



Photo © Tereza Hronová

Participatory Planning for Social Inclusion

A participatory multi-stakeholder approach to effective planning, implementation and evaluation of social policies and services ensuring that the most vulnerable people are not left behind.

People in Need, April 2020



Alliance 2015

towards the eradication of poverty



Photo © PIN archive

WHAT IS PPSI?

The **Participatory Planning for Social Inclusion (PPSI)** methodology brings all local stakeholders together, including social service users, CSOs, local authorities, government agencies, social service providers and citizens to effectively engage in a process of policy dialogue on social services or more broadly on social protection and inclusion issues.

WHY DO WE USE PPSI?

To ensure that the most vulnerable people are not left behind.

In the global effort to achieve the **Sustainable Development Goals** with its overarching mission of **leaving no-one behind**, **vulnerable people** in each community **need additional attention and support** not to be left behind. One of the important instruments to alleviate poverty and prevent social exclusion are various types of social protection instruments, such as social care (including prevention of exclusion, family support, counseling, rehabilitation, etc). In some societies, such support is provided mainly by community and informal structures, in others, state and local administrations provide social care services.

PIN uses an approach that draws on **the grassroots participation of the most vulnerable people and civil society organizations enabling them to engage in a systemic process of joint planning of social care/protection with decision-makers and social care providers. This ensures that needs and interests of most vulnerable are taken into account in a systematic, transparent and collaborative manner.**



THE ROOTS OF IN PIN'S WORK WITH PARTICIPATORY PLANNING FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

In the Czech Republic, People in Need has been involved in Participatory Planning for Social Inclusion for over 20 years, since the approach was adapted from the UK model to the Czech context. Based on its experience, PIN applied and adapted the approach to contexts of additional countries, mainly of the ex-communist bloc: Georgia, Kosovo and recently also Moldova.

PIN's experience with PPSI in the Czech Republic

Participatory (or community-based) planning of social policy and services is used throughout the Czech system at municipal and regional level. PIN's Social Integration Program team of approximately 300 staff and over 300 volunteers provides a wide range of social services for socially excluded or marginalized individuals and families covering over 50 municipalities. Having recognized it is impossible to change the status of socially vulnerable families without changing the approach of local and regional government authorities to the issue of social inclusion, since 1999 PIN has combined the social work practice with engagement in public policy planning. PIN's staff participates and in some cases, is part of the managing team of community-based planning of social policy and services across the Czech Republic. PIN's involvement in this process has evolved into successful policy and advocacy work also at national level on issues such as widespread unlawful and unethical practices of lending companies and bailiff property seizures.

The Impact of PPSI

Based on PIN's 20 years of experience with the PPSI approach it has helped target localities in the Czech Republic, Georgia, Kosovo and Moldova to:

- Acknowledge and effectively adjust policies and funding for services to address the most acute problems and vulnerable persons, even those, that were previously ignored and avoided.
- Engage in mutual learning and understanding the problems of vulnerable and socially excluded persons from different perspectives
- Build trust and collaborative spirit among various participating actors as well as ownership of the policies and plans elaborated
- Plan services in target areas effectively addressing real local needs and issues, resulting in improvements that sometimes did not require additional investments and funding
- Attract additional funds for addressing the identified problems (both from state and external funds)

PPSI IN PIN'S PROGRAMS



Expansion of PPSI to Georgia, Kosovo and Moldova

Since 2016, PIN has been working in the EU neighborhood to **empower actors of municipal social service provision and to facilitate their coordinated efforts to improve social service delivery**. PIN drew upon its Czech experience of Social Integration Programs and adjusted it to local contexts in 10 municipalities in Georgia, Moldova and Kosovo with a high number of vulnerable people (IDPs, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities). In line with local legal and policy frameworks, working structures (such as advisory committees on social inclusion) were established, consisting of senior municipal officials, local social service agencies, civil society organizations, representatives of vulnerable groups in each target municipality. These committees functioned as **efficient platforms for planning of social service policy and its delivery**. They were strengthened through capacity building activities and representatives of selected civil society organizations were appointed as the facilitators of the working structures. Based on the findings of participatory assessments of the social service delivery in target municipalities, the committees jointly developed **municipal strategies on social inclusion and annual action plans**. In order to support the implementation of the action plans, PIN together with local authorities, launched a grant scheme with co-funding from local authorities.

Results of PPSI in Target Communities

Georgia:

- As a result of the intervention, **coordination, planning and policy dialogue on the social service provision in the target municipalities significantly improved**.
- **Long-term social services were developed** by both civil society organizations and local governmental bodies for children, youth, IDPs, elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, in order to improve the quality of their lives.
- A one-time monetary assistance approach practiced as the main form of social assistance in target municipalities changed to **development of needs tailored, sustainable social services**.
- **An improved system of social service delivery in municipalities was established** through introduction and development of the criteria for selection of service beneficiaries, better distribution of the budget among different social programs
- The committees **continued to function as an effective mechanism** of community-based planning of social services in target municipalities still two years after project closure, now fully owned and financed by the municipalities themselves.

Kosovo:

- **Attitude change of municipal officials towards marginalized ethnic groups.** As a result of the action plans, municipalities started to finance some of the services for marginalized groups (eg. child learning centers, initiatives to combat bullying). Thus more marginalized communities' members were supported with services and referral to existing supportive structures
- **Strategic approach in social inclusion and education sector:** PIN has piloted a participatory way how to transform a general local social inclusion strategy in Kosovo into and practical action plan
- **Coordination of actors through the municipal task force:** Through participation in the meetings the municipalities came to terms with their obligations. Good policy ideas emerged as a result of the task force meetings, many of which were implemented in practice.

Moldova:

- **Interactive maps and database of social services** were developed in all target districts
- Target municipalities **started contributing financially to social services** implemented by NGOs
- The number of **children placed in close-type social institutions has decreased**, due to the fact that families with children have been supported through community-bases services

“Cooperation with PIN has clearly demonstrated that even in conditions of tight budget it is possible to offer long-term services to the population. The municipality is slowly shifting towards social services as evidenced by the launch of the social laundry service...”

**Tkibuli Municipality
- Head of Healthcare and Social
Security Department**

“Until now, the practice of cooperation between the local authorities and local non-profit organizations has been seldom adopted. Thanks to the project we have gained valuable experience which we should apply in the future.”

**Tkibuli Municipality
- Representative of IDP community**



GEORGIA: Heroes from the orange vans

In Georgia, many elderly people, especially in rural areas, live alone, isolated without family, sufficient income and face serious difficulties in self-care. As a result of the participatory planning process in Zugdidi, assistance to elderly people was identified as a priority. Subsequently, to improve the quality of life of elderly people in the Zugdidi municipality, the Social Department of Zugdidi Municipality City Hall has launched an initiative – “[Mobile Care Group for the Elderly](#)”. The initiative provides services to the elderly by a mobile team in a minibus equipped with a water tank, washing machine and cabinets. This mobile team includes a medical worker, a cleaner, a driver and youth volunteers. The mobile team pays home visits to pre-selected isolated elderly beneficiaries and helps them with health and hygiene conditions, maintenance of their living environment and houses. Thirty elderly beneficiaries living alone were selected from 48 villages of the Zugdidi municipality. After the end of the project the municipality fully took over the service and is now serving over 100 elderly people. Also the private sector started contributing, eg. a restaurant is donating food and other products, which are delivered to needy beneficiaries.

By introducing a home care service through multidisciplinary mobile team, elderly people have been provided with care, a safe environment and dignified conditions. This service has become popular and was subsequently introduced in other municipalities in Georgia and Armenia.

KOSOVO: Preventing child delinquency

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo face many problems in the area of integration, employment, social inclusion and education. One social phenomenon that worries the families of the marginalized groups is child delinquency (including drug abuse, school abandonment, delinquent behaviour, begging in the streets). Often families whose children face this problem do not know how to deal with it as well as responsible institutions.

As a result of prioritizing this issue by the social inclusion task force in Fushe Kosova in its social inclusion action plan, a group called Young Advocates was supported by a small grant allocated by PIN and the Fushe Kosova municipality. The group started cooperation with the Social Work Centre and assisted by a psychologist approached over the next 6 months over 50 families. This effort helped 15 families facing issues associated with child delinquency to start working with the psychologist and understand the root causes contributing to such behavior, providing to them counseling and other services provided by NGOs or the Social Work Centre.



“They supply me with all the medicines; help me with cleaning the house and keeping the yard, doing the laundry and personal hygiene, even hair and manicure... They come once a week and I am always looking forward to their visit. Sometimes just having someone around to say a word, is the best treatment.”

Zugdidi municipality, elderly person living on their own, beneficiary of the home care service



HOW DOES PPSI WORK? - PPSI METHODOLOGY IN A FEW STEPS

PIN has defined several core steps within the PPSI methodology:

Defining the territorial scope

Define which territorial unit is most relevant for such process taking into account administrative units, decision-making authority, mechanisms of financing of policies and services.

Ensuring the support of relevant actors for the process

Before starting, make sure that authorities and other actors are interested and will support and engage in the process.

Reach out to various actors whose involvement and support is important in the planning process and try to gain their support for the process, especially social service providers and their clients, civil society and community organizations, representatives and staff of authorities, their respective councils, and committees.

Coordination of the planning process

The coordination can be led by local authority representative or by a non-state actor, in which case the role of each of these two actors and the activities to be undertaken by each are defined in a mutual agreement.

Subsequently a coordination group should be established, responsible for leading the whole planning process.

Forming relevant working structures

Based on the local context, the structures/groups in which the planning process will be held should be organized. In small municipalities, there can be just one group carrying out the whole planning process. In larger municipalities, often separate working groups are set up, which are led by coordinators elected from the whole planning group.

Informing and engaging the public

The general public should be informed about the whole process of participatory planning process, its objectives and opportunities to be involved and influence the process.

Initial fact-finding

A crucial stage in the process is defining the information that needs to be gathered and analyzed to inform the planning process. Typically, this includes mapping of the existing social services available, assessment of the needs of vulnerable groups and scope of main social issues identified. Such research should be carried out with participation of the local actors, so that they build their capacity to gather similar information again in the future.

Capacity-building of actors of the process

Capacity building is an important component for actors of the participatory planning process. This may include the capacity to engage in the planning process, but also introduce new approaches towards social services and social protection, which are effective elsewhere in similar contexts.

Drafting of strategy of social inclusion and a related action plan

Based on the comparison of identified needs, current situation and financial, as well as administrative means, the working structures formulate a strategy of social inclusion (or specifically social service development), which includes the general direction and main priorities of the strategy.

Based on this strategy, an action plan with specific measures in the form of adequate, realistic and time-bound deliverables is drawn up with allocation of responsibilities for implementation of each measure.

Consultation and approval of the strategy and action plan

The draft strategy and plan is submitted for public consultation with sufficient time and technical means for the public to express their comments.

After incorporating relevant comments from the consultation by the working structures, the final strategy and plan is submitted for approval to the relevant responsible authorities.

Support of the implementation of the action plan

Due to the fact, that authorities often are short of funds to address even most pressing needs of vulnerable groups, it is advisable for implementing agencies to introduce a grant scheme for the support of the implementation of the measures included in the action plan.

Monitoring, evaluation and follow-up

During the course of action plan implementation, continuous monitoring needs to be in place, so that it is possible to revise the measures in case the context changes or unexpected barriers to implementation arise.

The strategy and action plan are drawn up for a specific time-frame. At the end of this time-frame, the results of the implementation of current plan and measures need to be evaluated. The findings are to be used for the assessment of the new situation for a new planning period as part of the cyclical process of participatory planning.

BEST PRACTICES AND KEY LESSONS LEARNT

- ✓ **Define the scope of the participatory planning process broadly** – in some cases the participatory process focuses predominantly on planning of social services. The broadening of the focus to the overall policy and strategy of social protection and inclusion on a given territory may bring more impact and substantial improvements, especially so in contexts where few services exist and there are little available funds for them.
- ✓ **Identify** within participatory planning process also relevant **cross-sectoral influences** from other sectors that have impact on vulnerable people the social protection and inclusion situation. Invite key actors from these sectors as well (eg. police representatives for safety issues, education, health representatives, water and natural resources management key representatives, etc.).
- ✓ **Ensure representation of interests of a wide range of groups reflecting the diversity of the local population.** Especially ensuring representation of various age groups (youth and elderly), gender balance, representation of distinct social and ethnic groups, specific vulnerabilities such as persons with disabilities,
- ✓ **Embed the participatory planning process in existing legal or policy framework** – in many cases the legal or policy framework envisages some kind of strategies or bodies (committees, task forces, consultation mechanisms) to be established. If the participatory planning process is integrated with such structures, it can make them functional and enhance the sustainability of the effort.
- ✓ **Clearly identify and describe** in the **statute of the working structure** the aim and objectives, powers and functions, composition, structure, principles and work format of the body in order to its ensure efficient functioning.
- ✓ **Monitor the social protection budget spending** by independent civil society actors to complement the implementation of the action plans





Contact for additional guidance and technical support:

ONDŘEJ NÁDVORNÍK

Advisor for Good Governance:

ondrej.nadvornik@peopleinneed.cz

Skype: [ondrej_nadvornik](https://www.skype.com/people/ondrej_nadvornik)

Participatory Planning for Social Inclusion - People in Need

peopleinneed.cz



Alliance 2015

towards the eradication of poverty