



Social Inclusion

We see social inclusion as the process of improving the ability and dignity of people, disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, to take part in society. Despite the wide proclamation of human rights, the problem of social inclusion usually is tied to vulnerability of certain marginal groups, even in more developed regions.

We believe that, after the violent conflicts, social reconstruction of the community starts with the healing of trauma. Since 1995, we have been working with a variety of vulnerable groups with the aim of empowering them to take a proactive role in their communities. Among the most vulnerable groups with whom we have worked have been youth, veterans, civilian victims of war, elderly, as well as a number of others.

Recently, we worked with mentally challenged people, another group marginalized on bases of their challenges in life. The goal of the work provided by the CWWPP is to make a positive difference in the lives of beneficiaries. By enabling people to fulfill their hopes and needs and share experiences within their communities and participate in a variety of activities, they have the opportunity to become valued members of those communities. At the same time, by enabling each community to fulfill the needs of its members and develop personal networks within that community, the community has the opportunity to become valued by its members.

One problem is that stigmatization of mental health creates community resistance. Social norms and stereotypes create barriers to real integration into the community. Together with fragmentation of services and insufficient and inadequate medical treatment and lack of capacity, these create barriers to appropriate independent life for psychologically challenged persons.

Development of psychosocial networks, empowerment, and psycho-education may be an answer to the question of whether independent living of mentally challenged people is just another social myth.

Moving from a system of institutions to one based on community services is challenging. It requires a major shift in vision, attitudes, and resources. Stigma attached to users in care makes communities reluctant to accept them. There are things that, hopefully, we can change (values, attitudes, etc.) and things that are more difficult to change (available resources, etc.).

With the CWWPP's more than 20 years of experience on work with empowerment of marginalized people, we are more than aware of how mental health is stigmatized and ignored in community development. The lack of capacity is an additional problem.

We believe that the education, supervision and, in short, empowerment of peer groups in addition to direct assistance through counseling represent an efficient way of improving the life of a community.

Mission to Croatia M. Držića 12 32000 Vukovar Croatia Tel and Fax: +385-32-441975 Website: www.cwwpp.org E-Mail: cwwppsummer@gmail.com	Office in The Netherlands c/o Kupers Ds. S. Tjadenstraat C81 9663 RD Nieuwe Pekela The Netherlands Tel: +31-597-645790 Fax: +31-597-647029 e-mail: pabbv@telfort.nl
--	--