

# HOW HAVE WE SUCCEEDED, OR WHY ARE WE DOING AN EVALUATION NOW?

EVALUATION REPORT ON THE WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION OF THE  
MUNICIPALITY OF SVETI NIKOLE  
(For the period: 1998-2004)



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## 1. Summary

**1.1 Organizational context:** The WOM Sveti Nikole has been operating since 1990, and was re-registered in 1998, under the new Law on Associations and Foundations. The WOM Sveti Nikole is the most important women's NGO in eastern Macedonia and is a member of various NGO networks on the national level. The WOM Sveti Nikole scope of work combines raising consciousness of women, education, information sharing, and advocacy activities in partnership with other NGOs, local communities, and state institutions, which all have been followed by and presented in media.

**1.2 Evaluation process:** This process relates to the evaluation of the Health Program implementation and the organization's performance: organizational processes and results, cooperation with others, and guidelines for future. It covers the period from 1998 until 2004. The evaluation was composed and carried out by the external evaluators, Natasa Milenkovic and Aferdita Haxhijaha Imeri.

**1.3 Specific goals of this evaluation are:**

- Evaluation of WOM Sveti Nikole efficiency, in terms of the set against achieved goals;
- Evaluation of implemented activities and their correspondence to the set goals;
- Evaluation of the contribution and competence of the managing structure engaged in the project implementation.

**1.4 Methodology:** The external evaluators in cooperation with the organization management have created an evaluation plan and development matrix of the WOM Sveti Nikole. The main meeting related to the agreement on this evaluation was held with the members of the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee, which agreed that the evaluation should encompass six different points of view presented by: 1. the Health program direct beneficiaries; 2. the organization members in various roles, 3. members of other NGOs; 4. representatives of local and national institutions; 5. local media employees; 6. donors' staff. The evaluation process included 18 interviews, five focus groups, and one workshop. In addition, it included a survey covering 30% of the direct beneficiaries and 30% of the women who did not participate in the health program. The total of 400 people contributed to the evaluation in many different ways. Evaluation activities were carried out in the municipalities of Sveti Nikole and Skopje.

### 1.5 Health program

*Findings:* This program started with lectures for direct beneficiaries in rural areas, combined with free gynecological checkups, and reached the level of advocacy activities seeking amendments to the Law on Healthcare to introduce free gynecological checkups, which at the same time is the greatest achievement of the organization and its strongest impact on the public life. The Health program is carried out through workshops, free gynecological checkups, self-help group, and various advocacy activities. One of the major successes of this program is combining the work for the most directly endangered (self-help group for women suffering from cancer) through creation of a network of women NGOs dealing with health projects, cooperation with local and state institutions, and all the way to amending the Law on Healthcare.

*Main recommendations related to the Health program:*

- Start initiatives at local level together with other NGOs, relevant professionals, and local self-government, related to monitoring the pollution and changing the water supply infrastructure in the town;

- Find the most adequate way to start a Self-help Centre for women suffering from cancer;
- Ensure better mapping of women's needs by each village;
- Improve communication and cooperation with gynecologists from the Health Centre in Sveti Nikole;
- Organize regular press conferences on the state level.

### **1.6 Lectures and workshops**

*Findings:* Attendance of beneficiaries at lectures and workshops was large in 13 villages and three towns where these activities were held. Workshops, as an interactive form of experiential learning, were introduced after three years of lectures. These basic activities help in maintaining permanent change in women's lives, that is, regular gynecological checkups. The importance of novelties introduced in the work context include visits to villages, which is done by a small number of NGOs, and the work with the most socially marginalized population, that is, rural women. Apart from rural women, this program also includes young women, which is also important, because they are a vulnerable segment of the population. All educational activities contribute to a better level of informing and thereby help raise women's consciousness of the need for regular gynecological checkups.

#### Main recommendations for future educational activities:

- Maintain what was good in the approach such as: form (workshops), beneficiaries (rural women) and educators;
- Pursue the work and design specialized health programs for young women, who have been sporadically worked with so far.

### **1.7 Free gynecological checkups**

*Findings:* This form of activity was combined with lectures/workshops and as such, represents a mixture of theory (educational activities) and practice (checkups). The most important benefit of free gynecological checkups was the opportunity for rural women to see a gynecologist, which they otherwise do very rarely and irregularly. This activity has also contributed to networking on the local level.

#### Main recommendations related to free gynecological checkups:

- Engage as many as possible women with poor education, from both, rural and town areas;
- Plan an annual one-day campaign every March, as the month of combating cancer, with the aim to remind women of the need for a regular checkup. It is necessary to ensure that this campaign is covered by local and national media.

### **1.8 Self-help group**

*Findings:* The Self-help group for women suffering from cancer in Sveti Nikole comprises 14 members. The main values of this activity include full support, empowering women suffering from cancer, and high level of confidentiality guaranteed.

#### Main recommendations related to self-help group future activities:

- Continue cooperation with Violeta Tomovska, who is a role model to the women in this group;
- Make a list of doctors, with whom the self-help group members have had problems,

and make their names available to other women suffering from cancer;

- Use and expand the social network (through professional and personal contacts), which WOM Sveti Nikole members have, in order to be able to efficiently and swiftly organize unplanned but necessary checkups for women from the self-help group.

### **1.9 Campaign and lobbying**

*Findings:* Campaign and lobbying for the Amendment seeking the introduction of free gynecological checkups under the Law on Healthcare in the Republic of Macedonia was first mentioned at an evaluation workshop of the WOM Sveti Nikole, and was externally facilitated during the summer of 2002. After the workshop, the organization composed a detailed and precise plan of campaigning and lobbying, and strict adherence to this plan is one of the key achievements of these advocacy activities.

**Main success of the WOM Sveti Nikole and its Health program is the adoption of the Amendment on free of charge gynecological checkups in the Macedonian Parliament on February 25, 2004.**

*Main recommendations related to campaign and lobbying:*

- Draft an action plan for 2005, related to monitoring the implementation of the Amendment. For this purpose, it is necessary to define a precise financial construction based on the total number of women aged from 18 years up without health insurance in the Republic of Macedonia;
- The network is suggested to continue work only with organizations which are motivated and have enough independent capacity to carry out future work on the health program within their own local context.

### **1.10 Survey results: views of beneficiary vs. non beneficiary participants**

*Findings:* The survey was conducted on a sample of 163 direct beneficiaries, or 30% of the health program participants, and 168 women from the control group, who are not beneficiaries of the health program. The survey was carried out in 10 villages and the town of Sveti Nikole, with the goal to show similarities and differences between women who attended lectures/workshops and went for a free gynecological checkup, and women who did not participate in projects. The survey results show that: i) the major problem of women in the town of Sveti Nikole is poverty; ii) educational activities were mostly attended by women with elementary and high school education aged between 20 and 50 years; iii) women between 30 and 60 years showed up in the largest number for free gynecological checkups.

*Main recommendations for future work with direct beneficiaries:*

- Ensure better and timely information to all potential beneficiaries in rural areas;
- Special attention should be paid to women with the lowest educational background and engage them as much as possible;
- This type of work (workshops and free checkups) should be pursued in the future;
- Activities should address women in the villages of the municipality of Sveti Nikole, especially the women who have not participated in the health program so far.

### 1.11 Promotional and educational materials of the Health program

*Findings:* Promotional and educational materials include leaflets and brochures. They are all written in an easy understandable language for wider population.

*Main recommendations on how to improve promotional and educational material:*

- Include a larger number of charts, drawings, and pictures, and balance them with the text;
- It is recommended to find a new printing house, which will ensure the same printing standards for all publications of the WOM Sveti Nikole.

### 1.12 Evaluation of the organization

*Findings:* Evaluation of the organization deals with processes, results, and the WOM Sveti Nikole relations with others, including the general population. In addition to the health program, the WOM Sveti Nikole is also engaged in the youth program through the Babylon Centre, and is also developing a legal team. The organization cherishes solidarity, persistence, honesty, dedication, commitment, and efficiency as its major values and also encourages motivation of new comers and old members. Thanks to its development capacity and open attitude to learning, the WOM Sveti Nikole stands for an organization which can grow fine and very quickly and thereby strengthen its professional aspect. From a basic level where all members performed all activities, the WOM Sveti Nikole has reached a point, where specialized teams deal with specific social problems. Relations within the organization have boosted considerably as all members are proud of their success, which has consequentially increased confidence and enthusiasm for future work. Actualization and continuation of work on gender issues help others understand specific problems of women.

*Main recommendations for future development of the organization:*

- The prime and crucial aspect is strategic planning and development of systems for monitoring (including media) and evaluation during strategic planning.

### 1.13 Organizational processes

*Findings:* The organization's mission include: "Improving the situation of women in all spheres of life, including emancipation and gender equality, health education and protection of women, as a prevention measure through various forms, lectures and checkups, providing all types of aid (legal, social etc), human rights/women's rights with a special emphasis on violence against women and children, work with children and youth as well as general population." The organization has approximately 500 members of various educational, age, economic, social, and ethnic background. There are 30 voluntaries working in the organization. The organization consists of the General Assembly, the Managing Board, the Supervising Committee, the president, and the vice president. The structure has changed several times since the organization was founded, implying that the organization has monitored its changes and has adjusted organizational processes to its development. The WOM Sveti Nikole has established mentor work intended for new members. Constant mobilization and motivation of young women intellectuals and those in managing positions, have resulted in consistent development of organizational capacities.

*Main recommendations related to organizational processes:*

- Mission needs to be revised, while the general aims of the organization, specific project goals, and objectives of individual activities need to be articulated;

- Vision should be defined;
- Advisory Council should be founded;
- Design and define Policy Manual, which should include all necessary procedures related to operations of the organization.

### **1.14 Organizational results**

*Findings:* Everyday activities and efforts of the WOM Sveti Nikole show persistence, commitment, development capacity, and professionalism. The organization has earned a distinguished reputation on the national level thanks to the campaign entitled "Do not turn your head away." Organizational results can still be seen through the well organized team work in various programs and good communication and relation with the permanent donor (Kvinna till Kvinna). Good practice of printing the annual report introduced in 2003, and its distribution in public is especially successful for its financial transparency.

#### Main recommendations related to the organizational results:

- Strengthen organizational capacities in all teams: in project proposal writing through supplying literature and exchange of the already existing knowledge (a permanent staff member and the organization president); learning English; taking computer courses, and maintaining permanent communication with donors present in the Republic of Macedonia.

### **1.15 Cooperation and communication with other NGOs, institutions, and general population**

*Findings:* The WOM Sveti Nikole proactive and cooperative approach to other NGOs and institutions on the local level is impressive, while on the other side it lacks a proactive approach to institutions on the national level and donors. Work efficiency and quality content material has established solid grounds for cooperation with the national NGOs. Press conferences have showed that a solid planning system along with a professionally designed campaign conducted in national media, lead to establishing a well-known name nationwide and promoting the ideas among professionals but also in general public.

#### Main recommendations for cooperation with other NGOs and public:

- Existing collaboration with the most active NGOs in the town of Sveti Nikole should be used and upgraded through coordination and development of joint activities on the local level;
  - In the light of future monitoring of the law implementation, the WOM Sveti Nikole should maintain its presence in national media;
  - Increase the distribution of the printed version of the annual report, by delivering it to partner NGOs from Skopje, the network members, local coordinators in rural areas, and donors.

### **1.16 Guidelines for future**

*Findings:* Planning the organization's future work brings out different perspectives, which each in its own way, contributes to the organization's existing development line. Active members of WOM Sveti Nikole have demonstrated interest in the following fields of work: youth program, Self-help Centre for women suffering from cancer, Centre for free legal aid, and SOS telephone for women - victims of domestic violence.



Main recommendations for future:

- Strategic planning;
- Future plans to incorporate needs of beneficiaries (rural women) pertaining to health education, and organizing English language and computer courses;
- Great achievements in 2004 to be used for fundraising from other donors and pursue efforts towards strengthening the organizational capacity in the next two years.

**1.17 Principal recommendation to the permanent donor:**

• Support the organizational development of the WOM Sveti Nikole over the next two to three years, as it is one of the necessary conditions for the organization's further development. The support also means to approve finances for everything necessary for strategic planning for this and next year, no matter whether certain expenditures were included in the draft budget, as it is always possible to revise the budget. Strategic planning requires the engagement of an external consultant, and we recommend that the selection be made by the WOM Sveti Nikole.

## Introduction

This evaluation report is composed based on consultations with members of the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee of the WOM Sveti Nikole, who are directly engaged in the implementation of various organization's projects, and were familiar with the draft report, which was discussed at the evaluation workshop on January 5, 2005.

The report contains the evaluations of the Health Program and the organization itself for the period from 1998 until 2004. The report contains a summary of key findings and recommendations; organizational context overview; evaluation process and specific goals description; methodology explanation; overview of evaluation findings, achievements, and recommendations classified by the Health Program main activities, organizational processes, results, cooperation with other NGOs and institutions, and guidelines for future; main achievements and recommendations of the Health Program and the organization itself are presented in the conclusions.

The WOM Sveti Nikole development matrix is attached s an **Annex 1** to the report.

The final evaluation report is a joint effort of the two external evaluators, and is based on comments by members of the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee of the WOM Sveti Nikole. The report is written in Serbian and Macedonian languages, the native and working languages of the two evaluators. As per the agreement between the evaluators and the WOM Sveti Nikole, the report and appendixes are to be translated into Macedonian, while only the report is to be translated into English. It is suggested that the report be delivered to all who participated in the evaluation and be posted on the organization web page, for its wide use.

## 2. Organizational context

The WOM Sveti Nikole commenced its work in 1990, and has since represented continuity of women's organizing in the municipality. The WOM Sveti Nikole is a member of the Organization of the Women's Organizations in Macedonia (hereinafter OWOM) which is the legal successor of the first Macedonian women's association, founded in 1944, known as the Women's Anti-Fascism Movement.

The municipality center is in the town of Sveti Nikole, which has 14,000 inhabitants, of whom 90% are Macedonians and 10% are of other ethnic background: Roma, Turks, and Vlachs. Agriculture is the main economic branch in the municipality, but there are also certain food and textile industries.

Unemployment rate, counting 45% jobless, is considered to be very high. Other municipality problems include inadequate work conditions, minimum salaries, unregulated social insurance, and problems with drinking water, which contains high aluminum percentage and water pipes containing asbestos.

Given the forehead mentioned, it is easy to understand why the WOM Sveti Nikole invests great efforts to combat the current problems, through projects in the field of women's health, with special focus on malignant diseases, legislation, women's human rights, work with youth through Babylon Center etc.

Women's Organization of the Municipality of Sveti Nikole in figures	
<b>Raising consciousness</b>	
500 members (30 active volunteers)	
Health education for 643 beneficiaries 545 from the municipality of Sveti Nikole 98 from the municipality of Lozovo	
Free gynecological checkups for 660 women - 159 referred to further medical treatment	
Publications: 6,900 brochures      3,460 posters      21,000 leaflets	
Self-help group comprising 14 women suffering from malignant diseases	
	<b>Education</b>
	2 trainings for 28 doctors and psychologists to become trainers of workshops for early detection of breast and uterus cancer
	2 bulletins in 700 copies, total: 1,400 copies
	Women's reproductive health education related to early detection of breast and uterus cancer. 36 lectures      56 workshops
<b>Advocacy</b>	
Network of 18 women's NGOs for joint advocacy and lobbying for adoption of the Amendment seeking introduction of regular gynecological checkups	
1 Amendment was composed and submitted to the Parliament, which adopted it and included in the Law on Healthcare	
Total number of round tables: 23 7 round tables in 2001 devoted to need of assessment of initiating the introduction of free gynecological checkups 16 round tables in 2003, devoted to draft Amendment seeking the introduction of regular gynecological checkups	
Survey was conducted with 3,020 women: 450, in 5 municipalities for reproductive health and malignant diseases 750, in 8 municipalities, more precisely for breast and uterus cancer and the necessity of introducing regular gynecological checkups 1820, in 19 municipalities, for breast and uterus cancer and on best methods to organize regular checkups for early detection of diseases	
3 press conferences devoted to Amendment submission and adoption	
15 billboards in Skopje	
1 web page	
1 TV clip	

### 3. Description of the evaluation process

The WOM Sveti Nikole planned and agreed this external evaluation with the external evaluators, Natasa Milenkovic and Aferdita Haxhijaha Imeri, in the autumn of 2003. External evaluation was financially approved by the permanent donator Kvinna till Kvinna (hereinafter KtK) as part of 2004 organizational activities. Besides holding several preliminary negotiations, the managers, evaluators, and members of the WOM Sveti Nikole Managing Board, also obtained and read an evaluation manual ("So evalucijata na TI" by a group of authors, QPSW Sarajevo, 2003), which helped in a better and deeper understanding of the term, and also the skills. The WOM Sveti Nikole elaborated Terms of Reference which was updated by the evaluators in cooperation with members of the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee. The evaluation refers to WOM Sveti Nikole activities in the period from 1998 until 2004, with the main focus on the Health Program and partly on the organization's work, while the rest of the projects implemented by the organization were not covered by this evaluation.

#### 3.1 Evaluation particular goals are<sup>[x1]</sup><sub>[x2]</sub>:

1. Evaluation of WOM Sveti Nikole efficiency, in terms of the set against achieved goals;
2. Evaluation of implemented activities and their correspondence to the set goals;
3. Evaluation of the contribution and competence of the managing structure engaged in the project implementation.

#### 3.2 Methodology

The evaluators have read the project proposals for the WOM Sveti Nikole health program for the period from 1998 to 2005 and annual reports, covering the period from 1998 to 2003, as well as two quarterly reports for 2004. They have also read WOM Sveti Nikole press clipping, the Statute of the organization, projects proposals (Self-help center for women suffering from breast and reproductive organs cancer, and Education and legal aid), the Amendment to the Healthcare Law seeking free gynecological checkups, adopted in the Macedonian Parliament and announced in the Official Gazette, No. 10, March 7, 2004, National Activity Plan for primary, secondary, and tertiary approach in prevention and treatment of noncontiguous diseases: breast cancer and WOM's Sveti Nikole promotional and educational material. The first meeting on mutual understanding of this evaluation was held with the Health Education Program coordinator, the WOM Sveti Nikole president, and certain members of the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee in October 2004. Further activities included the development chart of the WOM's Sveti Nikole health projects implemented in the period from 1998 to 2004, presented in **Annex 1**. In keeping with the evaluation goals and scope, it was agreed that interviews would be conducted with the following WOM's Sveti Nikole beneficiaries, members, and associates:

- beneficiaries of health projects;
- project educators;
- legal expert, who composed the draft Amendment;
- Managing Board and Supervising Committee members;
- local coordinators from five villages;
- representatives of 18 NGOs, members of the network;
- representatives of local and state institutions (outpatient's clinic, local Health Fund, and the Macedonian Parliament);
- representatives of local and national NGOs (the Civic Initiative of Women, the Environmental Association "Izgrevev", the Roma Association of Sveti Nikole, the Association for Emancipation, the Solidarity and Equality of Women in the Republic of Macedonia –

AESE, Antiko, the Macedonian Center for International Cooperation - MCIC<sup>1</sup>, and the NGO Info Center);

- representatives of local media (Radio Sveti Nikole);
- representatives of WOM Sveti Nikole donors (The Open Society Institute – Macedonia, and Kvinna till Kvinna - KtK).

The evaluators did not interview the Sveti Nikole mayor, the local Svet TV station manager, the MP who submitted the Amendment to the parliament, and the president of the Organization of Women's Organizations in Macedonia, because of their busy schedule, or their lack of understanding for the evaluation concept and interview purpose.

Two focus groups were held with health program beneficiaries along with a survey conducted on a sample of 163 women, or 30% of the Health Program direct beneficiaries. The survey also encompassed 168 women of the control group, who were not beneficiaries of the WOM's Sveti Nikole Health Program. It was conducted in 10 villages and the town of Sveti Nikole. The control group is by number of women polled and their background similar to the health program direct beneficiaries group. The health education program coordinator, who is a full-time employee with the organization, and the evaluators determined a sample and created the survey questionnaire for beneficiaries and control group. The survey was conducted by local coordinators in villages and WOM Sveti Nikole volunteers, while data entry was done by the WOM Sveti Nikole Managing Board. Data analyses was done by the evaluators.

The evaluators conducted 18 interviews, five focus groups, and one workshop. Evaluation activities took place in Sveti Nikole and Skopje.

The evaluators decided to conduct a survey with the beneficiaries and the control group as to get a clear profile of the actual situation and answers to the following questions: has education program produced long-term effects; has education program changed the health culture of the women who participated in the projects.

The interviews' structure facilitated efficient and qualitative recommendations and opinions from those who cooperate with the WOM Sveti Nikole (local and national institutions, NGOs, and donors), or those who are engaged in the health projects (educators, legal experts, and the Health Program manager).

Focus groups helped in meeting and hearing the beneficiaries (young women and self-help group for women suffering from cancer), Managing Board and Supervising Committee members, and local coordinators from four villages.

The Network evaluation workshop was attended by 12 organizations, which was their final activity for this year. It was an opportunity to share experience and tell the evaluators about their previous work and express their desires for future, and to overview individual capacities of each NGO and of the Network as a whole.

The final evaluation workshop, held on January 5, 2005 in the presence of Managing Board and Supervising Committee members, presented preliminary results of the evaluation and a draft final report. The goal of the workshop was to gather comments and feedback information from WOM Sveti Nikole members.

The evaluation was made possible thanks to the contribution from 400 individuals, which is a quite an impressive number considering the time and budget limits, and also to the great deal of volunteer engagement on the side of the WOM Sveti Nikole.

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<sup>1</sup> MCIC also appears as a donor, but since it deals more with training related programs, it is classified as a NGO.

## 4. Health Program

### Findings:

The WOM Sveti Nikole development matrix shows the following: the Health Program was launched in 1998 with the project entitled "Education of women from rural areas in the municipality of Sveti Nikole about malignant diseases." Health projects have been maintained since. In addition to lectures about malignant diseases, consequent psychological traumas, and the families' approach to their ill members, women were offered free gynecological checkups. Certain health projects dealt with contraception and sexual education and were mainly intended for young women.

WOM Sveti Nikole health projects were financed by four donors: Star Delphi International, MCIC, The Open Society Institute – Macedonia, and KtK.

The 1998 Health Program budget was 2,744 German Marks and the 2004 budget was EUR 28,038.

Since the WOM Sveti Nikole, as an organization, has not done any strategic planning, its project proposals focus on activities' description, while the development matrix shows unclearly defined projects' goals. From 1998 to 2001, project proposals did not include goals at all, while those composed since 2001, include goals, but they are defined from a long-term and general aspect, and being such, they hardly follow project activities. In addition, project goals are often mixed with the expected results.

List of health projects goals from 2001 to 2004:

Year	Goals
2001	- Education of young women about reproductive health and family planning.
2002	- Amending legal regulations in the health protection domain; - Creating strong women NGO network; - Improving women's health.
2003	- Submitting the Amendment on regular gynecological checkups; - Strengthening and enlarging women's NGO network to improve women's health.
2004	- Improving women's health by amending the Law on Healthcare; - Maintaining and enlarging women's NGO network and strengthening the organizations' capacities; - Forming self-help group for women from Sveti Nikole suffering from malignant diseases.

## Health program activities were realized through the following forms:

### 4.1 Lectures and workshops

#### Findings:

Lectures and workshops for direct beneficiaries were organized in the following villages: Gorobinci, Erdzelija, Crniliste, Amzabegovo, Mustafino, Pesirovo, Knezje, Kadrifakovo, Sopot, Dolno Djudjanci, Milino, Durfulija, and Nemanjici, and towns: Sveti Nikole, Lozovo, and Vinica. Total number of direct beneficiaries of these activities was 643. There were 36 lectures and 56 workshops. Lectures were held until 2000, when they were replaced by workshops. The number of women who participated in these activities fluctuated from 30 to 50. According to the women who took part in these activities, an understandable language was used in both cases. Coordinators from the mentioned villages emphasized large attendance, resulting from a good selection of educators. This basic activity helps maintain a permanent change in women's health, that is, regular gynecological checkups. New methods introduced (in the work of the organization, as well as in the local area) included visits to villages, which no other organization did before, and work with young women as the especially vulnerable group of beneficiaries.

#### Specific achievements of these activities:

1. Lectures, as a type of work, have been replaced with workshops, .promoting passive listening into an interactive exchange.
2. Good selection of project's associates (educators), whose work was positively evaluated by the beneficiaries (with different education, age, and ethnic background). The educators possess great learning capacities, personal development skills, and high level of commitment (motivation), which is very important for the organization's overall capacity. <sup>2</sup>*Gordana and Emina are highly respected in villages and their visits always attract large number of local women.*<sup>3</sup>
3. Organized lectures and medical checkups contributed to raising women's consciousness of the necessity of regular gynecological checkups, which can be seen by the subsequent increase in the number of checkups. Considering that the organization operates in areas with very poor information level, activities such as gynecological checkups are extremely necessary.
4. Lectures were given in a language understandable to rural women.
5. Beneficiaries are very happy with lectures and workshops. A coordinator in the mentioned village said: *Since 1999, when the WOM Sveti Nikole first came to our village, local women have been able to get informed and protect themselves.*
6. The WOM Sveti Nikole was the first organization in the municipality of Sveti Nikole to include rural women in the health program.
7. Young women from Sveti Nikole, encompassed by the 2001-2002 project, described workshops as very useful, primarily the topics addressing sexual education, pregnancy, children care, and healthy nutrition.

#### Specific recommendations for these activities:

1. Given that young women are a vulnerable social group, projects in the frame of the Health Program should continue. In that case, young Macedonian and Roma women (from the focus group of previous beneficiaries) recommend that future projects

<sup>2</sup>All quotes from interviews and focus group are in *Italic letters*.

<sup>3</sup>Doctor Gordana Miteva and therapist Emina Petkova are educators in the Health Program.



should focus on upbringing and education of children. Young Roma women asked for more support in their further education and self-employment, and also to women – victims of domestic violence.

2. The WOM Sveti Nikole has to facilitate workshops and invite a female gynecologist who would together with doctor Gordana Miteva organize two or three workshops each year, with the purpose to offer advises and answer the questions, which cannot be asked during regular checkups due to the limited time.

3. Like young women, rural women are not sufficiently included as beneficiary groups in NGO activities, therefore it is necessary to continue work with them. Specific recommendations for particular villages are included under the main recommendations related to the Health Program.

4. The policy of engaging educators and the methods of work with beneficiaries (workshops and usage of a language understandable to beneficiaries of different education and social background) should be pursued.

## **4.2 Free gynecological checkups**

### **Findings:**

Free gynecological checkups were offered in the towns of Stip, Sveti Nikole, and Veles and 660 beneficiaries showed up for the checkups. Gynecological checkups were organized after lectures/workshops held as part of the Health Program. Certain gynecologists involved in the project had their own private outpatient's clinics, while some performed checkups in state hospitals. Each gynecologist offered a certain number of free checkups on the top of those sponsored by the project. This type of activity contributed to establishing a network with other NGOs on the local level. The most important aspect of free gynecological checkups project was to give rural women the opportunity to visit gynecologists, which they do rarely and irregularly.

### **Specific achievements of these activities:**

1. Application of theoretical knowledge (effects of lectures/workshops were further expanded through gynecological checkups) and underlining the importance of checkups.

2. Collaboration with local partner NGOs in Sveti Nikole was considerably upgraded through free gynecological checkups provided to female members of the Environmental Society Izgrev and the Roma Association from Sveti Nikole.

3. Giving the opportunity to women, who do not practice regular checkups (rural women), to do checkups through the projects.

### **Specific recommendations for these activities:**

1. Keep women constantly reminded of the importance of regular gynecological checkups. One day of the year (in March, as it is the month of combating cancer, but not March 8) should be devoted to a public campaign in local and national media, which would use the same photo as in the "Do not turn your head away" campaign), but with a different slogan, which would remind women to visit a gynecologist regularly, every year. The same day in March should be used to do budget calculations for the campaign.

2. Involve more women with the lowest education background (elementary school) from rural areas and town in projects, especially those pertaining to regular gynecological checkups.

### 4.3 Self-help group

#### Findings:

Self-help group for women suffering from cancer in Sveti Nikole was launched with 12 women in September 2004. In January 2005, the group counted 14 members. The main value of this activity is the unreserved support and encouragement offered to the women with cancer diseases. Identification with the organization's president and the WOM Sveti Nikole educators along with a high level of confidentiality applied since the very formation, encourage women join the self-help group. The group members have a high esteem of Violeta Tomovska and closer cooperation with her in future would be significant.

#### Specific achievements of these activities:

1. Major achievements of these activities are support and encouragement of women suffering from malignant diseases. Women from the self-help group said: *This group gives me hope; Being with this group and socializing with other women mean a lot to me; Here I feel reborn, we exchange thoughts, and I am very happy; After our meetings, I am in a good mood and feel relaxed; Talking is a kind of medical treatment; These meetings are good, you can learn something, and also learn to help yourself in certain moments.*

2. The key motivation for becoming a self-help group member is the identification with the WOM Sveti Nikole president, and the doctor and therapist who are the self-help group leaders. Regarding this, members of the group said: *The doctor has had a similar surgery and therefore she can understand us as a doctor and as a woman. Both of them give us positive energy and a chance to discard pessimistic thoughts.*

3. High level of confidentiality among the group members and leaders is very important, especially for a small town like Sveti Nikole. The beneficiaries said: *The most important thing is that we obey the rule that our internal discussions are highly confidential.*

#### Specific recommendations for these activities:

1. Self-help group expressed the wish to meet and exchange experience with similar groups from the country or the region. It should therefore be checked as to whether this activity is possible and if so, try to incorporate the activity in this year's budget, or plan it for the next year, if the current budget cannot cover the activity costs.

2. Since Violeta Tomovska is a significant positive role model for the self-help group members (maybe even their idol), a joint activity of the WOM Sveti Nikole and Tomovska should be planned out as to bring her in the town once a year at least. A good activity example was a round table organized by the WOM Sveti Nikole in cooperation with "Zivotna iskra" (association led by Violeta Tomovska in Skopje) in Sveti Nikole in December 2004.

3. Check whether individuals suffering from cancer can be exempt from paying any medical fees and also check the criteria for the payment exemption for other accompanying diseases, under the Macedonian legislation. If the exemptions are allowed under law, a strong campaign and lobbying should be launched in mass media.

4. Focus group members singled out the doctors with whom they had problems (outpatient's clinic in Stip and the hospital in Skopje). All women in Sveti Nikole suffering from cancer should be informed about these particular names and advised to stay away from those doctors.

5. Increase the number of women in Sveti Nikole self-help group. Self-help group member suggested: *Advertisements on TV and radio stations would encourage more women to join in, and thereby increase the membership.*

6. More frequent group meetings are recommended, but on the other hand the question arises as to whether it is possible, considering other organization's activities and

other engagements of the educators leading the group. On this point, the beneficiaries said: *Self-help group would like to meet more frequently, because we have a lot to tell each other and there are many topics to be discussed with the doctor and therapist. We can help each other with medicaments and pharmaceuticals and medical devices, which we all need.*

7. Take full advantage of the WOM Sveti Nikole social network (professional and personal contacts), as to facilitate swift examinations in hospitals in Stip and Skopje for emergency cases. Regarding this matter, beneficiaries said: *In case of the repeating disease symptoms, women should be able to see a doctor immediately, and not to wait for the scheduled appointment, which can be months after.*

#### **4.4 Campaign and lobbying**

##### **Findings:**

The campaign and lobbying for the Amendment to the Law on Healthcare seeking free gynecological checkups in the Republic of Macedonia was first mentioned during the WOM Sveti Nikole evaluation workshop, which was externally facilitated in the summer of 2002. Later, a good and detailed campaign and lobbying plan was composed with the following steps to be taken:

- a) Establish a network of women organizations interested in the issue;
- b) Engage experts in order to articulate the problem and potential solution (public campaign final goal);
- c) Engage legal experts in order to find the most appropriate legal form for the requested solution/goal;
- d) Connect with decision-makers: establish contacts with MPs in order to learn when amendments to the Law on Healthcare are planned to enter the parliament procedure, as a result of reforms in the health sector;
- e) Dissemination of information concerning the actualization of the issue through a public campaign, including posters, billboards, and web page;
- f) Define expenditures for each of the mentioned activities under an approximate financial construction;
- g) Identify potential donors: at that time KtK was mentioned as the major donor and great deal of these activities were specified in the project proposal submitted to it.

Further work related to the advocacy of this Amendment continued in keeping with the steps agreed in the summer of 2002.

Initial meeting with eight NGOs was held in 2002, and in 2003, this activity grew into a network, which currently rallies 18 women's NGOs. Since 2003, the network has been meeting on regular basis and has organized two training for trainers of future workshops dealing with early detection of reproductive organs cancer. This network has lobbied for amending the Law on Healthcare and the introduction of free gynecological checkups for all women, regardless of whether they have health insurance. Based on the network evaluation workshop, held with external evaluators in December 2004, it can be concluded that the network has a coordinating form of work, with the WOM Sveti Nikole holding the central and leading position, therefore the network members cannot be expected to take an equal position or full responsibility for their activities any time soon.

Round tables held in the towns of the network members have helped collect information and improve the draft amendment, composed by the WOM Sveti Nikole legal expert. The activity was assisted by legal and medical experts from 16 towns in the Republic of Macedonia: Stip, Probistip, Kriva Palanka, Makedonska Kamenica, Bitola,

Kocani, Kumanovo, Gevgelija, Strumica, Skopje, Debar, Gostivar, Prilep, Radovis, and Struga.

While collecting arguments for the amendment, the network opened talks with MPs. The initiative found most support in the former parliament deputy speaker, who later on submitted the amendment. MPs contributed to the initiative by participating in certain round tables and backing the amendment in media during the campaign.

The campaign was entitled "Do not turn your head away" and was excellently designed through the slogan and the picture promoted. It was covered by all national and local mass media, but also on billboards, TV and radio clips, and the picture with the main campaign message was published in almost all weekly and daily press in the Republic of Macedonia. During the campaign, three press conferences were organized, which announced the forthcoming events and also the adoption of the Amendment in the parliament. The campaign had a very positive effect on different population segments, so when the amendment was debated in the parliament, everyone knew what it was about and supported it in principal.

The WOM Sveti Nikole also took part in a discussion, initiated by the Health Ministry, devoted to the composition of a National Action Plan for primary, secondary, and tertiary approach to prevention of non-contagious disease - breast cancer. Later, the WOM Sveti Nikole organized meetings with NGOs dealing with this issue in the country and summarized recommendations, which were forwarded to the Health Ministry (to the attention of the special committee for drafting the National Action Plan for primary, secondary, and tertiary approach to protection of non-contagious disease - breast cancer).

The necessary financial support for the implementation of the campaign was provided by the Swedish Women's Foundation Kvinna till Kvinna, the WOM's Sveti Nikole permanent donor.

### **Specific achievements of these activities:**

1. Adoption of the amendment on free gynecological checkups in the Macedonian Parliament on February 25, 2004. One of the campaign associates said: *It is not enough to give suggestions on how to solve a certain problem, we have to go a step further – the WOM Sveti Nikole has realized that.*

2. From the level of work with direct beneficiaries (education and gynecological checkups), over the past seven years, the WOM Sveti Nikole has managed to focus its activities on public advocacy and lobbying (Amendment to the Law on Healthcare, Article 32, paragraph 1, point 3, where new point 3a was added, and Article 32, paragraph 2, point 3, where new point 3a was added). Namely, from the initial work with marginal groups, the WOM Sveti Nikole has expanded its scope of activities to include changes of the legal mechanisms.

3. This great success is mainly the result of the well drafted plan and the full adherence to it. With this campaign, the health team showed that it knows how to offer arguments and solutions to a given problem (drafting Amendment by the WOM Sveti Nikole legal expert and the organization's open approach to suggestions of professionals contributed to final result), that it knows how to establish and maintain good communication with different public (beneficiaries, NGOs, professionals, media, politicians), and most importantly that it has excellent lobbying resources among its members. One example is a health team member, who succeeded to initiate the mammography donation from the Swedish government, although she spoke hardly any English.

4. Of material made for the campaign "Do not turn your head away," the most frequently used were manuals, brochures, posters, clips recorded on CDs, and web page.

5. The WOM Sveti Nikole has been very successful in communication with organizations in the network and in organizing the entire network.

6. Round tables were important part of the campaign, as well as lobbying which facilitated gathering of views and recommendations of professionals (legal experts, gynecologists, MPs) concerning the draft amendment to the Law on Healthcare seeking free gynecological checkups.

7. Round tables contributed to strengthening and developing of the network of 18 women's

NGOs, which were engaged in lobbying for the adoption of the amendment.

### **Specific recommendations for these activities:**

1. Improve mutual exchange of information and communication with other NGOs in Macedonia (especially with the Skopje based ones). Seek a way to spread information to NGOs outside Sveti Nikole, which would suit best the WOM Sveti Nikole and other NGOs interested in its activities (e.g. monthly announcements, quarterly reports submitted to donors etc).

2. Compose 2005 action plan for monitoring the implementation of the law.

3. Revise the network functioning in terms of whether to keep its primary job of monitoring and the implementation of the law, or the WOM Sveti Nikole will use the network as part of its women consciousness raising activities, that is, the work with direct beneficiaries with special emphasis on the towns of Radovis, Debar, and Prilep. The Women's Center of Debar has composed a health program for 2005, in which they will repeat the model applied by the WOM Sveti Nikole, that is, combine workshops and checkup methods. In Prilep, local women have demonstrated self-initiative capacity and conducted a survey within the network in 2004, which encompassed women from Krusevo and Makedonski Brod, who were not initially planned to be included in the project.

4. A WOM Sveti Nikole associate suggested: *Roma women's association should enter the network.*

5. A donor who is familiar with the network suggested: *Continue the network coordination only with the organizations that are motivated and possess enough self-capacity to pursue work on health programs in their environments.*

6. Compose a detailed financial construction based on the total number of women aged from 18 years up without health insurance in the Republic of Macedonia. The construction would help determine additional funds which should be allocated (as a special budget item) for the implementation of the adopted amendment.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Take the number of women aged from 18 years up in the Republic of Macedonia according to the 2002 population census and subtract: number of women with full time employment (Statistics Office); number of female pensioners; (Pension and Invalid Insurance Fund); number of unemployed women (Employment Office); number of University female students (from the census or from the Universities, for example: According to the Healthcare Fund, there are 5,591 freshmen female students), and number of women on social welfare (from the Welfare Office). To this number, add the number of women who are not citizens of the Republic of Macedonia.

## 4.5 Survey results: views of beneficiary vs. non beneficiary participants

### Findings:

Two focus groups were held with the health projects beneficiaries, and a survey was conducted on a sample of 163 beneficiaries, or 30% of the total number. The survey also encompassed 168 women from the control group, who were not beneficiaries of the WOM Sveti Nikole Health Program. Based on the number and structure, the control group is very similar to the one of beneficiaries. The survey was conducted in 10 villages and in the town of Sveti Nikole. The purpose of the focus groups was to meet and talk to the beneficiaries personally, as it was done with all WOM Sveti Nikole associate organizations, which enabled us to get direct information and authentic experience. The goal of surveys was to show differences and similarities between women, who participated in lectures/workshops and gynecological checkups and those who did not. Another goal was to find out whether long term effects had been made with the beneficiaries who had undergone education lectures and medical checkups. However, an exact data analysis was not possible due to inconsistencies in samples. Therefore, we suggest the survey results be used only for general recommendations and conclusions, that is, for mapping trends, rather than as an exact tool, which was our initial intention.

General comments refer to certain inconsistencies in samples, which can to a certain extent influence the results. For example, 57% of beneficiaries from the village of Crniliste did not attend lectures. On the other hand, the total number of women in the control group encompassed by the survey, differs from the beneficiary group in the following: the number of women in the group is larger by five women; there are more representatives of the group aged between 21 and 30 years, women in private business, unemployed women, and single women, while there are fewer (compared to the beneficiary group) women with higher education and those working in state institutions. Also, the survey showed that there were women in the beneficiary group who did not attend lectures/workshops (12 women of 163, or 7.36%). Additionally, there are women in the control group, who had participated in lectures/workshops (45 women of 168, or 26.78%). These facts would have additionally made the survey results inexact, if a statistic analyses had been done.

1. Based on the answers, the major problem of women in Sveti Nikole is poverty and another big problem is healthcare. Health related problems mainly arise with older women (aged between 50 and 60 years) and pensioners. This situation can be expected as health problems become more visible in this age.

2. Lectures are mostly attended by women aged between 20 and 50 years, with elementary or high school education background.

3. A low level of lecture attendance and gynecological checkups was registered with the group of women aged between 50 and 60 years.

4. Engagement of certain women with higher education in lectures and checkups is also rather low.

5. Lectures are understandable for women of all education backgrounds, except for women intellectuals, which can probably be an explanation for their low interest in lectures. This could either be interpreted as an exception to the rule, or as the fact that these women had higher expectations.

6. Most often reason for missing lectures are the lack of information about lectures (mostly women intellectuals), lack of time, and rarely family problems. These reasons are often cited in the answers given by rural women and women aged from 51 year up. Also, their answers are reasonable in the sense that if they had had the information in time, they would have attended lectures or would have taken the advantage of free gynecological checkups.

7. An increase in the number of gynecological checkups is registered even within the control group, mainly in 2003, but dropped again in 2004. This can be explained with the fact that this group did not attend lectures and that is why a public campaign impact is efficient, but of short-term.

8. Women aged up to 20 years and those with elementary education are the groups that did the smallest number of gynecological checkups, while women aged between 31 and 60 years fall under the group that visits gynecologists most frequently.

#### **Specific recommendations related to Health Program direct beneficiaries:**

1. Invest more effort in future health programs as to attract women with lowest education, women older than 50 years, and women up to 20 years old. It is very important to encourage these groups to visit gynecologists regularly.

2. Find a way to engage as many as possible women intellectuals in lectures and gynecological checkups. The more WOM Sveti Nikole is present in mass media and engaged in lobbying activities, the more women intellectuals will join the organization's activities.

3. Pursue this kind of project in the villages of the Sveti Nikole municipality, given the upward trend, that is, an increase in number of gynecological checkups, following lectures and free checkups organized by the WOM Sveti Nikole.

4. Control group showed direct short-term results of the campaign "Do not turn your head away" by increasing the number of gynecological checkups in 2003 and 2004 during the campaign and the adoption of the Amendment. In order to achieve a long-term effect, it is necessary to engage women who have not attended education programs and also organize one-day campaign for free checkups every year.

#### **4.6 Health Program promotional and educational material**

Two types of print material were analyzed for the evaluation: **leaflets and brochures**.

**Leaflets** are written in an easy understandable language and a large number of professional terms are explained in a simple, every-day language.

Additional explanations make leaflets difficult to read. On one hand, explanations provide more information to readers, but on the other such leaflets threaten to turn away potential readers due to their text density and small letters. An example is the leaflet "Women for free gynecological checkups," whose format and letters are small, while the text is long, and there is a whole empty page. This should be taken into account especially when beneficiaries are older women, many of whom have sight problems, that is, wear glasses.

#### **Good example of WOM Sveti Nikole leaflet**

A good example of a well presented content and the balance of text and empty space is the leaflet "For those who in their immediate environment have a person suffering from a malignant disease on reproductive organs".

#### **Recommendations:**

It would be good to use more graphs and pictures instead of text as it is done in the "Parturition" leaflet, with shorter titles and smaller organization's logo.

**Brochures** have easily understandable text and simple language. The main weaknesses of the analyzed brochures are related to: text graphic presentation, photos

application, and long titles, which sometimes cause counter effects. All this, however cannot be said for the brochure "Do not turn your head away."

The title is very short and is compensated with a photo on the cover page, making it very effective. The main text is presented well, with bigger fonts in the headings and the accompanying recommendations are written in smaller letters, while key words are bolded. The organization's logo is smaller, yet visible. It could be placed a bit higher towards the header and make it separate from the donor's logo, which can go on the back.

There are plenty of pictures and graphic presentations which are supplemented by understandable text, which could be shorter on certain pages.

For the first time, imprint appears in a brochure, which presents the authors, layout, and the organization's web page, which is a good practice that should continue.

### **Recommendation**

It would be good to pay attention to the author's rights for pictures used in brochures. If they belong to the organization, they should be protected, or otherwise list the source.

As regards the print material technical quality, letters color is weak in many samples, which makes reading difficult. This is important if we take into consideration that older women are potential readers of these materials. For example, if the text color in the brochure "Do not turn your head away" is compared with that in the WOM Sveti Nikole 2003 annual report, it can be seen that the latter has more intense font color.

These aspects have to be taken into consideration when planning print material.

### **4.7 Health program main achievements:**

1. Health team's capacity and dedication to this program, established in 1998, have enabled for the strengthening and developing of the program and finally turning it into a complete structure, which has now managed to encompass a number of women from endangered groups all the way to the highest level of decision-making.

2. The indicator of the health team's development capacity is the transfer from lectures to workshops, as a modern and up-dated form of learning through experience.

3. Knowledge and information which beneficiaries acquire in workshops are very important for their consistent and regular gynecological checkups later on.

4. Good selection of topics, and easy understandable language to all generations and education backgrounds, and connection between lectures/workshops and checkups, show that the Health Program team is highly competence and dedicated.

5. The WOM Sveti Nikole has built confidence with local coordinators and project beneficiaries.

6. Based on figures, the beneficiary group comprised women aged between 30 and 50 years from rural areas and with elementary and high school education. In fact, this is a group which has showed the biggest positive results. This is important, especially given the United Nations statistics, according to which they belong to marginal groups of women, who are rarely worked with.

7. The health program achievements can be also viewed through the control group of women (those who did not attend lectures/workshops), who are also interested in health education, which confirms that this program is recognized in local communities/villages, where it was implemented.



8. Important achievements have been also made in the self-help group, which is a new activity (from autumn 2004): high confidence in the group's work, encouraging and supporting ill women, and taking educators and the WOM Sveti Nikole president as positive models.

9. The WOM Sveti Nikole maintains open collaboration and proactive attitude towards other NGOs operating in Sveti Nikole and other local institutions with the aim to improve the work on the health program.

10. Collaboration with other organizations dealing with health projects in the Republic of Macedonia is qualitative and appreciated: *As regards the information about health projects activities that we do together, information primarily come through reports, which have always been qualitative and of good content.*

11. Among the main achievements of this project is combining the work starting with the most directly endangered women (self-help group with women suffering from cancer), establishing a network of women's NGOs dealing with health projects, cooperation with local and state institutions, and amending the Law on Healthcare, which introduced a provision on free gynecological checkups (Amendment published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, No. 10, 07.03.2004). With this activity, the WOM Sveti Nikole showed that it can create and coordinate a functional and national network of NGOs, communicate and negotiate with MPs and ensure support from them, make good argument of the change it strives for, and that it can hire an adequate agency, which designed "Do not turn your head away" campaign.

12. In geographical terms, there was a good coverage of rural areas in the municipalities of Sveti Nikole and Lozovo, where 13 villages were encompassed by health projects.

13. One local coordinator from the village where the project was implemented pointed to unplanned and unexpected achievement: *The project united women from the village, regardless of their nationality and age, and they have become more sociable.*

#### **4.8 Health program main recommendations:**

1. According to information and experience of the gynecologist in the outpatient's clinic in Sveti Nikole, the number of women suffering from cervix cancer is decreasing, while the number of women suffering from breast cancer and sterility is on an upward trend. Women in climacteric phase (before, during, or after menopause) must be encouraged to visit gynecologists more frequently, due to great hormone oscillations.

2. It is necessary to do better mapping of the needs in certain villages and accordingly tailor programs which will be more adjusted to the specific needs in a certain village, for example: in Crniliste, there are more young women; in Kadrifakovo there are more Roma women who are interested in contraception and sexually transmittable diseases; women from Mustafino and Kadrifakovo would like more lectures for adult women (older than 30 years). The timing for a certain activity is also important as to avoid periods of intense agricultural activities, like planting and collecting tomatoes and tobacco (e.g. the village of Crniliste) or cattle feeding (ex. the village of Kadrifakovo).

3. Mobilize the organization's internal capacities in terms of available knowledge and resources in order to specify the needs and raise funds for establishing a Self-help Center. The center should be a separate organization (according to one of the donors) and should engage the doctor and therapist. It would have a regional character, wherein certain activities would be taken over by state institutions. In order to achieve a higher level of sustainability for the center, funds should be raised from state budgets from the very beginning, that is, ways should be sought on how to make the center become part of the country's healthcare system.

4. Among beneficiary group with whom the WOM Sveti Nikole works, rural women still appear to be the most important group, which was underlined in one interview: *"Rural women should remain in focus of the health program."*

5. Pay more attention, that is, create special projects for young women aged between 20 and 25 years and more importantly for women older than 50 years and those with lowest education level (elementary school and/or different categories of illiterate women).

6. Continue further education and raising awareness of women, parallel with providing them with information about free gynecological checkups. Surveys show that education is a form that contributes to achieving long-term results (referring to follow-up visits to gynecologists after free checkups). Women should be reminded of the importance of regular gynecological checkups through a campaign, to be launched in March, as the month of combating cancer, and Violeta Tomovska could be also engaged in certain campaign activities.

7. Build capacities of the health program team and local coordinators regarding: computer skills, English language knowledge, writing project proposals, and fundraising skills.

8. The importance of continuing parallel activities in all spheres encompassed by the Health Program is well expressed in one interview: *Macedonia is a small country. It is therefore not possible for one organization to focus on a single type of activity. It would probably be best to continue with parallel activities, workshops in local communities, health service centers, and also with lobbying, because all perspectives can be maintained for certain period with a good management.*

9. Improve communication with gynecologists in the outpatient's clinic in Sveti Nikole by sending invitations in writing to them (fax or invitation letter) for each public activity organized by the WOM Sveti Nikole. Since women prefer to go to female rather than male gynecologist, developing cooperation with female gynecologist is very important and necessary because of beneficiaries. Apart from invitations, other ways to engage her should be sought.

10. Regular press conferences on the state level (whenever there is an event related to the Amendment implementation) would maintain media and public attention, and would also keep the public informed, and thereby the issue would remain in focus. Besides offering information to the public, information should be exchanged with NGOs from other parts of the country (especially those from Skopje) in a manner that is to be agreed between the engaged parties.

11. The most important activity in 2005 regarding the Amendment implementation is to calculate an additional budget, which the state should allocate for women without health insurance. Once this very important information is available, lobbying for an additional budget item in 2006 can start. The annual budget for the next year is calculated at the end of the current year.

12. Needs for further development of the Health Program have been also recognized from the outside: *They should focus on health problems, implementation and monitoring of the Law and further lobbying for its implementation.*

13. Based on talks with WOM Sveti Nikole members, professionals in local institutions, and with women suffering from cancer, it can be concluded that there are various reasons causing these diseases in the municipality and that no thorough survey on the issue has been conducted. We therefore recommend that the "Izgrev" Environmental Organization, the Women Civil Initiative, and the Roma Association of Sveti Nikole join forces in lobbying for the necessary water, air, soil, and radioactive testing with the Environmental Ministry, in order to introduce regular monitoring of pollution and bring changes to the water supply system in the town. This action would be beneficial to the WOM Sveti Nikole and all other engaged NGOs in earning more trust and respect with the Sveti Nikole population and would help change the general belief that NGOs work for big money which they receive from foreign donors. A self help group beneficiary said: *It is necessary to investigate into the roots of all this and undertake appropriate actions.*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Following a positive vote for citizens' contribution for water supply system and considering that citizens have already contributed certain amount, the next step is lobbying with local authorities to make the water supply system a priority in 2005 budget and allocate considerable funds for this purpose. Citizens' contributions and

14. The number of graphics (photos) and texts in print material (leaflets and brochures) should be balanced; letters should be bigger and print quality equal to other material WOM Sveti Nikole distributes in public, therefore it is necessary to change the printing house. The practice of printing imprint, launched with the brochure "Do not turn your head away" should continue in all of future publications and sources for photos and texts should be also listed.

## 5. Evaluation of the Organization

During the evaluation process, we considered the processes, results, and WOM Sveti Nikole relations with others. Besides the health program, the WOM Sveti Nikole works on a program for the youth through the Babylon Center. Since the activities on the Amendment started, the organization has developed a legal team. The information we received from all interviews and focus groups seems very important: poverty and unemployment are the major problems of women in Sveti Nikole and in the entire Republic of Macedonia and all other problems derive from these two.

### 5.1 Organizational processes

#### Findings:

The WOM Sveti Nikole was established as an independent organization in 1990 and was reregistered in 1998, under the Law on Associations and Foundations.

The organization counts around 500 members with different education, age, social-economic, and ethnic backgrounds. There are also 30 volunteers in the organization.

The organizational structure: the General Assembly consisting of 31 persons, 29 female and 2 male members. Of total, four are external members, 21 are elected by the town of Sveti Nikole group of activists (19 female and two male members), and six are from the surrounding villages. The Managing Board consists of eight female members and one male and the Supervising Committee has three members. Both bodies elect members from the General Assembly members for a four-year mandate.

The WOM Sveti Nikole president and vice president are elected by the General Assembly and for a four-year mandate, with the possibility of unlimited number of reelections. Accountant and cashier have special roles in the organizational structure.

Last reelection of the General Assembly, the Managing Board, the Supervising Committee, the president, and the vice president was in September 2004, when amendments to the Statute were adopted.

WOM Sveti Nikole mission is:

To improve the position of women in all spheres of life, such as emancipation and gender equality, health education and protection of women as a prevention through various forms, lectures and checkups, providing all kinds of aid (legal, social, etc.), human/women's rights focused on violence against women and children, work with children, youth, and general population.

During an exercise with the Managing Board and Supervising Committee members, we registered that apart from the activities formally enlisted under the mission, they also consider part of their mission the following:

- WOM Sveti Nikole capacity building;
- Raising consciousness of women in the society;
- Cooperation with other NGOs in the municipality and in a wider region;
- Engagement in bringing changes in legal regulations, which would positively reflect on women's needs and other gender related issues;
- Advocating rights of women all around the world.

The mission however, encompasses a wide range, therefore it would be difficult to assess it based on certain indicators in a future evaluation. Taking into account the wider interpretation of the mission by the organization managing structures, it is recommended that in strategic planning, mission be reexamined and reduced to human potential, that is, a feasible scope.

Overlapping was shown between certain elements, which fall under the vision concept and the organization's mission. Given that the WOM Sveti Nikole, has no vision at all, it should work on this matter during strategic planning.

According to members of the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee, the organization's strengths are:

- good organizational system;
- organizational capacity;
- good communication;
- teamwork;
- ensured finances for 2005;
- good technical equipment;
- no division within the organization over different political affiliations;
- web presentation;
- one full-time employee;
- organization is recognized by outside structures;
- respect and assistance from men and their occasional cooperation.

Officially, the WOM Sveti Nikole is a participative organization with a democratic decision-making process. This characteristic is recognized from the outside and is confirmed in an interview with another NGO member, who attended sessions the General Assembly: *The organizational structure of the WOM Sveti Nikole is actually much more transparent than before, which was confirmed at the General Assembly last session on electing the Managing Board, the Supervising Committee, and the president.*

It seems that the president, vice president and full-time healthcare coordinator, are informally perceived as leaders, which is neither good nor bad. Namely, it is good in case all members are aware of this fact and support this system of functioning, and if they do not, changes can always be suggested, discussed, and implemented.

## **5.2 Internal perception of the organizational structure**

In order to obtain credible information about organizational structure, the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee members were asked to present the structure on a scheme: a) how they see the organizational structure; b) where they see themselves in the organizational structure; c) their opinion of decision-making process; d) how they see information sharing within the organization. The result showed the following: all members, except one, presented the organization visually as a hierarchical structure, where the General Assembly and/or the president have dominant roles. Two schemes showed the Presidency and the Executive Board as being dominant. Since the Presidency existed until the autumn of 2004, its appearance in schemes can probably be interpreted as a result of the old structure. The Executive Board, by its function, is essentially a body which the WOM Sveti Nikole calls the Managing Board. This means that this what appears to be an accidental mistake is, actually "correct." Generally speaking, the Managing Board members are not paid and are not directly engaged in the implementation of activities (usually they are external members), but this is not the case in the WOM Sveti Nikole. In fact, the Executive Board consists of project coordinators and individuals permanently engaged in

the organizational activities. In practice, the WOM Sveti Nikole says the Managing Board for what is actually an Executive Board.

This exchange of "titles" can remain, providing that roles of all the existing and future boards in managing structures are precisely defined.

Teams that appear in the organization are: health, legal, and a team for work with children and the youth. At the same time, this is the external perception of the WOM Sveti Nikole spheres of work.

Members of the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee perceive decision-making process as being circular and linked to all structures of the WOM Sveti Nikole. There are two exceptions: one scheme presents the Managing Board as the starting place for decision-making process, while the other showing the structure without hierarchy, sees the entire organization taking part in decision-making.

Members of the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee view information sharing as follows: the key person for information sharing is the full-time employee; the majority of answers see information sharing as a circular process, which starts and ends with the General Assembly. Members of the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee mostly cooperate with the full-time employee.

The organization is open to admit new members who decide to join in voluntarily. The admission procedure is based more on a friendly approach, rather than on defined rules, which are to be observed during the admission and engagement of all newcomers. A good side of the system is the mentorship work, during which a newcomer is accompanied by an experienced member in the field work.

The hitherto procedure, that is, criteria for employing or hiring on a part time basis, required the following:

- voluntary work in the organization;
- commitment, that is, motivation;
- economical status of a woman and her family;
- regular attendance at meetings (from the WOM Sveti Nikole Statute, Article 10).

These criteria are precise and sufficient, but they have to be defined precisely and included in the Policy Manual, which the WOM Sveti Nikole needs to compose and make it available to the public. The first step is to post it on the web page.

When a WOM Sveti Nikole member has an idea for a new project or when a donor sets up a tender, a full-time employee and the organization president, as experienced members, assist in project proposal writing.

### **Specific achievements in the organizational processes:**

1. Organizational development and learning capacity are great, considering that the WOM Sveti Nikole started as an old socialist system type structure and has succeeded to become and be registered as an independent NGO. The organizational structure has been going through constant changes, and one of the indicators is the transformation of the presidency into the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee, as new management bodies. Another indicator is the increasing transparency in the organizational work, both in the appointment of managerial structures at General Assembly session, as well as in the

public distribution of the annual report with a balance sheet included, which is a practice very rarely implemented by other NGOs in the region.

2. The Managing Board and the Supervising Committee meet regularly on a monthly basis, which contributes to an excellent information sharing and facilitates continuity in work and consulting.

3. The possibility of transferring a person into a full-time employee has provided the organization with a better logistic support and easier/faster information sharing, where the full-time employee becomes the main source of receiving and spreading information among others.

4. Constant mobilization and engagement of women, who hold major managerial and political positions in the municipality of Sveti Nikole, have contributed to strengthening organizational capacities and helped earned more presence and respect in the local community.

5. Permanent work on mobilizing young intellectual women, who start as organization members and volunteers. Some of them later become coordinators of certain projects. Additionally, they are in position to participate in decision making.

6. The WOM Sveti Nikole has a good wage distribution policy, trying to avoid cases of the same person getting paid for her engagement in different projects. Of each wage, 3% go to the organization's fund, which give certain security to members and can be used to cover expenditures that are not covered by projects.

7. The employment criteria show that the organization cherishes voluntary-based work, solidarity, persistency, honesty, and also takes care of how to motivate its members.

8. Although the organization does not have it in writing, it practices the team division and definition of different roles for each team member, which results in a more efficient and effective performance.

### **Specific recommendations for organizational processes:**

1. The mission has not been equally understood by all organization's managing structures and therefore it should be re-examined in the following terms: whether members would like to keep it as it is now or they would like to make certain changes in future strategic planning. The mission should be either preserved as it is, or reduced and focused on the the WOM Sveti Nikole main activities. The choice should take into account the mission as a long-term aim based measurable results. Besides the mission, organizational general aims, projects' specific goals, and objectives of specific activities have to be clearly articulated.

2. The WOM Sveti Nikole has to define its vision. The vision as well as the mission have to be composed by as many as possible organization members, because it develops the feeling of being part of the organization, which is important motivation, especially considering still small annual budgets of the WOM Sveti Nikole and unfriendliness of general public towards the NGO work.

3. In public appearance, members of WOM Sveti Nikole Managing Board and the Supervising Committee should make a distinction between cases when they work and speak on their own behalf and when they represent the organization.

4. The WOM Sveti Nikole should be more active in mobilizing and motivating young women (from 18 to 30 years) to join the organization, which is stated in the WOM Sveti Nikole Statute, Article 10: "Encourage the enlargement of the WOM Sveti Nikole."

5. Under the 2004 amendment to the Statute, Article 20, it is stated that the Managing Board can create and Advisory Board. It is recommended that an Advisory Board be comprised of external male and female members, to include four local NGOs already represented in the General Assembly, and also include representatives of local and international NGOs, respected individuals from the community, and representatives of state institutions from Skopje. The task of this Board is to give advises in strategic planning and development of the organization as to contribute to a better implementation of the mission

and help in defining the vision. This Board submits its recommendations to the Managing Board, operates on a voluntary basis, and meets once or twice a year. It is also recommended that both genders are represented in the Board. The Board could give feedback about project proposals via e-mail group.

6. In order to resolve the issues elaborated in the recommendations below, the WOM Sveti Nikole should compose and articulate a Policy Manual, which should contain all work procedure-related facts of the organization. The Policy Manual should be a public document, available to all, and posted on the organization's web page, so that other NGOs could learn and use the experience and knowledge of the WOM Sveti Nikole.

7. Define a procedure for joining the organization (more detailed than in the membership card) and make it available to all. It would be good to form an admission team, which would work on mobilization of newcomers and also introduce them to organizational activities.

8. Procedure for employment or part-time engagement should be supplemented with a job advertisement (open for general public and/or organization members only), and list clearly defined criteria that are stated, but the question is as to whether they are clear to all WOM Sveti Nikole members. Transparency is very important for maintaining positive image in public and also for preserving good relationship within the organization and its professional development. Preliminary selection based on the advertisement should include three candidates at least, while final decision on the employment should be made by the Managing Board. The decision for the preliminary round is based on scores, wherein each member of the Managing Board evaluates potential candidates from 1 to 5 points, and the one with the highest score gets the job.

9. The procedure for paying persons engaged in projects exists, but it should become part of the organization's Policy Manual, thereby make the procedure clear and explicit enough to the whole membership.

10. Make a better and more precise work distribution upon the engagement of a new full-time employee in the WOM Sveti Nikole. Who will then be responsible for receiving and further information sharing?

11. Design and work out operations procedure for the Supervising Committee, which will determine: the manner for checking finances, how often, and in which way it will report to the Managing Board, the General Assembly, and the general public.

12. The decision-making process appears to be clearly defined, but as the mission itself, it is not equally understood by all members. Therefore, during strategic planning, members should discuss the responsibility for each decision-making process, which also needs to be precisely defined and as such be included in the future Policy Manual. The decision-making system can be flexible and should be adjusted to the present needs and values cherished in the organization. It is very important that the system is suitable to all organization members and that all give their consent to it, because it is a good precondition that members will respect the system after they adopt it.

13. Information flow is good and well developed, both within the organization and with other NGOs and institutions in Sveti Nikole. As it is the case with other procedures, information flow should be defined and included in the Policy Manual, so that all people interested in the activity could be informed.

### **5.3 Organizational results**

#### **Findings:**

Health program achievements are elaborated in the previous chapter and will not be repeated in this one, but it should be emphasized that the WOM Sveti Nikole greatest achievement is the Amendment to the Law on Healthcare, that is, the adoption of the amendment on free gynecological checkups.



Achievements that refer to everyday work of the WOM Sveti Nikole, which is yet not insignificant, include: successful organization of round tables, particularly those dealing with health issues; good and recognized work with the youth through the Babylon center; identification and work on current problems of women; various educational programs that the organization implements and which are highly evaluated by beneficiaries; organization's visibility at the national level thanks to the campaign "Do not turn your head away"; developed team work in different programs and good communication and relation with the permanent donor (KtK).

What appears to be important is the WOM Sveti Nikole consistent work on encouraging other local NGOs and showing that it is possible for a local and relatively small organization to initiate and achieve legal changes, which are important for the entire population. The best example is the WOM Sveti Nikole initiation and lobbying for the amendment to the Healthcare Law, which was adopted in the Macedonian Parliament.

### **Specific achievements of the organization:**

1. Since 2003, the organization has been printing annual reports and distributing them in public. This practice is especially successful due to high level of financial transparency, which is rarely applied by other NGOs in the Republic of Macedonia and the region.
2. Public transparency of the WOM Sveti Nikole health programs and other activities was praised by all persons interviewed during the evaluation process in Sveti Nikole (NGOs, outpatient's clinic, the local Health Fund and the radio station).
3. The WOM Sveti Nikole dedication and persistency is externally recognized: *They work hard and each project initiated has been successfully completed.*
4. Lobbying for amending the Law on Healthcare is a significant achievement: *The adoption of the Amendment on free gynecological checkups is their greatest success. They also engaged politicians and it became a national issue.*
5. The WOM Sveti Nikole professionalism and development capacity are externally recognized and emphasized in interviews. The main donor believes that: *The WOM Sveti Nikole has improved its professionalism, which is not the case with other NGOs. A coordinator of one NGO from Skopje said: Because they are persistent and dedicated they have a certain development line and are focused on particular women's issues and possess organizational capacity that is very important for the organizational further development.*
6. Another NGO in Sveti Nikole gave a comprehensive coverage of the organization's successful work: *The WOM Sveti Nikole strengths are: consistency in their work, the fact that they have office space; successful lobbying experience (the Amendment), work on burning issues with the emphasis on women's health; the formation of the Babylon Center; initiation and actualization of women related issues. When we participate in the WOM Sveti Nikole projects, our members can learn, express their opinion, and get free gynecological checkups.*
7. An interviewee touched on how the WOM Sveti Nikole influences positive development in the civil society in the Republic of Macedonia and how it positively influences the work of other NGOs: *The WOM Sveti Nikole gives an example to other NGOs that an NGO can work in continuity, can be sustainable, can have a great number of active members, bring about legal changes, which is encouraging for other NGOs. It also shows that a NGO can be of service to citizens (education, checkups), that a local NGO can make a world level campaign, and that women, as managers, can lead a strong NGO. The WOM Sveti Nikole has had influence in changing people's mentality, which has resulted in certain changes of old-fashioned thinking and attitudes. With its work, the WOM Sveti Nikole has demonstrate how a civil society should function, which is the best way to contribute to developing the civil society in the Republic of Macedonia.*
8. It started out as a local organization and has expanded its work to the national level over the past two years.

### **Specific recommendations regarding achievements:**

The evaluators have read some of the project proposals, which have not been supported so far, (the Self-help center, Education and Legal Aid). The following are the recommendations for improving and further lobbying for these projects:

1. Pay more attention to a better definition of problems in the local context of Sveti Nikole;
2. Improve argumentation for solving the problems, which projects deal with, and increase the usage of exact indicators (statistics so far used in the WOM Sveti Nikole work);
3. Ensure a better definition of aims, which would render a better definition of the evaluation and monitoring the program efficiency, that is, these program directions of the organization.

### **Specific recommendations regarding "Education and Legal Aid" project:**

1. Specify the beneficiary group, because its current context is too wide;
2. Define direct benefits of the beneficiaries from proposed activities – education and public round tables;
3. Achieve consistency in the presentation of activities – what is stated in the introduction has to be further stated in the description and budget of the project;
4. Specify the number of round tables' participants and reduce participants in workshops;
5. Estimate the number of free legal advises and give the basis for the estimate;
6. Reduce the project staff (assistant and lawyer), because this is a pilot phase of the project;
7. Attach to project proposal draft educational programs and work material, which will be used.

## **5.4 Cooperation and communication with other NGOs, institutions, and general population**

### **Findings:**

Interviews with representatives of local NGOs and institutions in Sveti Nikole show a very positive and almost unanimous stand about the WOM Sveti Nikole being pro-active and open for collaboration with others on the local level. There is lack of pro-activity towards national institutions and donors, that is, the organization waits for donors' tenders to present its ideas, and when projects are refused, there are no mechanisms to improve projects or fundraising with the same or a different donor.

The communication with a general population is most contributed by the WOM Sveti Nikole presence in the state-run media and its web page and that is why these two types of communication are specially elaborated.

## **5.5 Press Clipping**

Based on certain excerpts from the WOM Sveti Nikole press clipping, it can be concluded that the pre-campaign activities are presented in "Perspektivi," a magazine dealing with NGOs in the Republic of Macedonia, and in the bulletin of the Organization of Organizations of Women in Macedonia. In both publications, the WOM Sveti Nikole appeared regularly.

Effects of the “Do not turn your head away” campaign included excellent presentation in media of the information from press conferences held during the campaign, which at the same time draw the media attention. Namely, journalists made articles and features about breast and reproductive organs cancer and organized at their own initiative interviews with professionals (gynecologists) and with certain politicians (Liljana Popovska). A number of dailies and weeklies published the campaign poster, without the WOM Sveti Nikole having asked for it.

## 5.6 Web page

**Technical aspects:** the web page opens rather quickly, which does not provoke negative effects with the visitors, photos open gradually and slowly, but there is a good synergy with the text, because photos open while visitors read a related text. Even better effects could be achieved by further editing the photos in terms of reducing the resolution, or by making photos optional, where they would not open simultaneously with the text, but only by clicking on them. This could facilitate even faster access to the web page.

Additionally, the web page pink color dominated background, is very interesting. The question arises as to whether this color was chosen as “a typical women’s color.” It is however, recommended that this pink be replaced with somewhat less intense nuance.

**Content:** the web page is rich in versatile content, which presents different fields of work of the WOM Sveti Nikole. In order to facilitate a faster search option, it is recommended to reorganize the main menu in the following manner: instead of the general categorization into segments like gallery, contact information, and similar, topics should be categorized by the issues, for example: work with the youth, which would group all related information, health program, legal issues, etc.

### Specific achievements in cooperation with others:

1. Good work on the local level contributes to the development of the civil society in the town of Sveti Nikole: *Working in this environment is easier for us, because we have a strong women’s NGO in the town.*
2. Work efficiency and quality content material have established solid grounds for cooperation with the national NGO: *They react rather fast to all cooperation requirements and their material is richer in content than those of other organizations we cooperate with.*
3. The organization has highly developed solidarity with other NGOs across the country, which greatly contributes to building those NGOs capacities for their particular needs: *They helped me when I founded the organization, by writing the first project proposal for me. Whenever I have some problem with financial or any other issues I am not very familiar with, they always help me.*

### Specific recommendations for cooperation with others:

1. Take advantage and foster the existing collaboration with the most active NGOs in Sveti Nikole. It is recommended to organize quarterly meetings with key organizations in the town, with the purpose to exchange information, upgrade collaboration, and possible development of mutual activities on the local level.
2. Examine, together with the Environmental Association “Izgrev,” the Women’s Civil Initiative, and the Roma Association of Sveti Nikole the missions of each of them and identify fields of work and projects that could be jointly planned, implemented, and evaluated in the future.
3. Before requesting support for a certain project, the project proposal should be submitted to the NGO, which the support is sought from.

4. Link local coordinators from the villages of Mustafino and Kadrifakovo, who wish to work with ECO-products (Mustafino) and horticulture (Kadrifakvo), with the Women's Civil Initiative, who deals with green-houses and strengthening women's economic status.

## 6. Guidelines for future

### Findings:

Thinking about the organizational future activities, it is evident that there are different perspectives which each in their own way greatly contribute to the development of the organization. Different perspectives open different possibilities which should be discussed in the future and think on how to combine different perspectives into a single structure.

Each member of the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee presented similar, yet different desires concerning the WOM Sveti Nikole future activities. The work spheres cover work with the youth, the Self-help Center for women suffering from cancer, the Center for free legal aid, SOS telephone for women – victims of domestic violence.

Based on a survey, the needs in the field refer to organizing social events (demonstrated in almost all villages where the survey was conducted), repetition of health lectures (primarily for women who did not attend lectures), opportunity for additional education through computers and English language courses (for women who have their own business, single or unemployed women), and self-employment.

A local coordinator from one of the villages where the WOM Sveti Nikole operates said: *Women from the village are interested in their health and not in politics. They are fed up with politics and are not interested in it at all.*

### Resources for future:

1. The WOM Sveti Nikole has a permanent donor and certain financial resources for 2005. Considering that the donor will stay in the Republic of Macedonia for the next three years, it is expected that it will continue to provide support throughout this period.
2. Developed human resources, organized in teams and specialized in specific problems.
3. Full-time employed members.
4. Acknowledgment on the local and visibility on the national level.
5. Secured infrastructure (office, equipment) for future work.

### Specific recommendations for future:

1. Map out strategic planning and pay attention to redefinition and articulation of the WOM Sveti Nikole vision. Planning is half job done, while the other half refers to keeping up with the plan and its implementation.
2. Reconsider the idea of the Managing Board and the Supervising Committee members about expanding the field of activities, by supporting the following initiatives: SOS telephone for women - victims of domestic violence, the Self-help Center for women suffering from cancer, and opening an office for free legal aid.
3. Logistically improve the organization's space (provided by the municipality of Sveti Nikole) and upgrade computer equipment.
4. Integrate in future plans beneficiaries' needs relating to health education, English language and computer courses for rural women interested in these matters.
5. The Babylon Center (works with children and the youth) should develop a business plan in order to achieve partial self-sustainability and financial stability, wherein it should also intensify fundraising activities.
6. Take advantage of excellent results achieved in 2004 for fundraising with other donors and building organizational capacity over the next two years.

## 6.1 Main achievements of the organization:

1. The WOM Sveti Nikole members are acknowledged and respected intellectuals in this small town. People value them, which along with their work and capacity contributes to the development of the civil society in Sveti Nikole.

2. Organizational culture is more self-entailed than defined in writing. The organization cherishes values, such as solidarity, persistency, honesty, consistency, dedication, and effectiveness and encourages motivation with old and new members. Consistency in respecting and implementing these values contributes to the realization of the mission and cooperation with other NGOs.

3. Development capacity and open attitude to learning make the WOM Sveti Nikole an organization that can improve well and possibly fast, which can foster the organizational professionalism.

4. Security is ensured through the infrastructure and full-time employed members, along with constant mobilization of new members, including those in influential positions and young intellectuals, wherein the permanent donor makes the situation additionally stable.

5. From a very basic level, where all members did all jobs, the WOM Sveti Nikole has advanced to a level, where specialized teams work on particular social issues.

6. Relations among organization members have further improved, because all members are proud of their success, which consequently increases confidence and enthusiasm for future work.

7. The WOM Sveti Nikole was working on continuous and quality activities, not only in the town, but also in the surrounding villages, which has resulted in building a balanced capacity in the entire municipality.

8. Actualized and continuous work on gender issues helps others understand specific women's problems: *If there was not for the WOM Sveti Nikole to underline women's problems, I would never think that women have special needs.*

9. Composition and distribution of annual reports helps organization's overall transparency.

10. Press conferences have showed that a well planned and professionally prepared campaign in national media can lead to an acknowledgment on the national level and to spreading the idea among professional circles and general public. The web page also had a positive role in the whole process.

## 6.2 Main recommendations for organizational development:

1. The WOM Sveti Nikole is in a development phase with strategic planning as its main priority, which was also cited in an interview: *They have to focus on a certain field, which can be a wider field of work, but activities have to be directed towards a specific and wider aim.* Strategic planning can be realized in two ways. One is to have each program direction compose its own plan and have all plans incorporated into a single plan in the end. The other way is to have all teams partake in planning, which has to be facilitated by an external consultant.

2. When planning, a mission has to be reexamined and vision redefined. Financial resources for this activity have to be obtained from the permanent donor (KtK), so that the money for monitoring the law implementation could be redirected to strengthening the organizational capacity. Financial resources for this budget item can be obtained from several other donors (for example the US Embassy, the World Bank – small grants, the Embassy of Switzerland). Considering the great results of the WOM Sveti Nikole last year, it is the right time to raise funds with other donors.

3. Organizational capacities have to be strengthened (health and other teams) in terms of writing project proposal, which can be achieved by providing literature, know-how transmitting (full-time employed member and the organization's president) and a possible

engagement of a volunteer from the Peace Corps, who speaks the local language and has work experience in NGOs.<sup>6</sup>

4. The organization has to work on improving computer and English language skills of its members, by using the existing resources, computers in the Babylon Center, and language and computer educated members. Full-time employed members have to learn English and Excel program. This requirement was also underlined in an interview: *The organization has to make the best out of its investments in training its members, because it will benefit from it later on.*

5. This evaluation showed that the WOM Sveti Nikole does not possess a developed system for programs' and organization's monitoring and evaluation, therefore the development of these systems should be included in strategic planning.

6. The combination of health workshops and free gynecological checkups should continue, because it can change women's lives permanently. According to beneficiaries, but also women who were not included in the health program, their needs include, apart from gynecological checkups and workshops, self-employment (young women up to 20 years and women who have their own business) and in some forms, the protection of women's human rights.

7. It has to be researched what rural women can do, how they can operate, and whether there are fields in which they can function without the WOM Sveti Nikole. The coordinator from the village of Gorobinci said: *I wish the WOM Sveti Nikole helps us establish a small center for the youth, because there are about 100 school children in our village. It would be very nice to give our children the opportunity to learn English language and computers, because we know the importance of these qualifications in modern lifestyle.*

8. The Supervising Committee has to support the idea for hiring an independent financial auditor, who would work in accordance with the state and international financial regulations. The audit report can be used for further fundraising and increasing transparency in the local community and among potential donors. The MCIC external financial audit overview, presented in daily "Dnevnik" can be a good model. This is stated in the WOM Sveti Nikole Statute, and Article 26 says: *Professional administrative and financial issues can be done by the Organization itself, or can be given to another relevant organization.*

9. The Managing Board has to initiate the formation of an Advisory Board.

10. Establishing of the WOM Sveti Nikole Policy Manual, mentioned in the Statute, Article 19, and the Statute decision in 2004, became paragraph 18.

11. Promotional and educational material has proved to be more than useful: *There has to be more promotional material.*

12. Given the unique experience of the "Do not turn your head away" campaign, which was realized in a short time and encompassed various activities targeting a common aim, it is recommended that the WOM Sveti Nikole elaborates the experience in a case study. The goal is to share the experience with other NGOs, print and present it in an electronic version on the web page, that is, make it available to public.

13. The WOM Sveti Nikole has to find a better quality English translator, with good knowledge of the NGO terminology, especially given the fact that inadequate translation was the reason for different donors to reject various projects.

14. Organizational technical capacity has to improve by purchasing two new computers.

15. Attention has to be paid on the usage of feminine gender in all official and internal documents, and in job titles (e.g. female social worker, female psychologist, and female sociologists), and positions at work (female manager, female educator).

16. The organization has to build capacity for monitoring media concerning the implementation of the Healthcare Law inside the organization. In the meantime, it should contact the NGO Info-Center or Euro Balkan as to use their electronic press clipping for

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<sup>5</sup> These volunteers have already worked in other municipalities in the Republic of Macedonia. They stay in the Republic of Macedonia for one year at least.

learning about media presentations of others (state institutions and NGOs) and also their own.

17. Public has to be constantly informed about WOM Sveti Nikole activities. We have received very interesting and useful suggestions from a person who knows a lot and works in media: *Informing the public has to be a continuous process. They have to use all available opportunities from the existing resources within other organizations in order to plan the organizational PR strategy.*

18. Since the campaign and lobbying were national level activities, the WOM Sveti Nikole has moved from local to national media. Also, as planned, monitoring of the law implementation has to be conducted on the national level. Therefore, regular press conferences in the NGO Info-center are recommended.

19. Distribution of annual report print version has to expand to include partner NGOs from Skopje, network members, local women coordinators in the rural areas, and donors. Keep the previous distribution list, because people are informed about WOM Sveti Nikole activities through these publications.

20. Communicate with the NGOs which are active in Sveti Nikole and identify fields of possible cooperation and joint activities.

21. Proactive approach towards cooperation with donors would mean to insist on constant communication with those present in the Republic of Macedonia. Additionally, donors have to be personally contacted and the organization has to insist on feedback about the submitted projects, further project negotiating, or representing, even in cases when a donor has initially rejected a project. A typical example of a project is that of obtaining a mammography apparatus, given to the Mobimak Foundation. In this respect, the organization should continue to permanently inquire about the negotiation status and initiate meetings with those in charge.



## **7. Recommendations to WOM Sveti Nikole permanent donor Kvinna till Kvinna**

1. Support the organizational development, as an important element of the further overall development, over the next two or three years. It is therefore necessary to financially support strategic planning from this year's or/and next annual budget. If it means a certain budget revision, it is strongly recommended to go ahead with the revision. It is recommended to hire an external consultant as a very important aspect in successfully conducting strategic planning. In this respect, we suggest the choice be made by the WOM Sveti Nikole.

2. Provide technical assistance by purchasing two new computers, a laser printer and a scanner, and ensure good Internet connection.

3. Examine the possibility for continuing the exchange of "good practices" between Sweden and Macedonia, which contribute to improving the position of women in Macedonia.

**Annex 3: WOM Sveti Nikole development matrix for the period 1998 - 2004**

Year	Project name	Aims	Specific goals	Achieved results	Activities	Place of implementation	Number of beneficiaries	Budget	Donor
1998	Education about malignant diseases for rural women from municipality of Sveti Nikole		Organizational capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 9 lectures in 3 villages</li> <li>- 125 free checkups</li> <li>- 600 distributed brochures (with 5 topics)</li> <li>- 60 posters (attached)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 lectures on:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Contraception</li> <li>2. Breast cancer</li> <li>3. Uterus cancer</li> </ol> </li> <li>- 100 free checkups</li> <li>- Design, print, and distribution of 5 types of brochures</li> <li>- Design and print of 2 types of posters</li> </ul>	Gorobinci, Erdzelija and Crniliste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lectures for between 100 and 125 women</li> <li>- Checkups for 125 women (22 referred to further medical treatment, 1 urgently hospitalized)</li> </ul>	Approved DM 2,744	Star Delphi International
1999	Education about malignant diseases for women from municipality of Sveti Nikole			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 12 lectures in 3 villages and in the town</li> <li>- 100 free checkups</li> <li>- 60 posters (attached)</li> <li>- 1000 distributed brochures (5 types)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 lectures on:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Contraception</li> <li>2. Breast cancer</li> <li>3. Uterus cancer</li> </ol> </li> <li>- 100 free checkups</li> <li>- Design, print, and distribution of 1000 brochures (5 types)</li> <li>- Design and print of 2 types of posters</li> </ul>	Amzabegovo, Mustafino, Pesirovo and Sveti Nikole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lectures for between 140 and 160 women</li> <li>- Checkups for 100 women (20 referred to further medical treatment, 1 to medical treatment in hospital)</li> </ul>	Approved DM 4,989.50	MCIC – Macedonian Center for International Cooperation
2000	Education for rural women			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15 lectures in 4 villages and in the town</li> <li>- 125 free checkups</li> <li>- 90 posters (attached)</li> <li>- 1000 distributed brochures (5 types)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 lectures on:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Contraception</li> <li>2. Breast cancer</li> <li>3. Uterus cancer</li> </ol> </li> <li>- 125 free checkups</li> <li>- Design, print, and distribution of 1,000 brochures (5 types)</li> <li>- Design, and print of 2 types of posters</li> </ul>	Knezje, Kadrifakovo, Sopot, Dolno Gjugjanci and Sveti Nikole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lectures for between 104 and 112 women</li> <li>- Checkups for 125 women (48 referred to further medical treatment, 1 to medical treatment in hospital)</li> </ul>	Approved DM 5,152.50	MCIC – Macedonian Center for International Cooperation
2001	Education			- 25 workshops in	- 5 workshops on:	Gorobinci,	- Lectures for	Requested	Kvinna

Year	Project name	Aims	Specific goals	Achieved results	Activities	Place of implementation	Number of beneficiaries	Budget	Donor
	about early detection and facing malignant diseases for rural women			5 places - 200 free checkups - Additional result: round table devoted to: "Malignant diseases of women and necessary state intervention" - Additional survey on a sample of 450 women resulted in analysis of malignant disease	1. Malignant diseases, notion and symptoms 2. Psychological trauma of women suffering from malignant diseases 3. Family and individuals suffering from malignant diseases 4. Early detection of breast cancer 5. Early detection of uterus cancer - 200 gynecological checkups - Additional activity: round table on: "Malignant diseases of women and necessary state intervention" - Additional activity: survey on malignant diseases, on a sample of 450 women from 5 towns: Sveti Nikole, Kocani, Makedonska Kamenica, Kriva Palanka and Stip	Erdzelija, Crniliste, Mustafino and Sveti Nikole	150 women - Checkups for 200 women (66 referred to further medical treatment)	DM 14,784 - Approved DM 15,228 + DM 435	till Kvinna
2001/ 2002	Education for women about maintaining and improving reproductive health and family planning	- Education about reproductive health and family planning for young women	-Birth control - Early detection of certain diseases -Full protection of personal	- 8 workshops - 600 distributed brochures (6 types)	- 8 workshops on: 1. Sexual life of young women 2. Internal and external reproductive organs 3. Intercourse infective diseases 4. Contraception 5. Benignant and	Sveti Nikole	- 25 Roma and Macedonian women aged between 15 and 35 years	Requested USD 1,998 - Approved USD 1,998	The Open Society Institute - Macedonia

Year	Project name	Aims	Specific goals	Achieved results	Activities	Place of implementation	Number of beneficiaries	Budget	Donor
			health		malignant diseases 6. Family planning 7. Pregnancy and childbirth 8. Women's role in family - Design, print, and distribution of 600 brochures				
2002	Can we change something at least ?	- Amending legal regulations relating to healthcare - Creating strong women's NGO network - Improving women's health		- Mutual cooperation with 8 women's NGO for improving women's health - Mutual initiative for regular gynecological checkups - Rising consciousness of general population and other organizations of necessary regular free gynecological checkups - Unexpected result: inclusion of free gynecological checkups in election campaign of certain political parties - 1000 distributed brochures - 1400 distributed bulletins	- 16 workshops on 4 topics: 1. Malignant diseases, notion and symptoms 2. Psychological trauma of women suffering from malignant diseases and relation of ill women and their families 3. Early detection of breast cancer 4. Early detection of uterus cancer - 7 round tables in Stip, Probistip, Kriva Palanka, Makedonska Kamenica, Bitola, Kocani and Kumanovo - Initiative for forming network of 8 women's NGO-s and assessing necessity of introducing mandatory gynecological checkups - 110 free gynecological checkups - 4 meetings of	-Workshops: Lozovo, Milino, Dorfulija, Nemanjici - Round tables: Stip, Probistip, Kriva Palanka, Makedonska Kamenica, Bitola, Kocani, and Kumanovo	- Workshops for 120 women - Checkups for 110 women - General population	-Requested EUR 12,960  -Approved EUR 13,287	Kvinna till Kvinna

Year	Project name	Aims	Specific goals	Achieved results	Activities	Place of implementation	Number of beneficiaries	Budget	Donor
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>network members</li> <li>- Collecting official statistical figures</li> <li>- Survey with 750 women from 8 municipalities</li> <li>- Design, print, and distribution of 1,000 brochures (4 types x 250)</li> <li>- Design, print, and distribution of 1,400 bulletins (2 publications)</li> </ul>				
2003	Women for mandatory and free gynecological checkups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submission of Amendment on regular gynecological checkups</li> <li>-Strengthening and spreading of women's NGO network for improving women's health</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mutual lobbying and advocacy of 18 women's NGOs</li> <li>- Submission of Amendment on regular gynecological checkups</li> <li>- Realization of "Do not turn your head away" media campaign</li> <li>- Additional results: free insertion of poster or flier in dailies Utrinski vesnik and Vest and weekly and monthly magazines Tea Moderna, Zdravje, Kapital, Makedonsko sonce, Zena, Kompletna</li> <li>-Additional campaign promotion during</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 workshops on malignant diseases for women from MODA textile factory</li> <li>- Media campaign</li> <li>- TV clip</li> <li>- Design, print, and distribution of 20,000 fliers</li> <li>- Design, print, and distribution of 3,000 posters</li> <li>- Design, print, and distribution of 1,000 brochures about malignant diseases</li> <li>- 15 billboards</li> <li>- Lobbying and advocacy</li> <li>- 16 round tables on Amendment</li> <li>- Draft Amendment</li> <li>- Organization's web page</li> <li>- 4 meetings of network members</li> <li>- Contacts with MPs, legal experts, doctors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workshop in Sveti Nikole</li> <li>- 1 workshop in Vinica</li> <li>- Lobbying and advocacy in Republic of Macedonia</li> <li>- Round tables in towns where partner organizations operate</li> <li>- Campaign throughout Macedonia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workshops for 115 women from Sveti Nikole and 25 women from Vinica</li> <li>- General population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Requested Eur 25,486</li> <li>-Approved EUR 20,937</li> </ul>	Kvinna till Kvinna

Year	Project name	Aims	Specific goals	Achieved results	Activities	Place of implementation	Number of beneficiaries	Budget	Donor
				NGO fair - Additional workshop on malignant diseases in Vinica - Establishment of good contacts with Parliament deputy speaker Liljana Popovska	- Press conference				
Until August 2004	Step by step towards better women's health	- Improving women's health by amending Law on Healthcare - Maintaining and spreading women's NGOs network and strengthening organizational capacity - Forming self-help group for women suffering from malignant diseases in Sveti Nikole		- Adoption of Amendment on Regular Gynecological Checkup - 2 meetings with network members - Press conference to promote Amendment - Additional activity – participation in Health Ministry's discussion of National Plan for breast cancer - Submission of recommendations for National Plan for breast cancer prevention - 2 trainings for trainers	- 3 meetings with network members - 6 workshops with women who have undergone medical treatments for breast and uterus cancer - Lobbying and advocacy - 2 press conferences - 2 trainings for professionals who will conduct workshops on malignant diseases - Survey with 2000 women on women's health problems and needs - Study visit to Women's Centre Uzice, especially to women who have undergone breast cancer treatment - Design, print, and distribution of 1,000 brochures about malignant diseases - Design, print, and distribution of 250 posters	- Self-help group in Sveti Nikole - Lobbying and advocacy throughout Republic of Macedonia	- General population - 14 women who have undergone breast and uterus cancer therapies in self-help group - 28 female professionals attended training for trainers	-Requested EUR 22,150  -Approved EUR 23,038 + EUR 5, 000 for car purchase	Kvinna till Kvinna

Year	Project name	Aims	Specific goals	Achieved results	Activities	Place of implementation	Number of beneficiaries	Budget	Donor
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design, print, and distribution of 1,000 fliers</li> <li>- Design, print, and distribution of 500 brochures including survey results</li> <li>- Design, print, and distribution of 200 brochures for women with cancer diseases</li> </ul>				