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CONCEPT NOTE

Innovative measures of cities to support disadvantaged population groups

Side-event to the 57th Commission for Social Development 2018,

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Time: Wednesday 13 February 2019, 09:45

Location: UNH Conference Room 12

Co-organized by: Swiss Ministry for Social Affairs (FSIO), Council of Europe (Department of Youth)

Background:

Providing social support does not guarantee that the whole target population is covered. This is true for government benefits as well as for private assistance. It's not just a local issue because the outcome of regional and national programs depend from the effectiveness of implemented measures. But local stakeholders, public and private, are at the forefront and their employees are aware of this problem.

Decentralised bodies often take a more pragmatic approach. This is important because access to rights has a strong personal dimension. While most persons are able to express their needs, find the competent authority and apply for benefits, such actions are often out of reach for the most vulnerable: homeless children, out-of-school leavers from disrupted families, women in distress, single-parent families with very low income, isolated migrants. They lack the necessary skills, have a precarious residence status, suffer trauma or cannot turn for assistance to anybody around

Practices have developed over decades through community centers, outreach work or social street work. Social street work in particular is a very interesting approach that requires special skills. Various experiences show that people unaware of their entitlement to services, who don't know how it works or just in the process of becoming marginalized receive appropriate and efficient assistance through social street work. This is the case for example of out-of-school young people or children in the street.

Objective

The meeting offers the possibility to illustrate practices for facilitating the contact with out-of-reach people in need of assistance, in particular young people and children. The accessibility of services to vulnerable people is a challenge all over the world. Promising methods, especially street social work, implemented in very different countries will be presented. The meeting will give the opportunity to exchange views and to discuss what conditions are required to offer a second chance to those who fall through the social net.

Programme

- 09:45 – 09:50 - **Stephan Cueni**, Ambassador, Vice-director, Swiss Federal Social Insurance Office
- 09:50 – 10:05 - How do we reach vulnerable people? Experiences from some Swiss Cities
- **Julia Imfeld**, Project Coordinator, Swiss Union of Cities and Towns
- 10:05 – 10:20 - Social work with street youth in a medium-sized city (the case of Renens)
- **David Burnier**, Street Social Worker, City of Renens, West Switzerland
- 10:20 – 10:30 - How Social street workers operate around the world
- **Edwin de Boeve**, Dynamo International, Street Workers Network *Video*
- 10:30 – 10:35 - Social work with street children in Haïti *Interview*
- **Dady Isidor**, Street Social Worker, Foundation Tetkole, Haïti interviewed by Bernadette Groesmans, Dynamo international
- 10:35 – 10:45 - Youth actions supported by the Council of Europe
- **Rui Gomes & Humaira Aleefi** , Council of Europe, Youth department *Video*
- 10:45 – 11:00 - Debate

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