

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR PERIOD 2020.– 2025.



**Association of parents of children
with disabilities Vukovar butterflies**

PUBLISHER:

*Association of parents of
children with disabilities
Vukovar butterflies*

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS STRATEGIC PLAN IS THE RESULT OF THE TEAMWORK OF EXPERTS AND PARENTS IN THE ASSOCIATION, AND THE RESULT OF EXPERIENCES THROUGH WHICH THE ASSOCIATION HAS GROWN AND DEVELOPED. HOPEFULLY, WE SET REALISTIC GOALS AND THAT WE WILL REALIZE THEM TOGETHER.



IN VUKOVAR, DECEMBER 2019.



CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Achievements of the Association.....	9
3. Vision and mission.....	21
4. Developmental strategy.....	22
5. Partners and coworkers.....	25
6. Environmental analysis.....	27
7. Strategic objectives and implementation activities.....	32





INTRODUCTION

1.1 ESTABLISHMENT OF A STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan of the Association of parents of children with disabilities Vukovar butterflies (hereinafter text: Association) was created as the result of teamwork of experts, employees of the Association from the domain of psychosocial support, early intervention and rehabilitation of children with disabilities as well as parents, active members of the Association, and projects leaders (manager) through which the Association has developed and grown.

The strategic planning process was implemented in two parts. The first part of the strategic planning concerned to the analysis of the environment, the analysis of existing human resources, material and financial capacities of the Association. The first part of planning was attended by a mixed workgroup – employees, experts team of the Association, representatives of the governing body, active members and external associates.

The second part of strategic planning was related to the analysis of feedback, suggestions and consideration of other stakeholders, so that proposal of Strategic Plan would be better quality, more realistic and maximally feasible in relation to the planned areas of action, goals, activities and expected results.

In considering further development and operation of the Association, the special attention is paid to achievements so far, analysis of the current events and key stakeholders (partners, associates, users) which will be important for collaborative action in the next five years. The Association has prepared an action plan for the five-years period keeping in mind the default EU a framework that the Republic of Croatia, as an EU member, should adhere in the segments of action of the public, private and civil sector. Next year we are entering the new programme period 2021-2027. The basis of the programming and planning funds for the new multiannual financial framework will be the National Developmental Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030 with a vision of development and the investment priorities in the ten-year period. In the coming period, with the funds available to Croatia through regional development and the cohesion policy, the investments focused on the 5 main objectives will be encouraged:

- a smarter Europe by focusing on innovations, digitalization, economic transformation and support for small and medium-sized enterprises
- a greener, carbon-free Europe, implementing Paris Agreement and investing in the energy transition, renewable energy and fight against climate change
- a more connected Europe, equipped with strategic transport and digital networks

Strategic plan for period 2020 - 2025.



- more social Europe, with the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the supporting quality employment, education, skills acquisition, social inclusion and equal access to health care
- bringing Europe closer to its citizens, by supporting local and sustainable strategies urban development through the EU.

We focused our project activities in accordance with the European Strategy for the People with Disabilities (2010.–2020.) which advocates for the empowerment of people with disabilities to fully enjoy their rights and participate in society on an equal basis with other people and economy. The Strategy builds on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD) and complements the Europe 2020 strategy, an EU strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth) and Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union from the Lisbon Treaty. The program activities of the Association are harmonized with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with a disability that supports equal opportunities for people with disabilities vis-à-vis others citizens with the National Strategy for Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities since 2017 to 2020 and the Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Particular attention needs to be focused on supporting parenting as well as the whole family. Families of persons with disabilities face various challenges and it is important to provide material and psychological support starting with coping with diagnosis and changes that the disability brings for the whole family.

Through its work, the Association influences and contributes to the development of supplementary and alternative social services aimed at children with disabilities.

Due to the growth of the Association's activities, there is a need for specific profiliation of the certain activities aimed to achieve the set goals through implementation of activities by division to specific tasks that will be accomplished over a period of time, along with quality insurance.

The Strategic Plan is a response to challenges in the field of providing social services from the domain psychosocial support, early intervention, half-day and full-day residence for children and young people and supported housing, integration and inclusion.



1.2. ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION

The Association of parents of children with disabilities Vukovar butterflies- is a voluntary, non-governmental, non-profit association of children with disabilities, their parents, members of their families, carers and other citizens with a social-humanitarian goal. The Association works to help improve the quality of life for children with disabilities and their families.

The Association aims to improve the quality of life, medical and social protection for children with disabilities and their families. The Association is operating in the city of Vukovar, Vukovar-Srijem County and Osijek-Baranja County and the Republic of Croatia.

The Association Vukovars butterflies were founded in 2011 on the initiative of the group of parents with children with disabilities, in order to help them and to develop opportunities for the children with disabilities in development and equal inclusion in all segments of life. At that time in the Vukovar-Srijem County children with disabilities did not have access to adequate care and treatment, nor they were able to attend regular childcare facilities, schools and they did not have secured support from the Special Needs Assistant. Members of the Association are active in the prevention and combatting discrimination on grounds on health and disabilities. For this purpose, numerous protests, round tables, meetings with all the relevant stakeholders, in particular Ombudwomen for Persons with Disabilities and Ombudswomen for children, were organized, made the public aware through media. From this inception until today the Association has participated in the number of advocacy activities to improve the position of the children with disabilities in the community towards the local government, competent ministries and the Government of the Republic of Croatia. Listed results in the recognition of the status of the Social Service Provider and the conclusion of the contract with the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Protection.

1.3. VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF ACTIVITY

The Association Vukovar butterflies are the only association in the Vukovar-Srijem County which bases its work on improving medical and social care of children with disabilities in development and accordingly plans, organizes and implement activities. For that reason, it has a strong influence on the development of local community sensibilities to recognize the importance of involving children with disabilities into all segments of social and public life. By the implementation of highly educated professional staff in their work, the Association wants to emphasize the importance of continuing rehabilitation by creating the most favourable environment for children with disabilities. The recognizability of the quality of the association's work can be seen by the number of the



children involved, positive results of the organized therapies and monitoring and support of city administration, The City of Vukovar and Vukovar-Srijem County and Ministry of Demography, Family, Young and Social Politics, Ministry for Science and Education and the number obtained smaller and bigger national EU projects.

The Association bases its work on principles of teamwork, consistency and professionalism, tolerance and solidarity, with respect to high ethical principles in work: exercising the rights of children with disabilities, equality, competence, tolerance, transparency, impartiality, responsibility and confidentiality.

1.4. OBJECTIVES

Through its activities, The Association seeks to improve the quality of life, medical and social protection of children with disabilities and their families. It promotes the rights of children with disabilities through its goals:

- ❖ Continued medical and rehabilitation care
- ❖ Promoting the principles of equal opportunities
- ❖ Non-discrimination
- ❖ Inspiring and encouraging an inclusive culture in society
- ❖ Full participation in society according to their abilities
- ❖ Acceptance of disability in society as a component of human diversity
- ❖ Parental rights and respect for circumstances
- ❖ Conducting education and socialization of children with disabilities

1.5. ACTIVITIES

The Association seeks to ensure the implementation of objectives by organizing and implementing the following activities:

- establishing and maintaining cooperation with parents of children with disabilities, professionals, institutions and associations in the country and abroad;
- informing the membership and public about problems of children with disabilities and their families;

Strategic plan for period 2020 - 2025.



- social assistance and support that includes support to the people with disabilities, children and youth, families, help and support for people at the risk of poverty and social exclusion and other social assistance;
- social services that include consulting and assisting, psychosocial support, early intervention, assistance in inclusion in educational programs, and regular education (integration), information, consulting and education, education of service providers, professional help and support, short stay, play-rooms, workshops, clubs, organizing leisure activities, help and support in one's own home and community, rehabilitation, personal assistance, other social services;
- promoting of development of volunteering;
- humanitarian aid that includes improving the quality of life and health of socially excluded, assistance in meeting basic living needs and other humanitarian assistance help;
- other social activities;
- sports activities with the children with disabilities (participation in sports competitions, sports preparation, sports recreation, sports instruction, organization and conducting a sports competition).

The Association is also registered to perform following economic activities:

- providing psychosocial support to children with disabilities;
- organizing and conducting courses, workshops, cultural, sport and other events and manifestations, organizing the professional meetings, conferences, seminar, etc.
- Publishing of newsletters, publications, magazines, books and professional literature;
- Retail Sales of hand-made products outside stores and donated sale goods in accordance with the Trade Act;
- Implementation of psychosocial support (individual and group) early intervention;
- Intellectual services in accordance with special regulations governing the conditions for performing that type of activity;
- And other related economic activities in accordance with special regulations.



2. ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

2.1. ORGANIZATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- *Rehabilitation programmes for more than 180 children*
- *Authorized social service provider*
- *Equipment and other resources*
- *Human resources - the establishment of an expert team*
- *Volunteer activities*
- *The country as a partner*
- *Cooperation with the local community*
- *Local government as a partner*

The Association has signed the Agreement with the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Politics on the provision of the social services and it has become a Member of the Network of Social Service Providers. The Association provides a social psychosocial support service that includes rehabilitation that encourages the development of cognitive, functional, communication or social skills of the user, and it includes the following:

❖ ***Exercises of everyday skills***

Exercises of everyday skills are primarily aimed at achieving optimal functioning in activities of daily living. They include the development and stimulation of motor, cognitive, emotional and social skills, which implies a holistic approach to the child as well as comprehensive development and development incentives in all segments. The therapist will develop interests child, work to improve attention and concentration, stimulate cognitive growth, develop social skills and work to improve motor skills through motor planning activities, after achieving these goals develop those higher motor centres such as fine motor skills and graphomotor skills (preparation for school). The largest and most important tool of the therapist is a purposeful activity used as a therapeutic medium. It plays an extremely important role in the earliest steps of a child's development because the child must master first the lowest segments of development in order to progress to higher centres and improve cognitive development. Assisted communication with the help of assistive technology in our association includes work on Tobii communicator 5 consisting of tablets, communicators and EyeTracker. Tobii system is a system of learning and encouragement and has proven to be extremely useful and important in the development of interests and communication of children with the impossibility of verbal speech. It is also a means to children and people a substitute means of speech and communication, and we know that communication is the basis of



the development of human social life. Also, for assisted communication they use are also simple communicators that the Association owns.

❖ **Psychological support**

Psychological support includes providing support and assistance during the period of adaptation, psychologically empowering users, preventing risky behaviour, helping to resolve conflict and other crisis situations, encouraging the development of appropriate forms of behaviour, developing and supporting interpersonal user relationships. Neurofeedback is a therapeutic method based on monitoring the electrical activity of the brain (EEG) and giving feedback. Some disabilities are related to specific one's patterns of brain activity. With this method, it is possible to change permanently " bad " patterns and simply teach the brain to function better, and thus reduce or in completely eliminate the symptoms of the disability such as:

- *Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)*
- *mood disorders (depression)*
- *sleep disorders (insomnia, difficulty falling asleep, waking up often)*
- *anxiety and various fears*
- *stress and stress relief*
- *poor concentration*
- *learning difficulties*
- *headache and migraine*

❖ **Speech pathologist's therapy**

Speech therapy diagnostics include assessment of communication and language-speech development, assessment of pre-skills and reading, writing and arithmetic skills. Also, in children who show difficulties in understanding verbal instructions, we also use a diagnostic test - Comprehension Test grammar (TROG-2: HR) and Communication Development Scales (KORALJE). Speech therapy

diagnosis is performed individually in the presence of parents. We use it in the therapeutic procedure assistive technology, digital speech therapy set, Forbrain headphones and numerous didactic equipment.



❖ **Sensory integration**

Sensory integration is the way we use information that comes from our own body and environment we receive with different senses. The word integration itself represents a neurological process that ensures the organization of sensations from the body and the environment and the successful use of the body in the environment in which is located, and in the case of sensory integration, the senses unite in order to be an individual he got along better in the environment that surrounds him. Sensory integration involves the interoceptive system (proprioceptive and vestibular sensation), and the exteroceptive system (auditory, visual, tactile, olfactory and gustatory). The principle of sensory integration therapy is focused on neurological processes that enable the retrieval and use of information from the body and the environment for the purpose of creating organized motor behaviour. It is held in a hall equipped with equipment to regulate the various sensory sensations that present challenges in everyday life for children from different spectrum disorders. Within the hall, there is a separate room for the regulation of intense sensory sensations, the so-called Snoezelen room. Under the snow-green imply consciously selected stimuli, offered in a comfortable environment in which it enables the stimulation of the senses and the acquisition of experience with the help of light, smell, sound and touch.

❖ **Kinesiotherapy, sport and recreative activities**

Kinesiotherapy literally means healing through movement. Kinesiotherapy includes the application of movement for the purpose of treating the disturbed balance of the musculoskeletal system, injuries of the same, but also for the purpose of preventing the development of various pathological conditions. Mobility and the functionality of the musculoskeletal system may be impaired due to diseases, congenital anomaly, but also through daily long-term loads within everyday activities of life.

Kinesiotherapy is an integral part of physiotherapy and its goal can be equated with the goal of physiotherapy, and that is the re-establishment of a healthy, physiological course of movement, the improvement of the disturbed mobility and functions of the musculoskeletal system and stimulating the motor development of children. The basis of kinesiotherapy is a movement that can be active, assisted or passive, therapeutic, and every physical effort in performing this movement will be accompanied by a change in the respiratory, cardiovascular and nervous systems. Within kinesiotherapy, there are different methods of work - from movement, exercises (strength exercises, stretching exercises, coordination development exercises, balance and skills) to various elements of the sport.

Since its inception to date, more than 250 children with disabilities aged 1 to 18 years were involved in one of the activities carried out by the Association.



Other activities that the Association proceeds:

❖ *Half-day stay and playroom:*

The association promotes the need to socialize children with disabilities, and this is one of the activities that contribute to achieving that goal. Due to the specifics of parenting style like this family whose engagement does not end even with the chronological age of the child, a half-day stay represents a kind of short-term respite for parents and the possibility of emotional recovery for parents. Planned positive effects of program implementation and half-day playroom are the socialization of children with disabilities in the environment of healthy children. The problem of children and the need to organize this type of activity is reflected in the fact that children due to the inertia of the institutions for the implementation of legal obligations are not included in childcare and schools and are socially isolated, do not have the opportunity for socialization and integration. The situation is especially difficult when it comes to children from low-income families and other marginalized groups (e.g. children belonging to the Roma national minority) who are at risk of social exclusion. By implementing this activity, we contribute to the social inclusion of these groups. It is also planned to organize a playroom in the afternoon to give parents a break after working hours, psychological relief, the opportunity to dedicate themselves, friends, to other children.

❖ *Primitive Laser Integration (QRI) Laser*

Laser (QRI) is a relatively new modality of laser therapy. Laser technology is widely used in the world for more than 35 years, and acupuncture for thousands of years. Quantum reflex integration is a powerful combination of low-frequency laser, sound frequency and reflex technique integration with the aim of "restarting" the central nervous system and achieving fast and visible results inpatient.

Reflexes have not only a protective role, but also an extremely important role in laying the foundation brain neurophysiology for the development of higher brain functions, both motor and emotional and cognitive. By the method of quantum integration of primitive laser reflexes, we make children brain more functional in all fields: motor, vestibular, verbal, visual, emotional, cognitive.

❖ *Tomatis therapy plus Soundsory*

The Tomatis method acts on the central nervous system (brain) and leads to improvements in processing auditory sensations, speech, coordination, balance and focus while energizing brain. The TLTS device has its roots in audiometry, but its role is to determine how an individual communicates with others. The test consists of a series of subtests, the synthesis of the results of which leads to a curve which we call the auditory profile.

If both areas of the brain that process signals from both ears are out of sync, it can prevent the use of the child's potential. A device called an electronic ear, connected to headphones through the release of filtered music into



the headphones reduces listening. Mozart's is used music and Gregorian chants because they are high frequencies and with more vibrations than other types of music. It also uses mid and low tones alternately.

❖ ***Brain Gym***

Brain Gym rests on the foundations of neuroscience and consists of about twenty exercises, which are in fact cross-lateral movements. By aligning body and mind parts they improve motor skills, coordination, memory, reading, linguistic and mathematical expression skills, a better emotional balance is achieved and stress, tension and hyperactivity.

❖ ***Horseback riding and staying in nature***

It is a form of the rehabilitation program in which several components of the child are affected development. From social skills, socializing with animals and staying in nature, opportunities movements that many children do not have or have difficulty with. There is a three-dimensional movement of the horse a number of extremely beneficial effects on muscle tone, posture and motor skills.

❖ ***Human resources -the establishment of an expert team***

By working in the field of establishing an expert team, we have so far managed to hire a number of experts from different fields, to form a multidisciplinary team that meets the challenges of modern, a holistic, therapeutic approach to children with disabilities.

The expert team consists of:

- *Bachelor of Physiotherapy*
- *Sensory integration therapist*
- *Neurofeedback practitioner*
- *Tomatis practitioner*
- *Speech therapist*
- *Educational rehabilitator*
- *Bachelor of Occupational Therapy*
- *Psychologist*
- *Pedagogue*
- *Kinesiologist*

Strategic plan for period 2020 - 2025.



The core values of our Association are a high level of expertise and commitment to service users as well the team spirit we build, taking into account the needs of the team and respecting specific individual needs. The quality of service and respect for the dignity of service users, associates and donors are woven in the programs and projects we implement and are recognized through our feedback users and associates.

All professional associates involved in project activities in working with users respect their human and children's rights, with special attention to the protection of the physical and psychological integrity of service users, respect for the individuality of service users, equal treatment of all service users without discrimination on any grounds, respect for opinion and freedom of expression.

EQUIPMENT

PLAYROOM	▪ <i>Didactics</i>
	▪ <i>Board games</i>
	▪ <i>Consumables for art and creative workshops</i>
	▪ <i>Instruments and equipment for music workshops</i>
	▪ <i>Mats, rock climbing</i>
SENSOR ROOM	▪ <i>Mats</i>
	▪ <i>Swings</i>
	▪ <i>Slides</i>
	▪ <i>Pool balls</i>
	▪ <i>Different sensory aids</i>
	▪ <i>Snug room</i>
PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT CABINET	▪ <i>Didactics</i>
	▪ <i>Toys for play therapy</i>
NEUROFEEDBACK CABINET	▪ <i>Three neurofeedback devices</i>
	▪ <i>Three TVs</i>
	▪ <i>Headset</i>
	▪ <i>Three Laptops</i>
	▪ <i>Armchairs</i>
	▪ <i>Didactics</i>
	▪ <i>Toys</i>
	▪ <i>Assistive technology</i>

Strategic plan for period 2020 - 2025.



CABINET FOR EVERYDAY EXERCISE SKILLS	▪ <i>Simple communicators</i>
	▪ <i>Tobii Communicator</i>
SPEECH THERAPY OFFICE	▪ <i>Didactics</i>
	▪ <i>Toys</i>
	▪ <i>Speech therapy set</i>
	▪ <i>Assistive technology</i>
	▪ <i>Forbrain earphones</i>
KINESIOTHERAPY AND SPORT-RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES	▪ <i>Fully equipped sports gym with various requisites for all kinds of sport</i>
	▪ <i>Goals</i>
	▪ <i>Mats</i>
	▪ <i>Balls</i>
	▪ <i>Swedish ladders</i>
	▪ <i>Motor set</i>
OTHER EQUIPMENT	▪ <i>lasers to integrate primitive reflex</i>
	▪ <i>Cabinet for Tatomatis method: Three Tomatis devices; talksap; soundsory earphones; TLTS auditory device</i>
	▪ <i>Neurofeedback room</i>
	▪ <i>Laser room</i>
	▪ <i>Arranged and adapt yard space</i>
	▪ <i>Official vehicle</i>



VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

The association bases part of the realization of its activities on volunteer-led activities

provisions of the Volunteering Act (OG 58/07, 22/13) and the Statute of the Association as a legal basis.

- ✓ "Volunteering (or voluntary work) is one of the cornerstones of civilian life society because it revives the noblest aspirations of humanity: advocating for peace, freedom, choice, security and justice for all people." (Universal Declaration on Volunteering)
- ✓ "Volunteering is recognized and promoted as an activity or service that leads to improved
- ✓ quality of life, building social capital, personal development, to active involvement person in social events and to the development of a more humane and equal democratic society." (Volunteering Act)
- ✓ "Volunteering contributes to social development, civic participation, social cohesion and social inclusion." (Volunteering Act)

Active individuals invest personal time, knowledge and skills, promote and enhance work for

the common good by working in the community in a thoughtful and organized manner. As an organizer of volunteering, we base our work on the provisions of the Volunteering Act ensuring professionalism in working with volunteers as well as the work of volunteers with our service users.

Respecting the diversity and personal integrity of each individual, we guarantee confidentiality and impartiality which is the standard of our work that we are extremely proud of. The process of constantly renewing and upgrading the knowledge of volunteers is an incentive for personal development potential and ensures a level of quality recognized by all stakeholders.

Experiential learning and working with children with disabilities and their parents contribute to breaking down prejudices and stereotypes and strengthens the will to tolerance in our society.

The Association is a signatory of the Agreement on Mutual Cooperation with the Lavoslav Ružička Polytechnic from Vukovar - Physiotherapy study, based on which the cooperation has been carried out for the third year in a row volunteer activity of second and third-year physiotherapy students in our Association. Students - volunteers with their volunteer contribution greatly help the realization of activities in Association, and as future professionals become the best promoters of the rights of children with disabilities.

in the circle of the profession and the community in which they will act as future experts - physiotherapists. *In the future, we want to develop a network of volunteering because we believe that volunteers are promoters our missions and visions, which are confirmed by their experiences which we summarize during volunteering and we publish on our website.*



2.2. PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

In the eight years that the Association has been operating, therapies and support have been provided for 180 members, that is, children with disabilities of different types and degrees of impairment (multiple difficulties, autism spectrum disorders, intellectual disabilities, Down syndrome, difficulties social communications and others).

In its daily work, the Association provides for children necessary therapies that were realized from our own funds, donations, humanitarian actions and through projects. The beginning of the Association was marked by a valuable donation from the Adris Foundation by which it managed to procure and equip a working space. Space for daily work was provided by the City of Vukovar.

The beginning of professional work is marked by the employment of educational rehabilitators for individual work with children in the field of stimulating perceptually motor abilities, communication, adaptive and everyday skills and preparation for kindergarten and school. Therapeutic riding for all members is provided by a partnership agreement with the Equestrian Club "Danube Paradise" from the very beginning, which is still carried out today.

The association has, with the help of donations and projects, started the implementation of the project "Speech Therapy Cabinet" and "Playroom".

The "Playroom" project was realized because of the cooperation with the Croatian Employment Service, Center for Social Welfare Vukovar and Childcare facility „Vukovar 1“. In cooperation with the Center for social care on the project "Playroom" is provided and a half-day informally childcare stay for children of lower property status. The association provides care for children who do not have difficulties in development but are discriminated against and excluded from the regular process of preschool education.

The project "Speech Therapy Cabinet" provided work for a children speech therapist in the field of encouraging the development of speech and language skills, development graphomotor skills, articulation disorders and improving general communication skills. Members of the association participated in the project "Big Hearted Trainers", led by Ana Sršen, celebrated Paralympians.



This project aims to introduce parents and children to Hallawick concept of swimming and its popularization, which provides children with a swimming school, improves motor functions, positively affects the development of self-confidence in children and quality spending free time in the pool. Allianz Insurance project partner, in cooperation with the association, provided free transportation of children from Vukovar to Vinkovci, the city in which swimming pool program was conducted.

Furthermore, the effort, work and commitment of the Association was recognized by the First Gas Company, which valuable donation provided training for two experts in the field of Neurofeedback therapy device, purchase of equipment for Neurofeedback therapy, and part of the money that funds therapist's salary. By providing education, procurement of equipment and funds for part of the salaries Therapists Association has become one provider of this service in the area of Vukovar Srijem County. Apart from the Association, in the area of Slavonia. Neurofeedback is also provided by KBC Osijek, but the waiting list is longer than a year, and as a result, the Association began to provide services for new members from the area of Osijek - Baranja County. Another big donation from the First Gas Company was used to procure lasers for the quantum integration of primitives reflex. We have thus become the only providers of this service in the territory of the Republic of Croatia.

Therapy of integration of primitive reflexes is a novelty in modern rehabilitation of children with multiple developmental difficulties and achieves exceptional results. The association funded from their own resources person to work with the device. Thanks to donations, numerous therapies have been provided for children (rehabilitator, speech therapist, Brain Gym, Tomatis, sensory integration, therapeutic riding, Neurofeedback and laser) and numerous educational training. The association owns a car obtained from AutoZubak and UNICEF. This valuable donation enabled the transport of children from remote parts of the city of Vukovar and the surrounding suburbs and villages for therapy, as well as transportation for treatment. Also, in cooperation with Valmar hotels, free vacations are provided for our members, giving our children and their parents a short break from everyday worries, problems and driving to therapy. With HEP funds, part of the funds needed to pay for the education of expert was provided (employees of the Association) in the field of application of sensory integration therapy.

Equipping the space for the implementation of sensory integration was made possible by the donation of the First gas company. The funds that Adris Foundation provided Tomatis therapy - listening therapy for 15 children, training for Tomatis practitioners of the II degree, and another valuable TLTS device was purchased for the listening test.

So far, 8 assistants have been provided through projects in cooperation with the City of Vukovar and continued with another six, which is four more children for each new school year.



With the funds of the RTL project helping children "Be my friend", we bought two lasers for quantum integrating primitive reflexes, two separate extensions and programs for autism and cerebral paralysis as well as a helmet for better cognitive development and speech.

The association always strives to provide children with disabilities with quality and continuity rehabilitation, but due to lack of goodwill and lack of understanding of local self-government, especially the County and the state, the association is finding it increasingly difficult to operate and obtain the necessary funds for funding the profession for working with children. All of the energy was directed to make the Association become The provider of social services and work continued to be funded by the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social policy. ***At November 17th 2016 The Association signs the contract with the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy and becomes a Provider for social services in the field of psychosocial support.***

At January 1st 2017 starts working on 6 new employees providing psychological support services, sensory integration, exercises everyday skills, speech therapy as well as kinesitherapy and sports - recreational activities. In cooperation with social welfare centres, children are entitled to have free therapy. Furthermore, a project was obtained from Dm. Playroom and Brain Gym therapy was also continued. *Also at the beginning of 2017, the Occupational Therapy project was obtained from the Ministry of Science and education where children are involved in occupational therapy individually and in groups through the work of playrooms.*

Education has been provided for another sensory integration therapist, Brain Gym Trainer II degree and education of assisted communication for two professionals. With a donation, the basic minimum package of assistive technology for assisted communication, assessment and work was purchased

Thanks to a donation from Johnson & Johnson, we are equipping a speech therapy office. With a donation from the Foundation New tomorrow, we are buying a Tomatis device and one professional person is being trained to work.

An education project was obtained as part of the Capacity Building Program for implementation assisted communications organized by UNICEF. As part of it, 4 Persons are educated Throughout the entire period of work, numerous lectures, round tables, training, as well as the departure of professional staff to various educations and programs, national symposia and various conferences.

Various events, distribution of packages and donations were organized for children.



❖ MEDIA APPEARANCES:

- Show "Croatia Live", Croatian Radio and Television 2:
- "Why are we together" Daily HR:
- "It's time to move on", Večernji list, T portal, IN portal, Civil society portal
- Vinkovci and Osijek Television, Glas Slavonije, Croatian Radio Vukovar, HRT2 – regional diary - PPD donation to "butterflies", video with Sandra Bagarić - Hand of Friendship, Croatian radio 2 - What are we proud of ?,
- Good morning Croatia, Show Provjereno Nove TV.
- <http://www.vukovarski-leptirici.hr/mediji/>

❖ OPEN DAYS:

Every year, twice a year, the Association has an open door for parents and anyone interested in order to inform and sensitize the entire local community. Those days, the Association spends activities such as presentation of the Association, sightseeing of the Association, consultation with the professional team of the Association, distribution of promotional materials, the invitation to volunteers and distribution of handicrafts made by members, professional lectures and sports activities.

❖ WORKSHOPS, LECTURES:

The association continuously strives to invest in the education of the professional team. Our experts participated in the following training: Brain Gym I and II degree (10), Marte Meo (10), sensory integration (2), Neurofeedback Practitioner I and Advanced Level (5), assisted communication with the assistance assistive technologies (12), Tomatis practitioner (3), ADOS diagnostic test (1), game therapy (3).



3. VISION AND MISSION

3.1. VISION

A society of equals and equal opportunities and social inclusion of children with disabilities in development.

3.2. MISSION

Ensure equal opportunities for quality living and meeting the health, educational and cultural needs of children with disabilities. Influence the promotion of human rights and the development of civil society through their actions.



4. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

4.1. HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

The association was launched as a parent initiative to protect the rights of children with disabilities with a social - humanitarian goal, which aims to help and improve quality of living of children with disabilities and their families.

As the Association grew numerically and organizationally and developed into an important partner in the local the community in the domain of this issue, so the profiles of certain people have been profiled activities in the Association and took on the implementation of program tasks such as participation in public life, communication with the media, organizing events, humanitarian action and donation.

Motives of parents' actions are different, from the desire to help children in solving their problems to participation in society and self-actualization.

Development of professional staff comes from two directions: the direction of professional and team challenges posed by the Association with its organizational structure and the number and type of rehabilitation procedures, opportunities for additional education and training in the field of rehabilitation of children with disabilities in development.

4.2. METHODS OF FUNDING funds

Sources and ways of raising funds needed to implement the Association's program through the set goals are realized in the form of humanitarian actions, donations, projects and membership fees. The Association obtains funding sources through its own revenues, local budgets of the County and City, funds from the State Budget and lottery funds, EU funds and occasional sources funding (eg humanitarian actions, sponsorships, etc.).

All these sources are insufficient, and on the other hand, the inflow of these funds is discontinuous. Volatility and discontinuity of revenues affect the more difficult implementation of the planned program and organizational tasks.

As a social service provider with the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Affairs policy we have a multi-year contract. However, these funds are insufficient and in the provision of social services, we are faced with the challenge of achieving financial sustainability. We provide other services and activities for users on a project basis, which means that we adjust and harmonize with the tender conditions of different donors, which are uncertain source support - tenders are not published in accordance with the plan of their announcement,



the decision on tenders are several months late and projects start later than planned, which leads to discontinuity in providing services to customers in need. One of the solutions we see this problem in the diversification of financial resources through the search for other sources financing ("crowdfunding", economic activity).

4.3. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Aware of the importance of the communication component with the stakeholders of the association as well as the public, the Association

seeks to communicate through a variety of communication channels with an emphasis on media and programming activities in the local community. As models and a way of communication or presentation its work to the local community, the Association has its own website, organizes events, open doors day, a stand selling souvenirs of their own making.

- **External communication**

The association develops cooperation with local media as well as state media through appearances in thematic programs and informative shows on radio and television, as well as regular ones by reporting to the print media on activities and humanitarian actions.

- **Internal communication**

A regularly updated website, bulletin board, social media groups and circular mail is used as a model of internal communication.



4.4. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The association strives to ensure the quality and transparency of all activities that Association does as well as act in a timely manner to remedy the problem. Special attention is paid to the analysis:

- *Purposefulness of the structure and functionality of the work of the Association*
- *Influence by various factors on the implementation of quality policy and strategic goals*
- *Transparency of the whole system*
- *The most efficient use of the Association's resources*
- *Involvement of all stakeholders in the system*
- *Connection with the local community*
- *Approval, monitoring and evaluation of implemented programs in the Association*
- *Creating and updating weekly, monthly and annual operational plans*
- *Encouragement and realization of continuous professional education*
- *Drafting rulebooks and other by-laws to improve transparency*
- *Keeping records and reports*
- *Conducting a parent survey on satisfaction and suggestions for improving work*
- *Evaluation of professional work through the publication of professional and scientific papers of experts in Association*
- *Improving and enhancing communication and quality of information of all stakeholders of the Association*

The course of implementation of the plans will be monitored by the Board of Directors of the Association at regular sessions during the year.

The monitoring and evaluation process will be organized quarterly at the Steering Committee meetings.

The quarterly evaluation process will include a programmatic and organizational aspect with the aim of the analysis of the reports and taking corrective action.



5. PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

In order to ensure the preconditions and examples for achieving the goals, it is necessary to cooperate with stakeholders from the public, business and civil sectors, but also cooperation with the academic community.

The roles of stakeholders in the activities of the Association are often intertwined, so the importance of cooperation described according to a particular group of civil society organizations and international organizations to upgrade the quality of their projects and programs and create synergies their influences, both in advocacy activities and in all other activities. Associations will actively cooperate with long-term partners:

- ✓ *Association of Disabled Workers VUKA*
- ✓ *UZOSIO Dove*
- ✓ *Association of Fr. Mladen Hrkać Zagreb*
- ✓ *Society of our children Vukovar*
- ✓ *Golden Days Shield*
- ✓ *Association Down Syndrome Osijek*
- ✓ *Guide Dog Association*
- ✓ *OSIce Alliance*
- ✓ *Equestrian Club "Danube Paradise"*
- ✓ *Association Small House Petrinja*
- ✓ *PUŽ Zagreb*
- ✓ *UNICEF*

In the next strategic period, the Association will additionally work on capacity sustainability, the structure of the networks in which it participates and the building of new partnerships.

Strategic plan for period 2020 - 2025.



Representatives of local government and public institutions in the coming period the Association wants to strengthen cross-sectoral partnerships at the local level by establishing a model of cooperation through professional platforms and structured dialogue between civil society organizations and local government, especially in the area of policymaking and monitoring and anti-discrimination at the local level.

- ❖ *City of Vukovar*
- ❖ *Vukovar-Srijem County*
- ❖ *Sports facilities Vukovar*
- ❖ *Centres for social care from Vukovar-Srijem and Osijek-Baranja counties*
- ❖ *Development Agency VURA Vukovar*
- ❖ *Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy*
- ❖ *Ministry of Science and Education*
- ❖ *Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities and Specialized Ombudspersons - related to the implementation of anti-discrimination policy and promotion and protection of the rights of children with disabilities in development, the Association will report on the existence of illegalities and irregularities in the work of state bodies, bodies of local and regional self-government units and legal entities with public powers. In addition to the above, the anti-discrimination policy from the above will be followed areas.*
- ❖ *Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities*
- ❖ *Ombudsman for Children*
- ❖ *Ombudsman*
- ❖ *Gender Equality Ombudsperson*

Primary and secondary schools and higher education institutions - in the implementation of educational activities, lectures, workshops and the promotion and development of volunteering The Association has been successful so far cooperated with educational institutions in the Vukovar-Srijem and Osijek Baranja County, which plans to continue in the future.

- ❖ *primary and secondary schools from the area of the city of Vukovar*
- ❖ *Kindergarten Vukovar 1 and 2*
- ❖ *Polytechnic "Lavoslav Ružička"*
- ❖ *Faculty of Medicine in Osijek*
- ❖ *Faculty of Education in Osijek*

STAKEHOLDERS: CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, PARENTS



6. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

6.1. DATA ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

According to the data from the Report on Persons with Disabilities of the Croatian Institute of Public Health, 511281 persons with disabilities live in Croatia, of which 307647 are men (60%) and 203634 are women (40%), and thus persons with disabilities make up about 12.4% of the total population of the Republic of Croatia on May 3, 2019).

The largest number of people with disabilities, 248389 (49%), is in the age group 65+ while 217578 (42%) persons in working age (20-64 years). A person with a disability aged 0-19 year is 45314 (28451 males and 16863 females), which is a share of 9%. The most common types impairments in persons with disabilities, based on the Croatian Register of Persons with Disabilities Act disability (NN64 / 01), are damage to the locomotor system and damage to other organs.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the provision of Art. 26. pays special attention training and rehabilitation which obliges States Parties to take effective action and appropriate measures, to enable persons with disabilities to acquire and maintain the greatest possible independence and full physical, mental, social and professional ability, as well as full involvement and participation in all areas of life.

6.2. DATA ANALYSIS IN VUKOVAR-SRIJEM COUNTY

According to the report, a total of 16,431 people live in Vukovar-Srijem County disability of which 10,966 are men (67%) and 5,465 women (33%) (Table 1) and thus persons with disabilities make up 10.3% of the total population of the county. Most people with disability, 8318 of them (51%), are inactive working age. From Table 1. Disability is present in all age groups and in 9% share it is also present in children, 0-19 years, ie 1536 (951 males and 585 females) aged 0-19 years.

The most common types of damage in people with disabilities from the Vukovar-Srijem area counties, on the basis of the Croatian Register of Persons with Disabilities Act (OG 64/01), are mental impairment and damage to the locomotor system. According to the Decision on the classification of local and regional self-government units according to the degree of development Vukovar-Srijem County is in group I, since according to index values are found in the second half of the below-average ranked regional units (regional) self-government. The city of Vukovar is in the IV group of local self-government units because it is in the first quarter of below-average local government units.

Strategic plan for period 2020 - 2025.



The geographical position of the county, which makes it relatively isolated from the others Counties in the Republic of Croatia, difficult economic situation, the impossibility of hiring professional staff, resulted in the fact that parents were forced to take away their children despite their more difficult social status outside the place of residence to various therapies to ensure quality and professional work with them. In the area of VSC, there is an increased rate of risk of poverty compared to 2012. a year and reducing the living standards of the population.

The system of providing specific care for children with disabilities is insufficiently developed persons with disabilities as well as the mechanisms of action of civil society in the function of social welfare (non - existence of a register of social users, lack of networking and existence of a database data from other social stakeholders, such as civil society organizations).

- ❖ *Development needs of VSC in the field of social welfare are numerous, among which is the improvement of social service standards and creating a single database of system users with the implementation of standard quality, prevention of institutionalization of persons with disabilities and development and promotion foster care.*

In the area of social service delivery, the emphasis is on development extra-institutional care and the provision of new forms of social services.

Strategic goal 2. Developed human resources and high quality of life; Priority 2.3. Development of social cohesion; Measures; 2.3.2. Improving social services for vulnerable groups in society; 2.3.3. Design and implementation of programs for children, youth and the elderly Development strategy of Vukovar-Srijem County for the period until 2020.

Poverty and social exclusion are a reality for a growing number of Croatian citizens in particular vulnerable social groups eg people with disabilities, children, unemployed, beneficiaries from the social welfare system.

The Vukovar Butterflies Association operates in an area directly affected by the war and therefore has the status of an Area of Special State Concern - the first group.



6.3. REPORTS

❖ **Ombudsman for Children**

The Ombudsperson for Children in her Work Report for 2018 points out that they have a long line of reporting violations of the rights of children with disabilities most prevalent in the area preschool education, in the field of providing support for children insight kindergarten assistants and teaching assistants / professional communication mediators, scope the child's stay in kindergarten, and the implementation of an appropriate schooling program. In the system preschool education, there are still difficulties in providing a variety of support models for children with disabilities, as well as early intervention services.

The Ombudsman for Children has been on several occasions in the past period due to the absence of an early intervention made recommendations for resolving individual cases and general recommendations for changes in the system.

❖ **Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities**

The total number of children in kindergartens in 2018 is 153,933, and the number of children with disabilities in kindergartens in the Republic of Croatia who has exercised the right to co-financing in accordance with Art. 50 of the Law on Preschool Education and education is 2192, of which 1564 children are in integration, and in special educational. The group included 628 children with disabilities. 272 children with disabilities were integrated into kindergartens, and 356 children in programs at centres for the upbringing and education of children with difficulties (MZO Data 2018).

The Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities complains about the parents of children with disabilities when they do not receive equal treatment, support and access to the child's needs. Complaints related to the inability to enrol in kindergarten or longer waiting for enrollment, the quality of work of employees and attitude towards the child with developmental disabilities and reasonable adjustment to the child's needs.

According to the report in the school year 2017/2018. primary school education and education was provided in 905 primary schools with regular and special programs for children with difficulty. In primary schools with regular and special programs, classes were attended 23,627 students with disabilities (7.37% of primary school students). Most students with disabilities (19,933) attend classes according to the regular program and in special one's conditions (236), in smaller classrooms (71) or is integrated into regular classrooms and is educated according to the regular program with individualized procedures (10,733) and full-time program with content adjustment and individualized procedures (8,899 students or 33.76). MZO data, 2018)



The reality is that there is a small coverage of children with the existing early intervention service from the system social welfare, lack of service providers and trained professionals; existing services they are emphatically provided outside the natural environment of children, they are emphatically therapeutic according to the medical model instead of support aimed at the child and parents and others.

6.4. TRENDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The work of the Vukovar Butterflies Association is based on enabling social inclusion and equal

opportunities for children with disabilities, and is based on strategic documents Of the Republic of Croatia as the UN Convention on Human Rights, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with a disability, the National Action Plan for the Rights and Interests of Children and the National equal opportunities strategy for people with disabilities since 2007.

The Vukovar Butterflies Association contributes to the development of complementary and alternative social services (therapy) aimed at meeting the specific needs of children with disabilities under development. This is in line with the objectives of the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Affairs policy and the recently published Strategy for the Development of the Social Welfare System in which emphasizes the role of NGOs as service providers.

The Vukovar Butterflies Association is the only association in the Vukovar-Srijem County which bases its work on improving the medical and social care of children with disabilities in development and accordingly plans, organizes and implements activities.

As such, it has a strong impact on the development of local community sensibility for recognition and importance of including children with disabilities in all segments of social and public life

By implementing highly educated professional staff in its work, the Association wants to emphasize the importance of continuous rehabilitation by creating the most favourable environment for children with developmental difficulties.

The recognizability of the quality of the association's work can be seen through the number of children involved, positive results of organized therapies and monitoring and support from City Administration of the City of Vukovar and Vukovar-Srijem County. In the Republic of Croatia, great challenges can be identified in working with children with disabilities in development. These challenges are a direct consequence of the Homeland War and the transition period, a deepened by the growing economic crisis, the steady rise in the unemployment rate, growing social insecurity, impoverishment, and borrowing and emigration in large part citizens burdened with meeting basic existential needs.



6.5. SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secured space for the playroom, equipped playroom with didactic equipment ▪ Secured space for individual therapies ▪ Secured own means of transport for needs ▪ Associations and members ▪ Beneficiaries involved in regular therapies in the Association ▪ Continuous involvement of beneficiary parents in regular work of the association ▪ Long-term cooperation with Lavoslav Polytechnic ▪ Ruzicka from Vukovar ▪ Cooperation with related associations at the local and national level ▪ Quality asset management of the Association ▪ Initiated cooperation with local government (Grad Vukovar, Vukovar-Srijem County) ▪ Developed user information system ▪ Vehicle owned by the association ▪ A professional team that is continuously educated ▪ External expert associates ▪ Teamwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of professional staff to work with children with disabilities ▪ Insufficient sources of funding from the departments ▪ Ministries ▪ Discontinuity of funding ▪ Insufficient cooperation with educational institutions (Kindergartens, Elementary schools) ▪ Insufficient financial resources for technical assistance and staff education
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognized image of the Association as an important partner in providing social and rehabilitation services to children with disabilities ▪ Support and understanding of the local community ▪ The great need for this service profile (lack of services in regular programs) ▪ Possibility to apply for departmental tenders ▪ ministries and to larger tenders ▪ Continuity in improving cooperation between the Association and entire local communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Difficulty finding the right shot at the area of the county ▪ Failure to fulfil local legal obligations community and relevant ministries related to the rights needs of children with disabilities ▪ Slowness in the implementation of reform processes in the system social welfare, educational institutions and health ▪ Insufficient availability of necessary content for children from rural area



7. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUPPORT IN EXERCISING THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Specific objective:

1.1. Support for the integration of children with disabilities into the regular education system

Implementation activities:

1.1.1. Promote and encourage the engagement of teaching assistants, ie the third educators in all schools, ie preschool education for children with disabilities in development and people with disabilities

1.1.2. Provide a half-day stay and playrooms in the Association and exchange of experiences with employees of the education and kindergarten system

1.1.3. Develop and advocate for the improvement of laws, legal practices, strategies, ordinances and other documents important for the improvement of the existing system

1.1.4. Propose representatives of the Association to committees and working groups that decide on rights and ways of exercising the rights of children with disabilities and persons with disability in local self-government units.

Specific objective:

1.2. Support in exercising the rights of children with disabilities and persons with disabilities and their family.

Implementation activities:

1.2.1. Ensure the continuous provision of social services for children with disabilities through professional therapeutic work

1.2.2. Advocate for the rights and needs of children with disabilities and people with disability towards the competent authorities

1.2.3. Contribute to improving the implementation of a comprehensive anti-discrimination policy monitoring trends and problems in the area of implementation and advocating for change and improvements

1.2.4. Continuously inform parents by publishing educational texts through



websites in the field of legal legislation of children with disabilities and persons with disability, organizing thematic lectures - lawyers and social services in Association.

1.2.5. *Start implementing a regular counselling and psychological support program for the family*

1.2.6. *Develop cooperation with civil society organizations*

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: TO PROVIDE AND IMPLEMENT PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND EARLY INTERVENTION AND REHABILITATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL THERAPIES.

Specific objective:

2.1. Providing and continuous development of social services for children with disabilities

Implementation activities:

2.1.1. *Provide habilitation care according to the principles of effectiveness, timeliness and efficiency, when the problem is recognized and without unnecessary waiting*

2.1.2. *Contribute to improving the availability and accessibility of health care vulnerable groups of the population while ensuring quality standards*

2.1.3. *Cooperate with experts from higher education institutions in the field of habilitation through the development and evaluation of professional work and visibility in the professional community*

2.1.4. *Continuously strengthen the capacities of the expert team*

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: DEVELOPMENT OF VOLUNTEERING

Specific objective:

3.1. Promote volunteering and expand the network of volunteers

Implementation activities:

3.1.1. *Present the possibility and model of volunteering to the target population of volunteers*



Association

3.1.2. *Through participation in various conferences, seminars, lectures, present the work of volunteers, importance, educations, congresses, round tables, etc.*

volunteering and the volunteering model in the Association

3.1.3. *Promote volunteering and a culture of volunteering to the general public*

3.1.4. *Expand the network of volunteers and associates*

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Specific objective:

4.1. *Empowering the capacity of the Association*

Implementation activities:

4.1.1. *Ensure financial and organizational stability*

4.1.2. *Encourage the application of modern technologies to improve performance in applying acquired knowledge, skills and competencies*

4.1.3. *Continuously educate existing employees; employ persons with specific knowledge and skills*

4.1.4. *Ensure visibility in public - build recognition*



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We will monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan by analyzing the implementation of operational annual plans (final evaluation at the end of each year) and realization of planned activities, projects and program. On a monthly basis, we will monitor through regular team meetings. Members work teams will report on the results achieved, the problems that have occurred and in accordingly, future plans to the Assembly of the Association. The evaluation will be done through a report and insight into the implemented Operational Plan for each year. Evaluation and evaluation of results work will be for each individual project that will meet the strategic objectives. Board of Directors assesses the success of the implementation of the Operational or Strategic Plan.

The strategic plan will be considered achieved if most of the strategic goals are met.

The main goal is to achieve progress at management and executive levels, identifying weaknesses and realizing opportunities.

