

SozialMarie 2008
Preis für innovative Sozialprojekte

I. What we do or try to do in present time and have done since 1993

Kapernaum Csoport Alapítvány (Kapernaum Group Foundation) is a foundation with two main objectives:

(1) The Foundation is primarily a Christian mission among children and youths living with multiple disabilities (i.e. physical disabilities accompanied by others, like inability to speak, intellectual disability or mental retardation) and their families. We are convinced that the true and long-lasting solution for their lives – just as for ours – is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, through all our programs we try to communicate the love and care of God to these people, and integrate them into local Christian communities.

(2) The Foundation provides assistance for them to live with dignity, as equal members of the society. It has been ensuring that the disadvantages arising from the condition and the specific life situation of these children and young people are alleviated, and they are provided equal opportunities by means of continuous integration programs for 15 years.

To this end, the Foundation:

Preaching the Gospel

makes young people with multiple disabilities and their families acquainted with the Good News of Jesus; organizes special bible classes, bible studies, services, afternoon programmes for parents and devotional days; prepares information brochures and family newsletters.

Organizes programs promoting integration and equal opportunities

offers cultural, leisure time and community programmes on a weekly basis (almost every Sunday except in July, August and January) to improve the quality of life and promote the mental and spiritual growth of socially disadvantaged young people with disabilities and their family members, as well as summer camps (there are three of them) with an integrational focus.

Supports families

tries to provide help for the whole family in any needed way at occasional times; organizes devotional days, family counseling and bible studies for parents; prepares and sends out newsletters; maintains personal contacts and preaches the gospel.

Performs mission work

promotes and facilitates the establishment of other similar groups in churches; prepares, introduces and disseminates materials to be used in special bible classes; prepares other specialty publications.

Creates a support background

operates a voluntary service with the involvement of voluntary helpers with various denominational and church background (Reformed, Baptist, Catholic). Helpers participate at devotional weekends every half-year, and meet within the framework of a small group discussion and a prayer meeting every month. Every handicapped person has his/her own personal helper during our programs.

Performs other social activities and creates connections

makes contact with other churches; contacts with other civil organizations aimig at similar goals; represents the core idea of the Group in newspaper articles and television programs.

The target group of the programme

The members of the Group are young people and children with multiple disabilities (physical disability accompanied by other form(s) of disability, e.g. speech impediment, intellectual disability, deafness etc.). They are aged between 10–40. They live in residential homes, in single parent families or normal families. The majority of Group members live in Budapest or Pest county, but we have members with disabilities in the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Fejér and Tolna counties as well. There are 52 members (disabled ones and voluntary helpers) in our Group right now.

II. Innovative approach and actions

Our name comes from a Bible story (Gospel of Mark 2, 1-12.). One time Jesus was teaching in the town of Kapernaum when four men tried to bring their disabled friend to Him. Because of the huge crowd they decided to open the roof of the house to lower their fellow directly to the feet of Jesus. Thus, thanks to the helping hands, the so longed encounter could take place. We try to fulfill the very same role of these hands today and go together with our friend to Him and the people as well.

For the Group the whole family is important. So, we organize special programs for them as well.

We try out every possible outdoor and indoor program, in which they never had the possibility to do so, e.g. summer bobsleigh, pottery, boatripe, etc.

We prepare slideshows about stories. In this way our nonspeaking members can participate in the acts.

III. Future Plans and Prospects

A) Maintaining the usual activities of the Group, mentioned above. Organizing of a Disability Day together with our partners (“Hand in Hand” Foundation and RSZSZ organization), which would like to bring closer people with disabilities and healthy people through the introduction of the lives of people with disabilities and interactive programmes.

B) Creating the Kapernaum House – For equal opportunities

Planned location: the town of Zánka, Central Transdanubian Region, Veszprém county, sub-region of Balatonfüred.

As a result of this, a unique and exemplary service provision centre could be established which promotes integration and simultaneous services. In course of the implementation, we put huge emphasis on enforcing the horizontal principles.

The primary purpose of the project: promoting the equal opportunities of people with disabilities, people with reduced working capacity and socially disadvantaged people in the Western Hungarian sub-region, through the development of the complex instruments of employment and rehabilitation.

Project elements:

1. Almond processing plant

Besides employing the residents, provides employment to socially disadvantaged unemployed people in the region

2. PC workshop

The creation of a range and environment of information and communication tools adapted to people with disabilities contributes to the reduction of employment inequalities, where people can obtain skills and knowledge later applicable in distance employment.

3. Residential home consisting of accessible apartments for 12 persons with multiple disabilities

Accessible apartments adapted for people with disabilities, which provide an opportunity for them to create their independent lifestyle. The apartments can be bought by residents so that they can live there permanently.

4. Movement development centre with special gyms, tangentor, pools; therapeutic horse riding.

5. A guesthouse with accessibility for 8-10 families. Summer holiday centre for families who have children with disabilities. The programs supporting families and training parents are also of integral nature.

6. Student hostel with accessibility for 15 persons

Integrated child camping (sport, artistic) for children living with disabilities and for healthy children.

Available also for accommodating theologians and special education teachers, who can participate in training programmes. In any other cases it serves as a guesthouse for pay guests.

As the result of the project, a unique and complex residential area is created, which provides opportunity to carry out holiday programmes for children with disabilities and their families. It also allows independent lifestyle to youngsters with multiple disabilities and ensures employment. The residential area will aim at maintaining itself independently. The tourism development effect is good for the municipality, such revenues and the newly established jobs will reinforce sustainable growth.

Projekt partners: Local Government of Zánka, Assembly of the Reformed Church in Zánka, Central Danubium Regional Labour Centre, Hand in Hand Foundation, German organization-Bethel Institution

IV. Financial background

The Foundation generates its revenues from three different sources: public donations, governmental and non governmental applications and tax-payers offering 1% of their personal income tax.

The expenditures for e.g. in 2006 were as follows:

Material costs (mainly fuel, food, artwork)	3800 Eur.
Services used (cultural programs, summer camps)	9100 Eur.
Vehicle costs (insurance and tax)	2000 Eur.
Other costs (banking and annual depreciation)	2100 Eur.
Total annual expenditure	17000 Eur.

The Foundation has won domestic funding and municipality tenders. An integrated art camp were partly implemented from the operational support of NCA and Budapest Bank Foundation.