

## **"We will reorient its attitude towards the problems of people with disabilities" (PHOTO)**

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In the Stoubcy (Minsk region) a the workshop on strategic planning took place, and began the writing of the local agenda in order to solve problems of people with disabilities.

In 2015, Belarus accepted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which provides, in particular, the equality of rights of all categories of the population. But in order to achieve true equality and fully implement the provisions of the Convention, not enough simply to sign the document. To do this, with the support of the European Union in Belarus is implementing the campaign "Agenda 50", aimed at the implementation of the basic provisions of the Convention in local communities. In different regions of the country we are implementing specific practical steps that will help to realize the basic principles of the international instrument.

The campaign launched various projects in four Belarusian cities, where local communities have tried to solve these problems relevant to people with disabilities by creating their own local agenda.

Another city that joined the campaign, is Stoubcy. On February 19 the workshop on strategic planning for a local agenda was held, conducted by TUS Foundation.

*Photo by Pavel Savitsky.*

The meeting was attended by representatives of local TTSSON, the regional organization of the Red Cross , TsKRNiR, BeLTIZ and BTI, as well as the assistant deputy of the House of Representatives. After being acquainted with each other, TUS told about themselves and what they have achieved in solving the problems of people with disabilities in Poland for several decades of work.

*Photo by Pavel Savitsky.*

'We do not just work with people with disabilities, it is important for us to work with the system, we are engaged in strategic planning', - said Malgorzata Peratsyatkovich in the beginning of the meeting. - Development of the ability to seek funds for the implementation of our projects and ideas. We have invited you, that you could write a local program. According to our expectations today you should start doing it.

Then TUS offered Stoubcy society to work on the methodology of "22 steps". It was developed and tested in practice in the five regions of Poland and, most importantly, a benefit that is received participants of the training adapted to Belarusian realities.

*Photo by Pavel Savitsky.*

In addition, it was found out that strategic planning - something that was new for the Stoubcy. Director of Stoubcy territorial social service center Svetlana Blashko said that according to this principle, local institutions should be working within the framework of the State to create a barrier-free environment program.

- But it is not very much: the needs of people with disabilities are greater than they can be provided by the state. The program should be designed "bottom-up", but it creates a "top down", so the differences are obtained, - admitted Svetlana Blashko.

At the same time, according to her, the supervisory authorities last year there has shown interest in

how the program should be executed. And a coordination commissions have been established, which includes representatives of state bodies and non-governmental organizations, who meet every three months to discuss progress and to plan budget.

*Svetlana Blashko (left). Photo by Pavel Savitsky.*

- Strategic Planning - the road from a point where we are at the point where we want to be. To do this, you need to consider the time and money, for which we want to achieve the goal. When planning it is important to understand exactly what we want to do what we have the resources - material, human, etc., - explained Małgorzata Peratsyatkovich. - This by help the Swedish model "Agenda 22", which says that you can not plan anything for the people with disabilities if you are not working with them. They must have a voice, they should be the main experts and take part in all stages of strategic planning, and not only in those which concern them directly

*Photo by Pavel Savitsky.*

This principle shall be learned in practice. After the theoretical block and detailed acquaintance with the instrument "22 steps", it was time to go to the diagnosis of social problems. To this, the participants were divided into two groups - the "residents" and "local authorities" - and received instructions according to which they had to plan the yard of a 6-levels building. Doing this showed that in order to get comfortable with all the results, we must work in heterogeneous groups.

*Photo by Pavel Savitsky.*

The third work was devoted to the direct writing of their own agenda for the Stoubcy. To this end, the participants formed a team and assigned roles, and it was very important that they are not imposed by force. The date, by which it decided to fill in the statistical information in the initial questionnaire and to create a local agenda, members of the team also determined for themselves - was 2 April. The next step was to find the most important problems of people with disabilities in the Stoubcy. Among those, the participants identified the lack of the ability to move people with disabilities in the city and the area, lack of barrier-free environment, job creation, access to free legal advice and not knowing the people with disabilities of their rights. In addition it turned out that the rehabilitation of the available funds do not solve the problems of people with disabilities, as well as the rehabilitation is not available in medical institutions.

*Photo by Pavel Savitsky.*

Writing a local agenda for Stoubcy will take more than one month, but it was important to take the first steps to the 22's - and these have been made.

According to Deputy Director of the Office on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Michael Mackiewicz, a training seminar on the creation of a local agenda allows for a different look at his work to people who are closely related to the theme of disability. This was confirmed by examples from Shchuchin and Volozhin, where the work of writing the local agenda started earlier, however, with same problems, so Stoubcy was no exception.

*Photo by Pavel Savitsky.*

- Now we reorient their attitude towards the problems of people with disabilities - shared personal impressions Svetlana Blashko. - It turned out that even while working as a team we have not all turned out well. But pleased that the majority of the participants are ready to make efforts for a common cause, and work on the agenda will allow us to build a scheme for solving the problems of

our city.

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