municipal Assemblies and youth organizations.

The main achievements of the Advocacy Group of Children with Disabilities (Hëna) during 2021

- Development of the strategy 2022-2025 and the new action plan of Hëna group
- Capacity building of group members through training organized by HANDIKOS on mentoring techniques
- Organization of the campaign "Be my shield!" in order to promote the reporting of violence against children
- Implementation of the campaign "Without an assistant I am out of school", in which children in addition to engaging in the development of informative videos, have also held focus groups with parents in order to identify needs which they then addressed to the representatives of MED in 4 municipalities, as well as to the Minister of Education through a joint meeting where they received the commitment from the ministry to engage assistants.
- Organization of the campaign "Respect the right of access, YOU have an obligation!" in cooperation with ROR and the Municipal Assembly of Children, in order to promote AI 33/2007, in which children also held meetings with relevant directorates where they submitted their requests for compliance with this instruction during the construction of each facility.
- Creation of friendly spaces within the Center for Social Work in Prishtina,



Organizing the workshop of Hëna Group, parents and HANDIKOS where issues such as:

- Identification of new group members
- Mentoring training for Hëna Group members over 15 years old
- Participation in public/budget hearings
- Conducting the meeting with the representatives of the Municipal Directorate for Youth, Culture and Sports in order to include the action plan of Hëna Group in the framework of the action plan for youth at the local level
- Joint meetings with the RoR group and the children of the Municipal Assembly

Throughout this year, in addition to project engagements, Hëna group children have also engaged in representing children with disabilities in workshops, discussions, and various campaigns organized by Save the Children and other relevant organizations and institutions, thus representing the voice of children with disabilities and lobbying for their rights.

To give a concrete answer to the relevant evaluation question: "How have the project interventions affected the increase of participation of children with disabilities in decision-making processes and strengthening their role in the protection and advocacy of children's rights?" - it is clear from the findings of this evaluation that advocacy and participatory activities of the children of this project had satisfactory success in increasing civic knowledge and in empowering children to monitor service delivery and seek their improvement; strengthening their capacity to systematically and reliably identify and articulate issues of interest to them; and in increasing their ability to dialogue and influence government officials.

Through these interventions, the involvement of children with disabilities in advocacy initiatives has increased in order to have an impact on addressing the problems and challenges they face. Such interventions took many forms, including media campaigns, municipal and parliamentary lobbying, lobbying meetings with service providers and policymakers, drafting legal reforms and developing action plans and strategies that address the specific problems of children with disabilities.

In the question posed to them: **"Do you think that the voice of the participating communities is heard more in the decision-making and policy processes after participating in the activities implemented by this project?"**



Most community members, children with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, HANDIKOS staff, and service providers responded affirmatively. They stressed that the improvement of services that has been achieved shows that their voice has been heard.

Children:

"Through our participation in these activities, our voice has been heard and we have managed to change many things. We do this through advocacy and participation within Hëna Group. In the beginning, we did not have the knowledge, then we learned a lot about our rights, and we were trained to advocate for our rights. Compared to the situation in the beginning, when we were just created as a group, now we can say that our voice is heard much more, we are participants in many processes. We also have the strategy and action plan with the priorities set by us as a group."

"We think that maybe we should be more involved, so that our voice is heard even more. For example, next year we plan to be part of the budget hearings"

It is important to note how advocacy activities and the participation of children in decision-making processes and those of the CSC, has significantly affected the capacity building of children with disabilities to influence issues of interest to them. This not only from the direct results of this project but also through the participation of the members of Hëna Group in many other activities outside the project, and the improvement of services or even the initiation of any new service that is considered necessary. It is worth mentioning here that by raising their voices and lobbying for their rights, children with disabilities have directly contributed to the implementation of their rights, such as physical access to school or combating discrimination in school which includes one of the main objectives and which also reflects the sustainability of the activities of this project.

"My son is part of Hëna Group, and he is highly trained to advocate for his rights. Together with the members of the group, he tries to influence the improvement of the services provided to him and other children with disabilities". My son fights discrimination today everywhere, for example, at school, when he has been called incompetent, he has reacted and expressed his concern to the school authorities about the discrimination that has been done to him. I am very happy that he reacts for himself and other children. All this, thanks to



all the knowledge and capacities that we have jointly gained from participating in these activities. (Parent of a child with disabilities)

Children of Hëna Group:

"At the school where I go, it was impossible for me to go at first, because there was no physical access for me. Through participating in the group Hëna, I realized that I need to raise my voice for my problems, and so I acted and managed to create physical access for me and other children with disabilities in our school."

HANDIKOS implementation staff:

As the biggest success we see as Hëna group. This group was formed as a result of the need to hear their voice about the concerns they have. We are very pleased with their progress, from 2017 until now. Hëna group members have been key consultants in all project reviews and needs assessments.

The project in general, including the CSC process as well as the activities of the children's advocacy group Hëna, is considered a very relevant project, given the fact that all participants in this evaluation were very satisfied with the activities of CSC.

Level of consent or satisfaction with the activities of CSC and the participation of Children			
Participants	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Total
Children with disabilities	8		8
Parents of children with disabilities	3		3
Service provider	10		10



4. HOW SUSTAINABLE ARE THE ACTIVITIES OF CSC AND THE PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES?

Will the results of CSC and child participation be sustainable?

A fact that has emerged from this evaluation is that members of the community participating in the CSC, implementing partner organizations and service providers, will enjoy the benefits that come with increasing their civic knowledge, empowered capacity to monitor service delivery; identifying and articulating objectively issues of interest to them; increase the ability and self-confidence and group confidence to dialogue and influence government officials.

Data from this evaluation show that most community members and service providers who have participated in CSC activities intend to continue to grow in their civic competence.

Plans to maintain sustainable CSC results and child participation	
Members of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ They aim to support and use the CSC process ✓ They intend to use the CSC process in monitoring services ✓ They continue to educate each other on rights ✓ They intend to continue cooperating with service providers in improving the services ✓ They aim to engage actively in policy monitoring and expand engagement to include other services
Providers of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ They aim to continue encouraging dialogue and cooperation with service users ✓ They aim to be transparent in their work ✓ They aim to educate and inform service users about the services they provide ✓ They aim to continue discussions with service users about rights and responsibilities



HANDIKOS

- ✓ They aim to transfer these competencies to the community
- ✓ They aim to replicate and promote the project in as many municipalities and other institutions as possible
- ✓ They aim to continue to help communities at every step they need

5. WHAT LESSONS DOES THE PROJECT EXPERIENCE OFFER TO STAKEHOLDERS?

This project used several strategies, approaches and tools to achieve the results it aimed to achieve.

Based on the facts presented in the pages and paragraphs above, this evaluation shows that from these strategies, approaches and tools they were successful in achieving what they were supposed to achieve. Therefore, the CSC experience and child participation offers some lessons.

First, the experience of this project confirms the fact that CSC is not only a powerful tool for community-based accountability monitoring but also a powerful tool for empowering citizens. Because of this, CSC's experience seems to support two hypotheses embedded in the strategy of this intervention:

(1) if the right holders become confident in themselves, then they will engage the incumbents, and **(2)** if the right holders engage the incumbents, then the incumbents will become accountable and transparent.

Second, the experience of CSC provides lessons that the implementation of the CSC process achieves better results, being a process that is implemented step by step, and where one step builds the other. If any of the participants in the process, is disconnected from the process, then this has affected the continuity and quality of CSC results.



Third, involving children in advocacy and addressing issues of mutual interest guarantees impact and quality as well as the importance of being able to evaluate services and find opportunities for dialogue and cooperation. Involving children with disabilities, members of their communities and local organizations at every stage of advocacy initiatives not only brings greater credibility but can help consider the political aspect either culturally or socially sensitive situations, and ultimately empower individuals who will benefit most from the changes that have been requested. A very important lesson that emerges from the implementation of this project is that successful results have been achieved in the first place through coordinated advocacy at different levels, the use of different forms of advocacy and the involvement of children in each phase of initiatives, starting from goal identification, analysis of the situation and relevant documentation, identification of targets and influential persons/institutions, goal setting for change, identification of events and opportunities, creation of action plans, monitoring of activities and modification or updating.



LIMITATIONS

The final evaluation of the second objective has faced three main challenges. The first challenge was methodological. Its design and methodology were mainly qualitative, using Focus Groups and interviews for primary data collection. Gaps of unaddressed statistical data at the time of determining the initial assessment (baseline) have necessarily hindered the baseline-conclusion comparison of indicators and to some extent limited the presentation of quantitative results. Another significant limitation that prevents a clearer and easier presentation of the intended results is the large number of indicators, the variability of some of them in proposals from year to year, and the inability to measure some of them.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Given that among the principles of the project of promoting child protection in all environments is empowerment, and among the objectives is the promotion of empowerment models, HANDIKOS should promote CSC in all projects and initiatives. The results of the implementation of CSC and the opinions of those who participated in this evaluation show that CSC is not only an effective tool for monitoring community-based accountability, but also a very suitable tool for effective community empowerment.

Anyone who decides to use CSC must jealously maintain continuity during the execution of the CSC process. Experience shows that the CSC process achieves better results when the same group of implementers stay throughout the life of the project. When a staff member of one of the implementing partner organizations is left or some of the community members or service providers are left, this affected to some extent the continuity and quality of the results of the CSC process.

Projects should be undertaken once a basis has been established to identify indicators and core values that subsequently help track progress over the life of the project.

Although the main objective is to protect children in all settings through the promotion of social accountability mechanisms and the participation of children in decision-making processes and leadership of advocacy initiatives, and this has been achieved through project activities either directly or indirectly, it is recommended that the focus of activities be more directly involved in the aspects of protection of children with disabilities in different settings.

Summary of the CSC process and models of participation of children with disabilities in modules, and if possible their accreditation or institutionalization.

Conduct a final project meeting or roundtable with key inter-institutional partners to share findings from the final evaluation and push for institutional initiatives that replicate or integrate the CSC approach as a means of social accountability and children's participation in existing or new services.



Expanding Hëna Group network to other municipalities, and establishing a center where all groups coordinate for a general advocacy strategy at the national level but also in creating municipal plans depending on the identified needs.

Community mapping - when planning action plans should include the community map as part of the baseline study to identify segments or the influential institution of the surrounding communities. This also means conducting a basic study, which would further help the members of Hëna group in comparing the results of a final evaluation.

Capacity building of Hëna Group in monitoring and evaluation, as well as setting indicators. A special emphasis should be placed on the monitoring of advocacy activities, action plan activities and their realization by those responsible and the experiences and mechanisms of the social accountability process.

Creating a handbook that would reflect the experience and activities carried out by Hëna Group, the way of advocacy, the results achieved and instructions on how to advocate for the rights of children with disabilities and how to improve the participation of children with disabilities in decision-making processes, having the child at the center and considering the friendly approach. Such a thing would enable the replication of such a modality in other environments or even municipalities or other places.

Regarding the recommendations related to the structure of project proposals that have influenced the presentation of results in this evaluation report, it is recommended:

- Development of logical frameworks with a smaller number of indicators and also SMART indicator.
- Develop a baseline study with specified targets that would enable comparison with the evaluation report at the end of the project.
- A more structured form of narrative reporting as well as that of indicators



ANNEXES

ANNEX A

Final evaluation of CSC and children's participation Standard focus group discussion guide with Parents and Children

1. Has your knowledge about CSC and social accountability increased after your participation in the implementation of CSC?
2. In which sector of CSC implementation did you participate?
3. Are you satisfied with the way CSC has enabled you to get involved in identifying problems related to children with disabilities, monitoring the services provided by service providers?
4. Do you think that your skills to implement CSC to address your problems have increased?
5. During this process you have identified the problems and formulated indicators for those problems, then action plans to address the identified issues? Are you actively and effectively using this information to influence the decisions or policies that govern the services that are provided to you?
6. Can you give us an example of any service that has improved as a result of participating in CSC? If yes what improvements?
7. In your opinion, do you think that your voice in decision-making and service improvement is now heard more after participating in CSC?
8. What have you learned from this process?
9. Do you think CSC is an effective mechanism to involve or engage citizens or service users in service improvement or decision-making?
If yes, Why?
If no, Why?
If Yes, how will you promote the use of CSC?
10. What do you like about CSC? What do you dislike about CSC?
11. As part of HANDIKOS activities, do you feel that your participation in processes important to you has increased, e.g. the services provided to you?



12. Do you feel that your voice is heard more?
13. Can you name a service that has been upgraded or added as a new service as a result of your participation in decisions?
14. How is your relationship with service providers in cases where you are consulted about decisions that affect you?
15. You as a leadership group, how do you practice your work, e.g., how do you engage in an issue that concerns you and want to give your thoughts and influence that service?
16. Do you think that through the activities of this project, you are already able to lead your groups and address issues as well as influence decision-making?
17. Do you think something needs to be changed or added to increase your capacity?

ANNEX B

Standard Focus Group Discussion Guide and Interviews with Service Providers / Decision-makers

1. Are you satisfied with the way CSC has helped you work together with service users to address the concerns raised by them?
If yes, what makes you happy?
If not, what makes you unhappy?
2. Do you have more knowledge about social accountability and CSC, after your participation in this process?
3. Do you think service users are effectively involved in addressing and monitoring the services
4. Can you give us an example of any service that has improved as a result of CSC?
5. In your opinion, do you think that CSC has helped CWDs and their families to raise their voice on the issues that concern them?
6. What have you learned from this process?
7. What is the way to create consistency of the results you have achieved in this process?



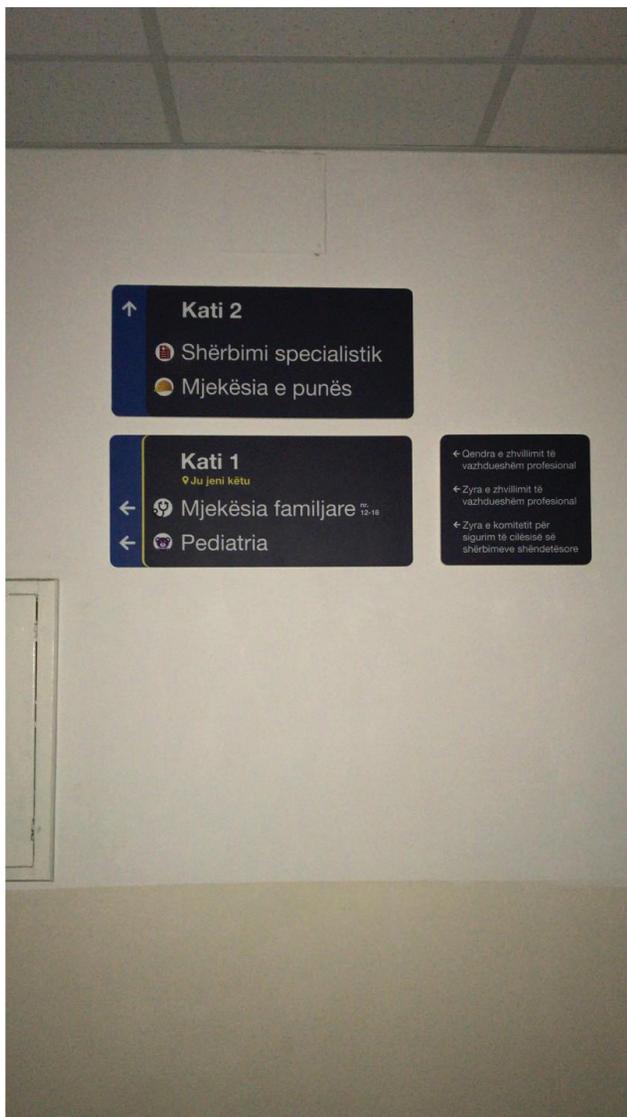
8. Do you think CSC is an effective mechanism to involve or engage citizens or service users in service improvement or decision-making?
If yes, Why?
If no, Why?
9. If Yes, how will you promote the use of CSC?
10. What do you like about CSC? What do you dislike about CSC?

ANNEX C

Standard focus group discussion guide with Staff

1. What has been your role and in what stages have you been involved?
2. Which do you think is the biggest goal you have achieved
3. Do you find it a convenient tool and to some extent the goal has been achieved?
4. How do you see the commitment of parents and children and service providers?
5. Do you think that all the children have been sufficiently involved and have benefited from participating in these activities? What would be your suggestions for getting them more involved?
6. How do you see the sustainability of this process?
7. How do you think this process has gone? What went well and what did not?
8. What things could the project do better?
9. What have you learned from this project and what recommendations do you have for the future?





Orientation boards - MFMC Prishtina



Friendly spaces CSW





Friendly spaces CSW



Friendly spaces CSW





Accessible swing in Liria - Ferizaj park



Accessible swing in Liria - Ferizaj park



Hëna Group - 2017



Hëna Group 2018



Hëna Group 2021



Hëna Group 2021



