

**Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Federation of BiH  
ZE-DO Canton  
Kakanj Municipality**

***Directives for preventative activities in the fight  
against drug addiction in Kakanj municipality***

Kakanj, October 2006.

## ***I Project summary***

*Open your eyes – Wake up* project is implemented by NGO „Alternative“ Kakanj. It is part of the program called *Promoting the reform of the child protection system at central and local levels in BiH* financed by IBHI / UNICEF.

Project objectives are:

1. To lower occurrences of drug abuse in Kakanj municipality
2. To define directives for the Strategy of drug addiction prevention program in Kakanj municipality

The project is based on informing and educating young people and their parents in order to increase their knowledge of negative effects and consequences of drug addiction and related diseases. More than 250 high school students and about 200 parents from 4 primary schools in Kakanj were involved in workshops and meetings. Their opinions and ideas have been incorporated into this document.

In order to lift awareness about the need for a drug addiction prevention program we used video projections, leaflets, radio programs and thematic meetings to inform and consult wider public about negative consequences of drug addiction.

Donation of a PC and software to the Mental Health Centre in Kakanj helped create the unique data base of drug addicts in Kakanj municipality. The data base should be viewed as a basis for future activities in the field of drug addiction prevention programs.

Forum of Women „Alternative“ Kakanj has implemented the project in partnership with primary and high schools, the Mental health Centre Kakanj, Social Affairs Centre Kakanj, Kakanj Police Department and NGO „PROI“ from Sarajevo.

## ***II Reasons for assembling expert team for defining directives for preventative activities in the fight against drug addiction***

In 2005/06, in the course of implementation of projects related to drug addiction (in partnership with institutions and organizations mentioned above), Forum of Women „Alternative“ Kakanj realized it was necessary to create directives which would contribute to a better quality and longer term fight against drug addiction. Creation of the directives was preceded by assembling an **expert team**. The team worked continuously from August to October 2006 on defining the directives for preventative activities in the fight against drug addiction in Kakanj municipality. Based on conducted research and available statistical data the team outlined reasons justifying the need for the directives, conclusions and recommendations which were forwarded to Kakanj municipal assembly.

## ***III Drug addiction problem in Kakanj municipality***

The war raging from 1992 to 1995 resulted in economic and social chaos in BiH society. The post war society has been plagued with uncertainties and injustices of all kinds. We are witnesses to ever increasing number of people trying to ease, avoid or solve their problems using legal and/or illegal psycho active substances. In the society like ours, children and young people are particularly at risk due to being torn apart between dysfunctional families, transforming schools and social environment in general which is full of uncertainties and dangers of all kinds. Sporadic epidemiological researches of drug use in BiH only confirm such a state. Epidemiological survey conducted in 2000 by the Public Health Centre of Federation BiH in partnership with the *World Health Organization* and the *Public Health Institute* of Finland points to an incredibly high percentage (60 %) of smokers younger than 15 years, with 46 % being permanent smokers and 14 % sporadic ones.

Another survey (conducted by *UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina 2000 Youth*) points to similar trends. This study reveals that 45 % of young people smoke, with 52 % male and 38 % female. Alcohol consumption in Federation BiH as measured in litres per inhabitant has been increasing from year to year, from 16,7 litres in 1997 to 26,2 litres in 2000. It should be stressed, however, that the Federal Bureau of Statistics has no insight into huge amounts of alcoholic drinks being produced or imported illegally and spent without any control. According to *UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina 2000 Youth* 11 % of young people consume alcohol on a permanent or casual basis, 43 % in certain occasions, while only 46 % of young people do not consume alcohol at all.

Consumption of psycho active substances usually starts at the age of 12. Astonishingly, passive parental support to consumption of harmful substances is observed in over 50 % of surveyed individuals (72,5 % in smokers).

Adolescents using mentioned substances achieve poor results in school, miss classes, they are prone to delinquent behaviour etc. Surveyors were surprised to find out that people taking psycho active substances were determined to do so in the future.

NGO „Alternative“ conducted its own survey in Kakanj in 2004/05. The survey only examined drug addiction problem. It involved 80 young people aged 15 to 30. **70 % of them stated they knew people** who consumed drugs, **64 % thought drugs were available at every step**, while **28 % said they consumed** certain types of drugs **on regular basis**. Based on these findings it is obvious the problem of drug abuse is very serious and should not be ignored.

### 3.1. DATA FROM KAKANJ POLICE DEPARTMENT for 2003 – 2005

*Table 1. Confiscated substances per year*

Type of psycho active substance	2003.	2004.	2005.
<b>Marihuana</b>	2 fields found, 50 – 60 plants	2 fields found, more than 70 plants	5 fields found, about 1200 plants
<b>SPEED</b>	145 pills	158 pills	163 pills
<b>Ecstasy</b>	154 pills	156 pills	170 pills
<b>Heroin</b>	2 cases	4 cases	6 cases

**Note:** Data in the table only refer to processed cases. Numbers would be much higher if unprocessed cases were to be included as well.

Notably, occurrences of marihuana cultivation in rural areas have significantly increased. In the first half of 2006 there were 4 cultivation fields found pointing to increased number of marihuana growers. In addition, Kakanj Police Department officers working in the field have noticed new types of drugs starting to show up in the market.

### **3.2. MENTAL HEALTH CENTRE DATA**

Mental Health Centre in Kakanj, in cooperation with the cantonal drug addiction institute, has initiated a program aimed to provide help to long term addicts. Kakanj is one of few municipalities implementing the methadone program of substitution therapy provided by the cantonal drug addiction institute. In addition, addicts have access to counselling services, psychotherapeutic treatment, motivational therapy, preparation for detoxication, therapeutic communities etc. Participation in either of these activities is voluntary.

Currently there are **4 persons** included in the methadone program, **although available data point to a much more alarming state and much higher number of addicts than currently registered.** Data obtained in the Mental Health Centre and cantonal drug addiction institute also show that experimenting with psycho active substances begins even before the age of 12. As such, any future activities must be focused on primary and secondary prevention aided by all aspects of the society.

Having all this in mind, it is obvious the problems related to use and abuse of psycho active substances among young people in BiH and Kakanj are firmly established. We need to do everything possible to **implement various preventative measures so as to stop children and young people from experimenting with psycho active substances,** thus removing the possibility they will become addicts and face dangerous and uncertain future.

## ***IV Justification of directives for preventative activities in the fight against drug addiction***

The need for the directives is justified by **several aspects** important to normal functioning of a society:

- general health justification,
- preserving the family as the basic unit of the society,
- psychological justification,
- emotional aspects,
- economical savings,
- social level,
- legal aspects,
- pedagogical values,
- preventative benefits

## Preserving the family

Taking into account widespreadness of drug addiction consequences, psycho active substance addiction should be viewed as the most serious public health problem faced by young people, the society in general and thus the family as the basic unit of the society. We must understand the fact that each addict affects negatively not only him/herself but also the surrounding environment. Hardest hit is the family. As found out by our surveys, each registered addict has destroyed his/her social environment – family of up to 5-6 relatives.

As such, it is clear that team work with addicts, including psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and hospital staff, directly contributes to preserving the family. Their rehabilitation and resocialization into contributing members of the society certainly help upholding family values and lower the number of crime-prone individuals harmful to themselves, their families and the society in general.

## Economic, social and legal aspects

It has also been established that drug addiction results in the following instances and efforts directed towards reducing their occurrence are fully justified:

- conflicts with the law and disturbance of public order due to high number of criminal acts
- large financial resources assigned to treatment and rehabilitation of addicts; one day in Sarajevo Medical Centre **costs 161,50 KM** per patient so that annual cost of one patient's stay is **1.938,00 KM**; continuation of rehabilitation in drug addicts' communes is **250 KM** per month per or **12.000 KM** per 3-4 years per patient
- lower work and life expectancy followed by the loss or reduced work capabilities of young people at their prime; large number of death cases as direct consequence of consuming drugs
- disturbance of normal life trends in school, at work and living environment in general due to ever increasing number of addicts and occurrences of drug abuse. Each addict draws in 4-5 new addicts as a consequence of the need to obtain drugs
- significant financial drain to grey economy market due to large sums being set aside for purchase of drugs

Based on the number of registered addicts multiplied by 3, **1.800,00 KM** per day or **648.000,00 KM** per year is spent in Kakanj municipality.

## Prevention justification

Preventative measures achieve:

- **education of educators** of various professions (medicine, social affairs, pedagogy, psychology, teachers, police, religious groups etc.), parents, populations at risk ( puberty and adolescence) and wider public about causes and consequences of drug addiction
- **lifting public awareness** about dangers of a single contact with psycho active substances and their abuse

- **neutralization of stigmatization** thus enabling the society to approach addicts more easily and provide them assistance
- **decrease in the number of new addicts**
- **public and expert institutions sensitized** about drug addiction problematics possibly leading to establishment of more efficient system of providing help etc.

### Psychological justification

- decreasing psychical tension leading towards healthier psychological and emotional climate inside family, school, at work and in public in general
- development of achievement motives and opening the doors towards brighter future – at work, self-sustainability, assistance to family
- development of healthy life styles
- lifting the sense of personal and social responsibility in order to achieve optimal mental and physical health
- development of positive attitude towards oneself and other people – development of human relations etc.

### Pedagogical justification

- preventing occurrence of modelling since by solving drug addiction problem young people can model successful life styles
- stressing the importance of all forms of upbringing – moral, social, emotional and psychical – and their mutual interconnection.

### Emotional justification

By realizing the activities outlined above we will achieve the following:

- emotional maturity
- easier establishment of emotional relationships leading to improved quality of life
- possibility of achieving intimacy and exchange of emotion with individuals of opposite sex
- close relationships within family, society and public in general leading to decreased tension, anxiety, depression, aggression etc.
- easier passage through period of positive identity formation etc.

## **V What is Prevention?**

In general the aim of primary prevention measures is to lower the use of *illegal* and *legal* psycho active substances per inhabitant by affecting elimination or reduction of risk factors and strengthening factors of protection. Preventative work involves interventions prior to occurrence of a health problem, meaning disruption of cause-and-consequence relationships that lead towards health and social problems.

## **Target group**

Abuse of various psycho active substances is present among individuals coming from the most vulnerable population group. They are adolescents, socially sensitive group prone to succumbing to changes and temptations.

Target groups which need to be encompassed by preventative measures in Kakanj municipality include **adolescents, parents and wider public.**

## **Prevention levels**

### **a) Primary prevention**

Primary prevention deals with various influences on behaviour and attitude of target groups and aims to direct their lives in certain direction. Program of primary prevention measures involves all population groups, although it can be focused on certain groups such as parents whose involvement has so far been negligible.

The following aspects hold important place in primary prevention:

- family;
- responsible parenting;
- health education;
- general care of the community for children and young people;

General aim is to promote health and help build healthy life style.

### **b) Secondary prevention**

Primary prevention needs to be followed by secondary prevention, which involves timely discovery of the disease or a health problem that is not yet fully developed and visible.

Target group of the secondary prevention includes addicts / consumers of psycho active substances who mostly receive no treatment within drug addiction prevention programs

Aims:

- To treat addicts or to lower the number of new addicts
- To recognize early potential addicts
- To motivate for treatment

### **c) Tertiary prevention**

Target group of tertiary prevention involves addicts who have already established certain level of psychological stability and who need help in keeping their work habits and in resocializing. This type of prevention can be implemented in cooperation with the community.

The aim of tertiary prevention is to enable the recovery, rehabilitation and resocialization of addicts.

## **VI Why Invest in Prevention?**

**Most efficient, most rational and most economic** measure in the fight against drug addiction is the primary prevention. Measures and activities undertaken within primary prevention refer to the protection of healthy and unaffected population.

*Is it worth investing in prevention?*

- Research shows the results of drug addiction treatment are very discouraging, almost negligible. The problem of drug addiction is best illustrated by treatment results showing that *only 5 % of addicts get cured*.
- Cost of treatment of a single addict is over 15.000 KM and it can last more than 5 years.
- Lower work and life expectancy followed by the loss of or reduced work capabilities of young people at their prime.
- High number of death cases as a direct consequence of drug abuse.
- According to the *World Health Organization*, 1 dollar invested into drug addiction prevention saves the state additional 7 dollars.

Currently, based on the number (4) of registered addicts in Kakanj municipality, complete treatment and rehabilitation requires setting aside over 150.000,00 KM.

*Do measures of prevention have any effect?*

Long-term prevention measures aim to influence young people to assert negative attitude to all forms of drug addiction and to develop skills of making right decisions.

Primary prevention must certainly be supported by effective repressive measures (legislative and judicial system) that will lead towards reduced availability and demand for psycho active substances, and thus towards reduced number of addicts.

***Based on all outlined facts it can be concluded that prevention is worth putting effort into. Prevention measures are much cheaper and achieve better results and effects, since they disrupt the network of cause-and-consequence relations that lead to health and social problems.***

## **VII Conclusions by Expert Team**

Based on conducted research and analysis of available data, the expert team identified the following causes of ineffective fight against drug addiction in Kakanj municipality:

- non-existence of drug addiction prevention programs at municipal level,
- multiple data bases of drug addicts at municipal level,

- ⊖ non-existence of institutional networks and cooperation,
- ⊖ different approaches to solving the problem of drug addiction
- ⊖ insufficient education of staff from institutions dealing with drug addiction problem,
- ⊖ ineffective legislature related to drug addiction,
- ⊖ insufficient access by the local community to information referring to drug addiction problem

## ***VIII Recommendations to Kakanj Municipal Assembly***

Aiming to contribute to improvement of the state of drug addiction in Kakanj municipality, the expert team made the following recommendations based on the reached conclusions:

- It is necessary to establish a **coordinating body** made up of members of various professions, who will define criteria for assigning the resources to as well as monitor and evaluate drug addiction prevention projects, so as to be able to provide directives and recommendations for future projects;
- It is necessary to set aside **municipal budget funds for programs and projects** which will be prevention based. Funds will be rewarded through public tenders to those NGOs whose project satisfy tender criteria.

*The expert team suggested the coordinating body and Kakanj Municipal Assembly to direct funds to the following activities in 2007:*

- **Improvement of activities** of continually updating the existing data base;
- **Education of educators** of various professions (medicine, social affairs, pedagogy, psychology, teachers, police, religious groups etc.), parents, population groups at risk (adolescents) and wider public about causes and consequences of drug addiction,
- **Inclusion of media** at the local level in activities of preventing drug addiction

## ***IX Participants in creation of directives for preventative activities in the fight against drug addiction in Kakanj municipality***

### ***9.1. Institutions***

1. Kakanj Hospital
2. Kakanj Police Department
3. High School „Kemal Kapetanović“ Kakanj
4. Cantonal Institute for the Fight Against Drug Addiction
5. NGO „Alternative“ Kakanj

## **9.2. Members of Expert Team**

1. *Mirsad Tursum*, Head of the Mental Health Centre in Kakanj
2. *Elvedin Mioč*, Drug Addiction Department Inspector, Kakanj Police Department
3. *Amela Džomba*, Director, High School „Kemal Kapetanović“ Kakanj,
4. *Sedin Habibović*, Head of the Prevention Department at the Cantonal institute for the fight against drug addiction
5. *Dženan Šarić* – Project coordinator, NGO „Alternative“ Kakanj

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