



UNITED PROFESSIONALS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

PRESENTATION FOR ACWW, 15.10.2025



EMILIA CRUSHCOV - CHAIR

Who we are and what UPSDA stands for?

✓ UPSDA is an alliance of professionals with different backgrounds, aiming to achieve sustainable development through transfer of knowledge, skills and creative Ideas.

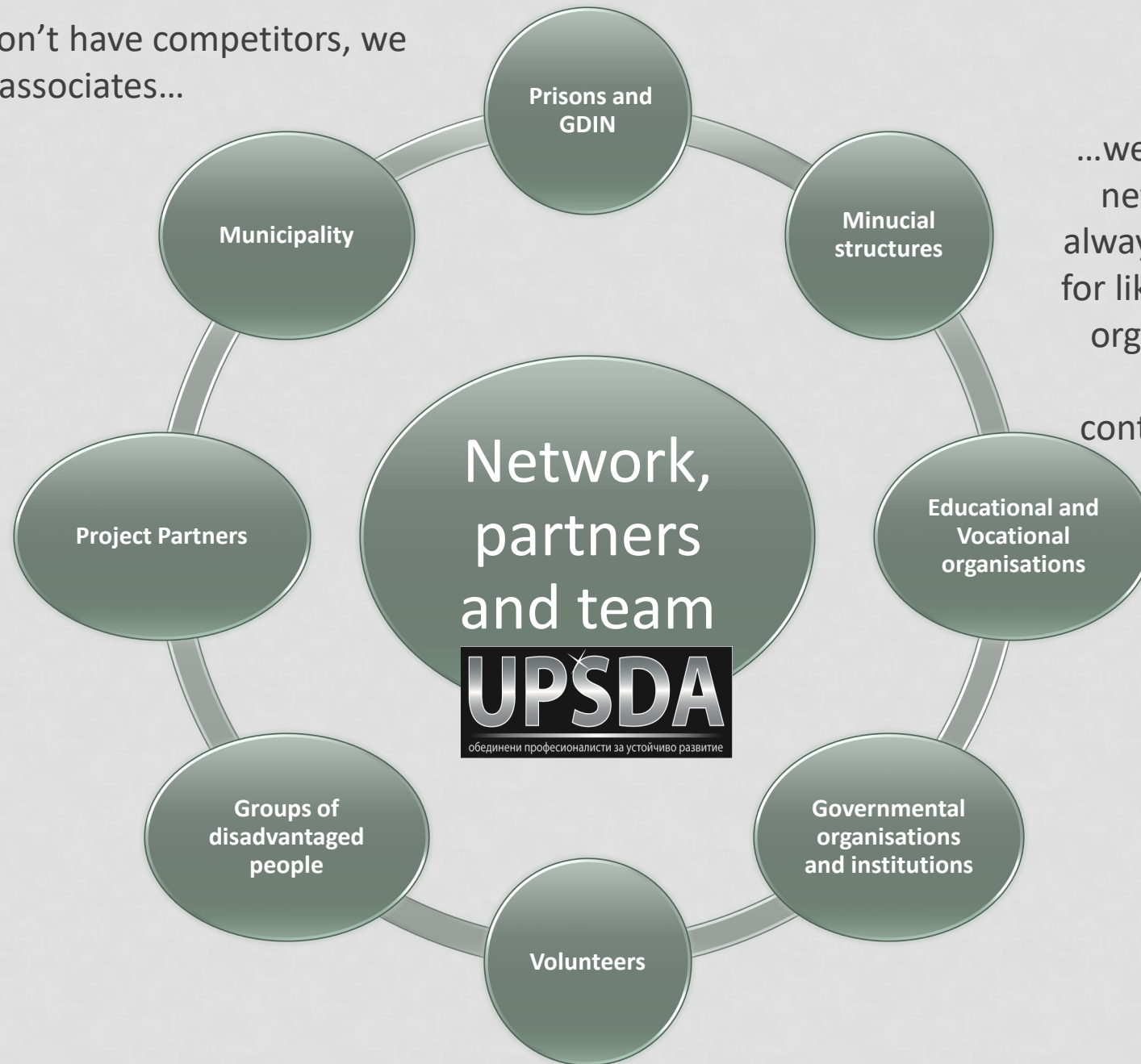
United Professionals for Sustainable development

Association

Founded in 2011

Plovdiv, Bulgaria

We don't have competitors, we have associates...



...we build our
network and
always looking
for like-minded
organisations
and
contributors...

We lift people UP



Our mission is to assist organizations and individuals in achieving professional and personal excellence.

How we achieve this?

- **Projects:** UPSDA initiate, develop and realize educational and social projects or initiatives for different disadvantage groups and related organisations.
- **Research, problem analysis and evaluation.**
- **Methodologies:** UPSDA's team develops methodologies for improvement of current issues. We supervise implementation and evaluate their effectiveness whilst enabling pilot testing procedures.
- **Traning, support of staff and capacity building:** UPSDA's team develops and delivers training to various groups and organisations, based on their need assessment.
- **Advocacy and Policy recommendations**
- **Organising seminars, conferences and other events** for awareness and dissemination of outcomes to various stakeholders.
- **Network building.**
- **Promotion of SDG** (Sustainable Development Goals) in various settings and context.
- **Publishing and dissemination** activities

BUILDING BRIDGES: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MODELS FOR MARGINALIZED WOMEN IN BULGARIA

Best practices from Velingrad, Mineralni Bani, and Plovdiv with 3 different communities.



2016

**“Mentoring for selfhelp” project
financed by NGO grants scheme of Financial
mechanism of EEA 2009 – 2014**



- **Main goal:**
- Empowerment of vulnerable groups.
- **Specific aims:**
 - 1. Support of mechanisms for self-help and mutual help
 - 2. Introduction of Mentoring method for children with deviant behaviour and at risk of early dropping from school, as well as improving the skills and knowledge of teachers at three schools with pupils mainly from Roma origin.



Mentorship for Self-help





Training of volunteers



Socio-Economic Integration of Vulnerable Groups and Improving Access to Education in Velingrad Municipality

- Funded by the Operational Programs 'Human Resources Development' and 'Science and Education for Smart Growth'



Partners & Funding

- Municipality of Velingrad
- Association 'Consulting Bureau Progress 7'
- Association 'United Professionals for Sustainable Development'
- Primary Schools: 'Georgi Benkovski' & 'Neofit Rilski'

Total Budget: ~1.56M BGN

Funded by OP HRD & OP Science and Education for Smart Growth

Together for Education and Inclusion!



Main Goal

To implement an integrated approach for improving quality of life, social inclusion, and poverty reduction.

Specific Objectives

- Promote socio-economic integration of marginalized communities.
- Improve educational environments for active social inclusion.
- Ensure equal access to quality education.
- Encourage cooperation between schools, NGOs, and families.
- Strengthen tolerance and cultural identity.





Key Activities

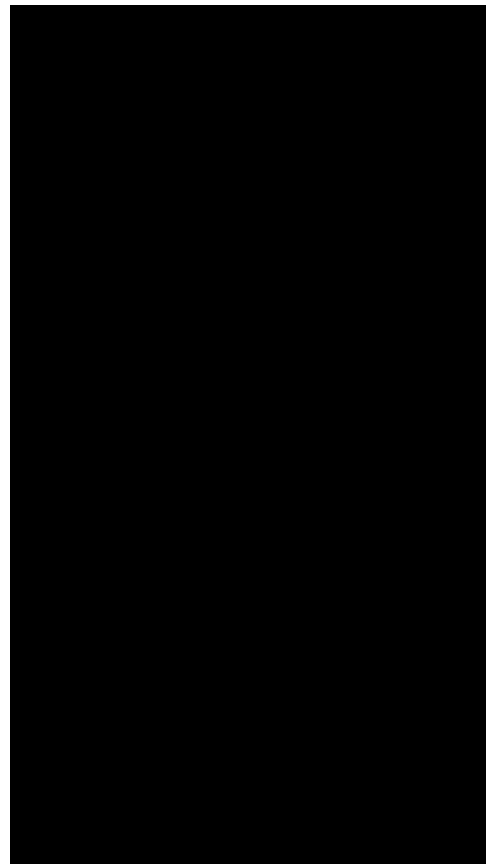
- Parent Clubs 'Together for Education'
- Forum Theatre for Inclusion
- Health & Rights Awareness Workshops
- Sessions on Family Planning and Social Rights

- Focus on measures to prevent early school drops

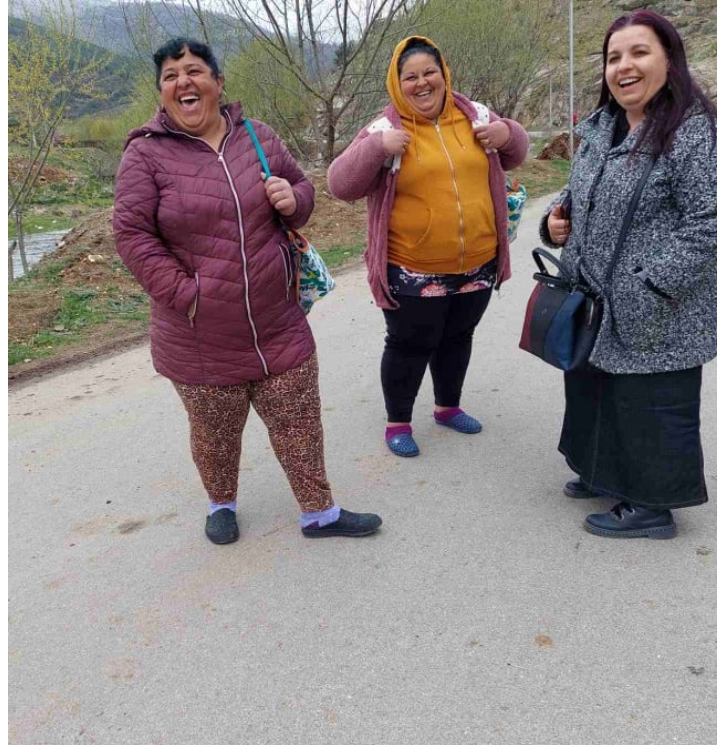


Theater activities





Rehearsed in unusual places 😊



Community Impact

- Women and families empowered through education.
- Increased awareness of rights and health.
- Greater inclusion and community cohesion.
- Sustainable reduction in poverty and inequality.



2020



International Day for the
Elimination of Violence against
Women
25 November

**Trauma-Sensitive Working Model for
Marginalised Youth, ERASMUS+**



2024



The Center for Active Inclusion 2018 - ongoing

Established in the village of **Mineralni Bani** under the project **“Implementation of a Set of Measures to Encourage the Activity of People from Vulnerable Social Groups,”** implemented by the Municipality under the **“Active Inclusion”** scheme of the **Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2014–2020.**

Several activities were made with groups of unactive women.

Implementation of a Set of Measures to Encourage the Activity of People from Vulnerable Social Groups

Scheme: *Active Inclusion*

Priorities:

- Reducing poverty and promoting social inclusion
- Improving access to employment and the quality of jobs

Project Summary:

- The project aims to initiate the provision and development of **integrated social and health services** tailored to the needs of the target groups — economically inactive persons, people with disabilities and their families, families with children with disabilities, as well as children and adults at risk.

WHAT IS OUR SOLUTION?

Developing and delivering of
Specialised Tailor-made
Programs

Offering new
Experiences

Development and Supporting of different skills
and competences

Improved chances on
the Labour market



FESTIVAL OF HEALTH
Volunteers form PTPI Smiles
are selling products of inmates





Training and supervision



- ***Future for the Children***

**Trainings and Supervision
for Specialists**
Municipality of Mineralni
Bani

- **Project Details:**
- **Contract No.:** BG05SFPR002-2.003-0120-C01
- **Procedure:** BG05SFPR002-2.003 – “*Future for the Children*”
- **Programme:** *Human Resources Development Programme 2021–2027*
- **Partnership between:**
 - **Municipality of Mineralni Bani**
 - **Ministry of Labour and Social Policy**



2024 - 2025



THANK YOU!

upsda.org



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Questions

Comments

Observations



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