



SURVEY REPORT

FROM THE PERCEPTION STUDY FOR MEASURING AWARENESS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS, MEDICAL PERSONNEL, CARETAKERS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS, SERVICES AND LEGISLATION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

October, 2014

The author's views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of HandiKOS

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Project financed from FDDP, implemented from HandiKOS in partnership with Kynnysry from Finland.

1. Survey Methodology

HandiKOS hired a consultant for preparing and implementing the survey for measuring the knowledge and awareness of the government officials, medical personnel, caretakers, and PwDs about the rights of people with disabilities, the available services and existing legislature. The Project Management team has met with the consultant several times and has identified the categories and topics of the survey. The common decision was to include in the survey local and central government authorities, medical personnel at the primary and secondary levels, caretakers of PwDs, and PwDs themselves.

The team decided to include in the survey four different fields, such as wellbeing, health, education, and access. In order to measure these categories, the survey will include three ministries from the central government. These ministries will be Ministry of Social Welfare and Labor, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Education and Science. The survey will also include the Office of Good Governance.

The survey was carried out also at municipal level, where the interviews targeted five larger and five smaller municipalities in rural zones. Within the municipalities, the survey included the directorates of health, welfare, education, urbanism, and the office of human rights.

The management team and the consultant have finalized a guiding questionnaire for the interviews, which enabled the surveying team to conduct semi-structured interviews with around 240 targeted respondents.

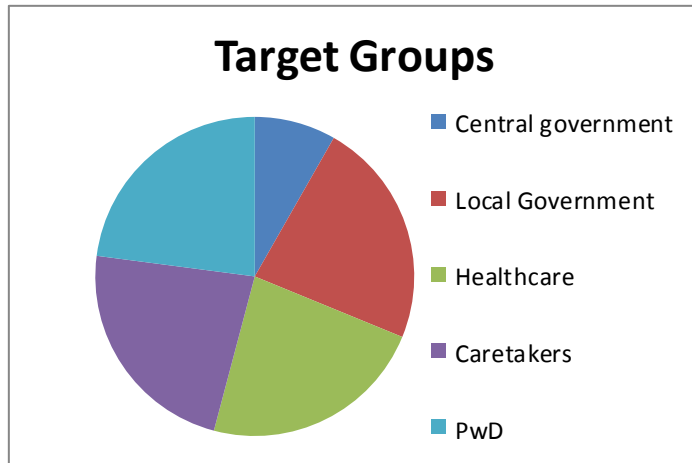
As the next step, the consultant, in cooperation with the Project Management team hired three students to conduct the interviews in the field. The areas of target were divided between the interviewees based on their professional backgrounds, taking into account the geographical location of the interviews. After the hiring, the consultant held a short training on conducting interviews based on the content of the questionnaire. The training also tackled issues such as how to approach the respondents. During the training, the interviewees went through each of the questions, so that they were prepared and understood fully the details of the questionnaire.

Once the interviews were completed, the consultant analyzed the data and compiled this report with the findings from the interview.

There are inconsistencies in the numbers between different questions. This is as a result, because some of the respondents didn't feel comfortable answering some of the questions.

2. Institutional category

The survey included representatives from three different institutions. The first was the central government, which involved the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, Ministry of Science, Technology and Education, and Ministry of Health. Within the ministries, the survey targeted different departments and offices, starting from the department for citizens' rights in the medical care, department of medical services, office for human rights and gender equality, department of employment, department of finances, department of higher education, department of pre-university education, department of pensions, and department of social welfare. Eighteen people were involved in the survey from the ministries.



The second institution body were the local governments of ten municipalities spread geographically throughout the country. Five of the municipalities were larger urban centers and five were smaller, located in rural areas. The survey involved different departments within the local governments, such as the office for human rights, department of health

and social welfare, department of education, department of urbanism and planning. In the local government were interviewed 50 officials.

Another category targeted through the survey was medical personnel at the primary and secondary level of the country's health care. This involved family health care centers and regional hospitals. The survey targeted different types of personnel, from general physicians, specialist of pediatrics, and nurses.

The survey targeted also 50 caretakers of People with Disabilities and 50 People with Disabilities. They were also located in different areas of the country.

3. Background

The interviewees were asked about the length of the time they work for the institution. Within the central government, the responses varied from four to 15 years, meaning that some of the officials were with the institution since their establishment after the war. Most of the respondents in the central government were with the institutions for a period of less than 10 years, with eight of them being in the position for more than 10 years. The officials hold positions such as department directors, including those of social welfare and pensions, officer for People with Disabilities, officer for elementary and higher education, coordinators of the unit for human rights and gender equality, and planning officials.

In the local government, the officials held their positions starting from a period of six months up to 16 years. Only 10 of the officials held their positions for more than 10 years. The other forty were under 10.

Among respondents were directors of targeted directorates, such as education, urbanism, and social welfare, as well as officials of these directorates.

Within the healthcare, the timeframe, in which the respondents hold their positions are significantly longer, compared to those of the central and local governments. The physicians and nurses hold their positions for up to 30 years, starting from a two-year period. Only 11 of the respondents hold their positions for less than 10 years. The majority of the interviewees are in their positions for periods of over ten years.

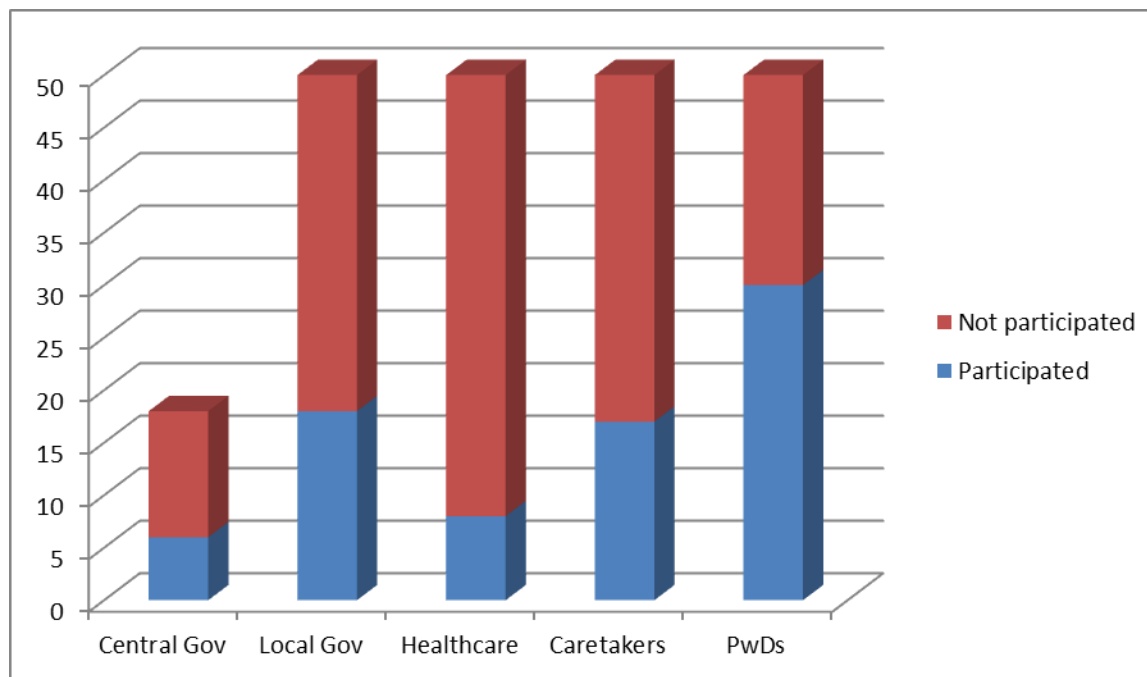
The reason why the interviewers asked the questions about the time-period the officials held their position was to measure the difference in knowledge level between recent and more seasoned employees. The survey found that the level of knowledge depends on each official individually. There was no link between the years in the position and the level of knowledge about People with Disabilities, as well as their rights and their needs. These questions were not asked to caretakers and People with Disabilities, as many of them don't work, and it is not relevant if their knowledge about their rights and the necessary services are related to their employment.

On the question if they interact with PwDs in their work, 13 out of the 18 respondents from the central government responded positively. The number of PwDs they interact with during the year varies from two to 200. The same number of officials responded positively on the question if they interact with PwDs in their private life. On this question, 29 of the local government officials answered positively, six negated to interact with PwDs on their work. It is interesting that eight of the local officials refused to participate in the survey, and the rest didn't answer that question. The number of PwDs they interact during the year varies from three to 100. The number of local government officials, who interact with PwDs in their private life is 25. From the healthcare, 33 respondents answered positively related to the their interaction with PwDs in their work, while five responded negatively. The rest were reluctant to answer the question. They stated that they see from five to 200 PwDs annually. From the healthcare workers, 29 of them deal with PwDs in their private life. Naturally, this question was not asked to caretakers and PwDs.

The officials were also asked what types of disability they knew. This question involved caretakers and PwDs as well. The knowledge of the officials and caretakers shows hardly any difference. The medical personnel was more technical in the response, which was to be expected. The most common responses differentiated between the physical and mental disabilities, without going into more detail.

The next question to measure the background of the officials was in they had participated in any training related to disabilities issues. From the central government, only six of the respondent had participated in any training, 10 negated the fact, while two refused to answer the question. Within the local government, there was a split between 18 who had participated and 17 who had not participated. Among the interviewed medical personnel, only eight have participated in any form of training related to the disability issue. Thirty-two of them negated to have participated in any training. The response of the caretakers was that 17 of them have and 29 have not participated in any training. Among the PwDs

themselves, the situation is slightly different, showing a more positive trend. Thirty of the PwDs have participated in trainings, while 19 have not.



Participation in trainings

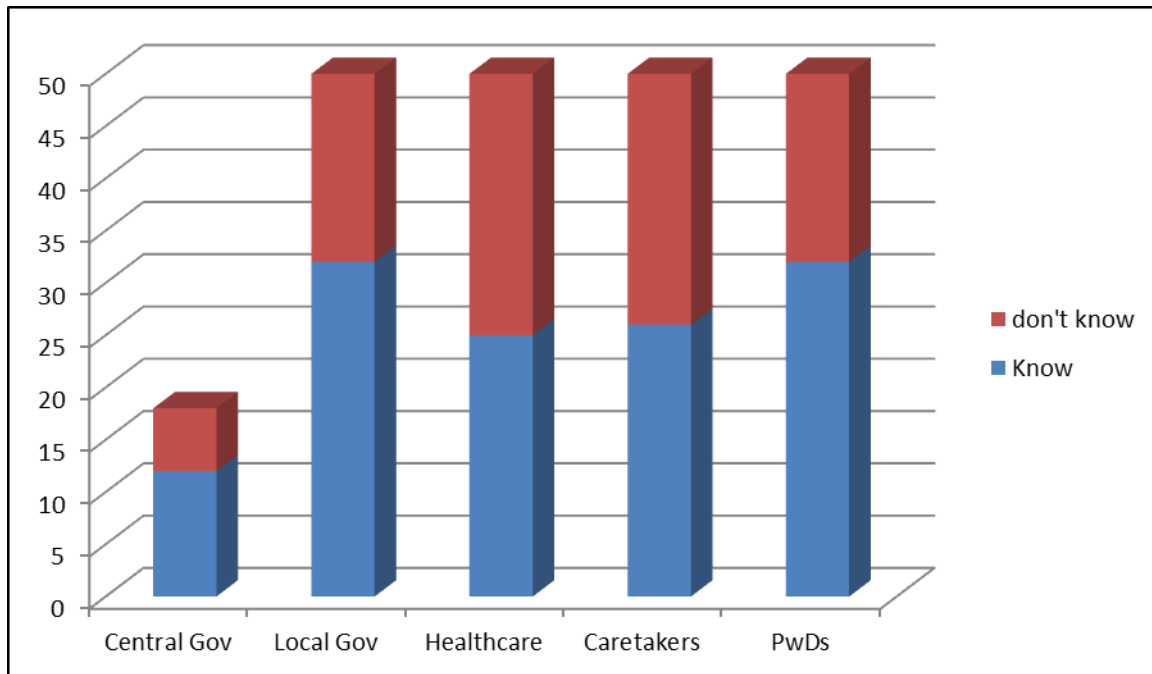
The responses of those, who had participated in trainings, about the types of training they have attended did not vary much between the different types of respondent groups. They vary from advocacy and lobbying and approach to PwDs, to rights of the PwDs and support to them. The caretakers stated that their training was related to physiotherapy, caretaking, and other support for PwDs. Some of the respondents did not remember the type of training, but rather gave the name of the organization, which had organized the training.

The interviewees, who negated to have participated in any training, were asked where they had gotten the information they possess. Their responses were also very different. They stated that they had their information from the television shows, from officials within the ministries, from the internet and special education schools, social networks, and from literature published by HandiKOS. Among the caretakers and PwDs HandiKOS dominates significantly as a source of information. The central government officials were the ones not to mention HandiKOS as a source of information.

4. Awareness

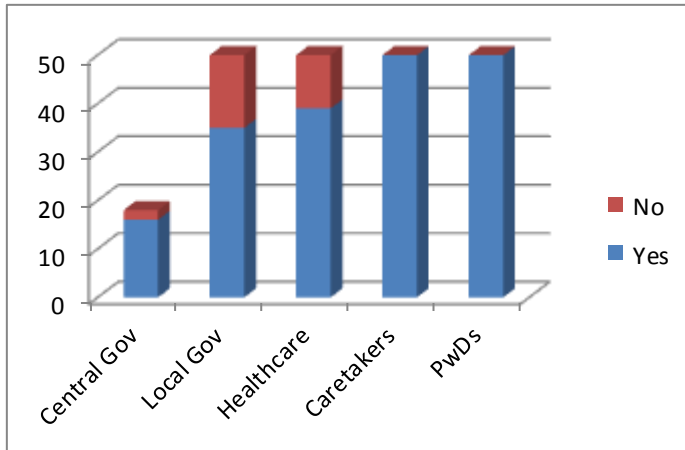
The first question to measure the awareness of the respondents about the People with Disabilities was if there were any official documents regulating the rights of PwDs. To this question, 12 central government officials stated to know of them, while two didn't know. At the local government level, 32 of the interviewees stated to know about official documents regulating the rights of people with disabilities. Three of them didn't know of any such documents. The responses of the medical personnel

were surprising with 25 of them knowing and 13 not knowing of any official document on the rights of the PwDs. From the caretakers, 26 of them were aware of documents and 22 didn't know about their existence, which was also a surprising response. Since they deal with PwDs on daily basis, their level of knowledge about the topic should have been much higher. The knowledge of PwDs about any documents regulating their rights is slightly better, compared to caretakers, but is also discouraging. Only 32 of them know about such documents, while 11 don't. As the numbers suggest, some of the respondents from each category refused to answer the question. It can be assumed that they didn't know the answer to that question and they are calculated toward that category in the chart below.



Knowledge about official documents regulating the rights of PwDs

In any case, when asked about the existing legal documents regulating the rights of People with Disabilities, the responses were quite general, especially among caretakers and PwDs. The central and local government officials knew the documents by name, such as the law on labor, the law on urbanism, and the national strategy for PwDs. Also the knowledge of medical personnel is limited related to the official documents regulating the rights of the PwDs. Their answers mentioned the constitution and the laws in general. Most discouraging is the level of knowledge among caretakers and PwDs. Their mention of the documents in general, such as the constitution and the legal package, shows more an assumption by their side that such documents should exist, rather than being based on concrete knowledge.



Support to integration of PwDs to the mainstream education system

In the question if they think that PwDs should be integrated in the mainstream education system, all responses were positive, with some abstaining from answering. Sixteen of the central government officials responded positively on this question. With only two of them refusing to answer, it can be said that the support for this issue is absolute. Similar is the situation among the local government officials, where 35 respondents answered positively. Some of them abstained from answering this question, while the other refused to

participate in the survey. The response of the medical personnel was even more positive compared to the government officials. Most of the respondents, namely 39 of them, answered positively on the question. The responses of the caretakers and PwDs was absolute, where all respondents supported the integration of PwDs in the mainstream education system.

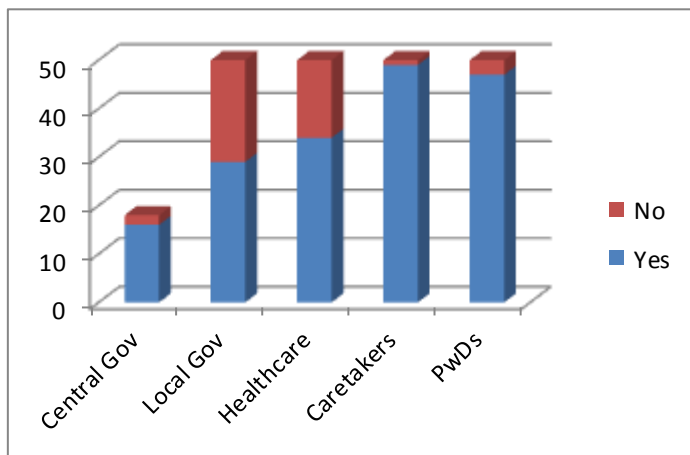
The question if PwDs are in need of similar medical services brought the same positive response. Only one of the central government officials negated this fact, while 15 answered positively and the rest refused answering the question, which for the need of practicality are counted towards the negative answers. To this question, 35 of local government officials, 39 medical personnel, and all 50 caretakers, and PwDs answered positively.

To the question if PwDs need constant medical care, the absolute majority of the central government officials, namely 15 of them, answered positively. The same was the situation with local government officials. All 35, who answered the question, responded positively. Also 39 medical workers, 50 caretakers and 50 PwDs answered with a yes.

The respondents were also asked if they thought the PwDs should be able to move freely and independently in the city. Sixteen of the central government officials answered yes, as did 35 local government officials, 39 healthcare personnel, 49 caretakers, of which one answered negatively, and 50 PwDs.

When asked which legal mechanisms guarantee these rights, the responses varied between the different groups. For instance, the central government officials stated some concrete legal mechanisms, such as the law on health, law on the blind, and different conventions. Some of the local government officials were more in touch with the ground reality and stated that the PwDs are human beings and their rights are regulated by all laws. The healthcare personnel, caretakers, and PwDs themselves were more general in their responses. They mentioned the constitution and the law on disabilities.

When asked about which institution should deal with PwDs, the responses of the central and local government were similar. While they stated various ministries and institutions that should concern themselves with PwDs, there were also some responses, which stated that all institutions should deal with PwDs in their respective fields. Nevertheless, the number who stated this is discouragingly low. The caretakers and PwDs are not aware that all institutions are responsible for securing the wellbeing of citizens.



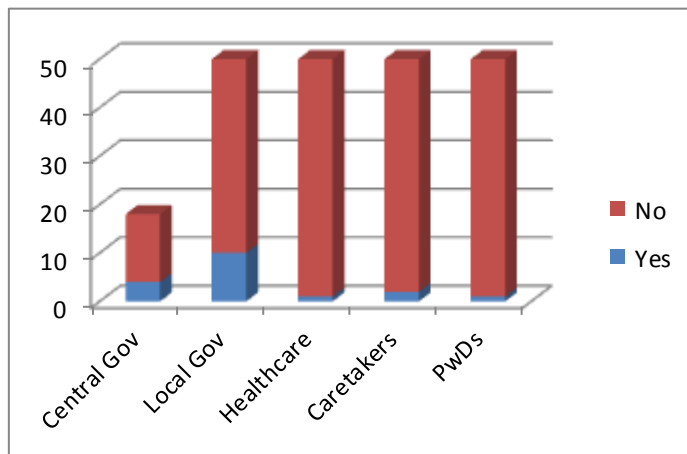
In the question if PwDs should enjoy the right to work, sixteen respondents answered positively. Two abstained from answering the question. The response of the local government officials was in a way that 29 of them answered positively, while three negated the possibility. The others didn't want to answer the question. Thirty-four of the medical personnel answered positively and three of them said no. There was also a number, who

abstained from answering. Among the caretakers, 49 of them said that the PwDs should be able and offered the opportunity to work. One caretaker negated the possibility of PwDs work. The PwDs response about work is also positive, with 47 of them supporting the concept. Three of them didn't feel like answering the question.

Sixteen of the central government officials answered positively the question if the PwDs should be able to make their own decisions concerning themselves. There were no negations in this question, only two of the officials abstained from answering the question. The local government officials responded differently about this question. With 28 officials answering yes, four negating, and almost 20 abstaining, the answer doesn't show a high level of awareness about this matter. The answer of the medical personnel is 34 versus 3, with the positive responses dominating. Most of the caretakers, namely 47 of the respondents, responded positively to this question, while three of them were of the meaning that PwDs should not be able to decide for themselves. Among the PwDs, the number is 43 positive responses, three negations, and four abstains.

The answer to the question if the institutional bodies have done enough to enable the freedom of movement for PwDs was balanced among the central government officials. Eight of them answered in the affirmative, while seven negated. Among the local government officials, the responses were 18 positive and 12 negative. The medical workers were also split in their response. While 16 answered positively, 15 of them answered negatively. The answer of the caretakers for this question is significantly different, where only 15 answer positively and 26 negate the question. Slightly similar is also the response of PwDs. Although more balanced, their positive answer is 19 versus to 23 negating the matter.

The next question was related to the previous one, as it asked the target groups if they knew where there were obstacles that hindered the movement of PwDs. The answers of the central and local government officials were slightly similar, and varied from statements that there were no obstacles, to statements that there was lack of budget to eliminate all the obstacles. Some of the officials mentioned the fact that there was hardly any access to upper floors in public buildings. Medical personnel brought up the issue of pavements, obstacles in hospitals, and other public buildings as well. The caretakers and PwDs mentioned all possible public spaces and buildings, as having obstacles hindering the movement of PwDs.



Have the authorities done enough Support to work for PwDs

Another question about the awareness was if the institutions have done enough to ensure equal rights for PwDs. Surprisingly, even the government officials admitted that the authorities have not done enough. Only four of the central government officials were positive about this answer, while five were negative about the matter. The others abstained from answering. Also a scarce minority of only 10 local government officials stated that the institutions have done enough and 23 negated this fact. Also here, a number of officials refused to answer the question.

The number of medical personnel, who think that the institutions have done enough to ensure equal rights for PwDs is relatively small. Only three of them answered positively, while 30 don't think that enough has been done for PwD's rights. As was to be expected, the caretakers don't believe that the government has done enough, as only two has said yes to this question, while 48 said no. Similar is also the opinion of PwDs, who only one answered positively, while 43 negated the question.

The scarce number of respondents, who answered positively to the previous question, were asked what the authorities had done to ensure equal rights for PwDs. The answers to this question were vague, with no concrete relations. The central and local government officials mentioned the approval of laws and regulations, periodical employment of a small number of PwDs, and compiling statistical reports. The medical staff stated that they prioritized the PwDs when they came for checkups. The caretakers and PwDs didn't answer this question.

The interviewers asked the respondents also if they thought that the institutions should do more, in order to ensure equal rights for PwDs. To this question, the answers of the central government officials were more scarce and their volume increased with caretakers and PwDs. While the central government officials brought up issues such as law implementation and approval of new regulations, the local officials were more concrete in their responses mentioning issues, such as installation of elevators in municipal buildings, integration of children with disabilities in the education system, as well as training and employment of PwDs. The medical personnel brought up issues such as providing free drugs to

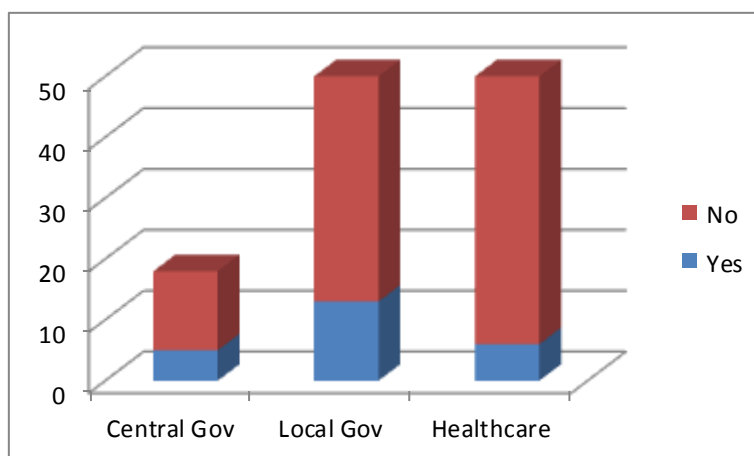
PwDs, training of staff to work with PwDs, and improvement of infrastructure for enabling access. The caretakers brought up more issues related to this matter. They believe that the PwDs need more support to lead independent lives, to have rights to work and education, financial support, re-socialization and inclusive education, and organization of cultural and recreational activities or PwDs. The issue that came up the most among caretakers was the equal treatment of PwDs. The responses of the PwDs entail all the mentioned answers, such as access, support, improvement of conditions, socialization, and equality.

5. Implementation

The questions under this category were not asked to caretakers and PwDs.

The first question that the interviewers asked was if any PwDs work in the respective institution. Within the central government, 12 of the respondents answered positively, while three negated the question. Twenty-two of the local government officials said that there are PwDs working in their institutions. Nine of them negated the fact. The answers of the medical personnel were split, where 15 of them answered positively and 16 negatively. When asked how many PwDs worked in the institutions, the answers of the central officials was one and/or two, local officials from one to 13, and medical personnel one.

In the question, if there were any legal mechanism within their institutions that would ensure equal rights for PwDs, five central government officials answered positively, and seven negatively.



Are there official documents in your institutions to ensure equal rights for PwDs

This target group mentioned the law on antidiscrimination, the law on health, and various regulations as the document regulating the rights of people with disabilities internally. Thirteen of the local government officials affirmed the question and 14 negated it. Also local officials mentioned the various laws for ensuring the rights of PwDs. Only one of them mentioned the municipal regulation as the internal document for ensuring PwD's equal rights. Only six of the medical personnel answered positively, while 19 negated the question. The medical personnel were more vague related to the internal documents, mentioning the law on rights of PwDs and regulations. In support of this question, the respondents were asked, what their institutions do to promote and encourage the development of PwDs capacities. The respondents of the central government didn't mention any concrete activities, besides the fact that they enjoy full rights as the rest of the staff and that they are given opportunities to participate in the decision-making in different commissions. The rest of the answers were vague, like they receive moral and institutional support, there is no discrimination in the selection, and priority in

selection. The local government officials mentioned the involvement of PwDs in different projects without going into detail about them. The rest of their responses were confusing as they mentioned the supply of classrooms in schools with equipment and various trainings. The medical personnel had no answer to this question.

6. Comments

The respondents were asked to comment on anything they think it is worth saying, but the interviewers didn't ask them. The central government officials commented that PwDs should not be seen as a burden, but rather as a value of the state, to increase the employment percentage of PwDs in institutions, to adopt a law on PwDs on government level, and to increase the movement possibilities for PwDs. The local government officials suggested that the central government should take a more proactive role in dealing with the PwDs. The medical personnel commented that the laws dealing with the PwDs should be implemented to their fullest extent and provide conditions for a life with dignity. They also suggested that the government should secure the medication, regulating the infrastructure, and adopting the law on health insurance. The caretakers commented on the lack of employment opportunities for PwDs and requested special care for all categories of People with Disabilities. They also stated that the social services for PwDs should be improved, especially through increased financial support. More than half of the PwDs mentioned the financial support as the most pressing issue, as well as mentioned the organization of sports activities as a possibility or improved living conditions.