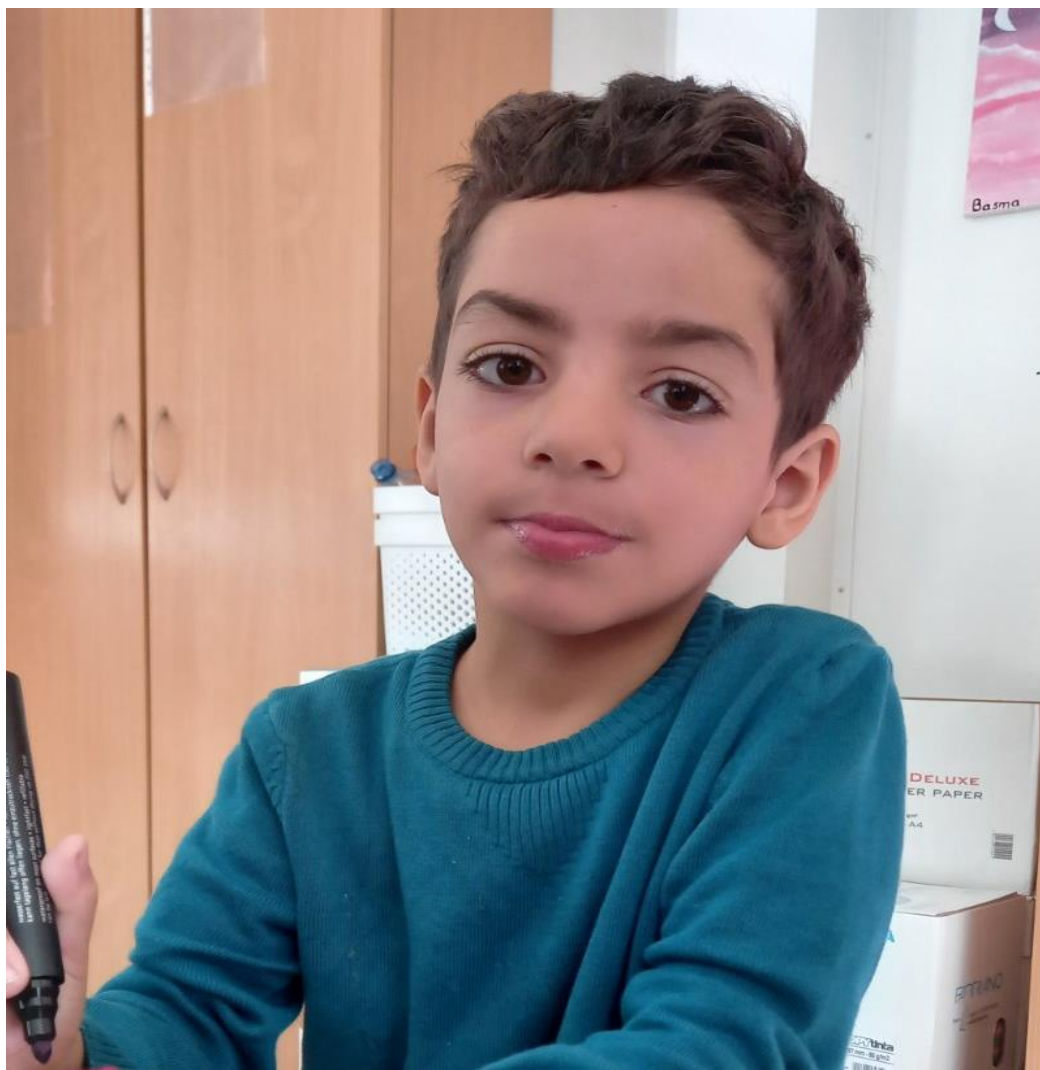




Save the Children



***Ali*, a boy from Iran who was forced by hardship to embark on a journey to a better life with his family. Here he is, participating in activities in of the the Child Friendly Spaces in Bihac center, Una Sana Canton, Bosnia and Hercegovina.**

**name changed*

SUPPORTING LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Capacity building for child rights defenders

Save the Children in North West Balkans

LOCAL PARTNER: LAN BIHAĆ

Who they were

The Association "LAN" (Learning Activity Network) is a non-governmental, non-profit, non-partisan, civic organization that operates since 2015, on the principles of impartiality, independence, humanity and voluntariness. Through its work and activities, they advocate for democratic development of the society, tolerance, coexistence and respect for human rights and civil liberties of all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

Save the Children began working with LAN in 2018, supporting in organizational capacity development, including capacity building of staff, which were only 5 at the time.



Child Friendly Space in Bihać Center, BiH

Who are they now?

Today, LAN is one of the partner organizations working jointly with Save the Children in the Emergency Response Program for refugees and migrants. They have currently grown as an organization, equipped with 17 staff members who run programs in human rights and education, including provision of support and capacity building in communications, teacher training and other expertise in the field of education. LAN also focus on supporting the education for children and youth in BiH, providing assistance to youth in career development and self-employment, including people with disabilities,

The organization has become a key player in the field of education and human rights, organizing conferences, professional meetings, seminars and other events, independently or in association with other organizations.

LAN is now currently running a Child Friendly Space in one of the camps in Bihać, Una Sana Canton, BiH providing support to refugee and migrant children.

What was done?

Throughout the partnership, Save the Children in NWB has built close working relations with LAN, developing and strengthening their capacities to work **for** and **with children** in advocating for children's rights, while acting as a watch dog to hold local and national duty bearers accountable on child rights issues. Various opportunities and capacity building is provided both for organisational (i.e. finance, anti-harassment, team building, etc.) and programmatic issues, specifically support in thematic areas - Child Protection, Child Participation and Child Rights Governance.

Save the Children has organized a series of workshops for LAN staff related to child participation and child safeguarding policies, which led to LAN developing a Child Protection Policy, now an integral part of their work tasks.

It is Save the Children's belief that by shifting greater capacity, means and ownership to national and local actors, it will result in more timely, appropriate and effective outcomes for the most deprived, vulnerable and marginalized children and their communities and better fulfil the rights of children.

More specifically, LAN enhanced capacities on:

- Advocacy and campaigning, with the perspective of Child Participation;
- Humanitarian/Emergency response;
- Staff knowledge and skills on Child Protection and Child Rights Governance;
- Development of Child Safeguarding Policy;
- Implementing and monitoring of child rights;
- Increasing and strengthening of financial capacities, including financial and logistical procedures
- Anti-harassment;
- Team building.

Results

- Increased knowledge and capacities of the organization in the area of children's rights.
- Improved teamwork of staff, enhancing trust and commitment to tasks.
- Increased knowledge of staff on working directly with children for the best interest of the child, adhering and applying child safeguarding principles in their daily work.
- Increased visibility and reputation in the area of children's rights, with focus on humanitarian response.



Capacity Building of LAN staff

What difference has the partnership made for the CSO?

Thanks to Save the Children support in capacity building, LAN managed to integrate policies in place that entail an environment built around mutual respect for staff and the organization in place, and establish a culture of dialogue and effective communication with each other. LAN has managed to set up an internal process on ensuring capacity building of staff, aiming to continually strengthen the skills of staff in different areas such as in education, child participation and child protection. This internal system in place, has led to an understanding of the importance of having a diverse and multicultural team that can lead to a better working environment, which will be able to support those most in need. Continuous capacity building

It is Save the Children's belief that by shifting greater capacity, means and ownership to national and local actors, it will result in more timely, appropriate and effective outcomes for the most deprived, vulnerable and marginalized children and their communities and better fulfil the rights of children.

has brought the organization to a position of better understanding children's rights, and at best, how CSOs can have an impact in the society and support children to develop, learn, and be happy. This can be best be seen on the child friendly spaces that LAN run, providing support for children on the move.

CASE STORY – *Ali's step forward



So far, more than 50,000 refugees and migrants have reached Bosnia and Herzegovina through the Balkan route. One of them is Ali*, a boy from Iran who was forced by hardship to embark on a journey to a better life with his family. A long and difficult journey, full of uncertainty, through several countries brought Ali and his family to Una-Sana Canton two years ago. Thanks to the support of local and international organizations, including Save the Children, they were accommodated in one of the migrant temporary reception centres in this Canton.

During one of the many attempts to cross the border with Croatia, an accident happened that changed the life of this boy and his family forever. While crossing the road at night, Ali was hit by a truck, as a result of which he suffered severe bodily injuries. This was the beginning of a difficult period for him and his family, as the boy needed medical care and several months of recovery.

"Ali didn't talk at all. He constantly had mood swings and behavioural outbursts that could not be controlled. "We were very worried about him. We wanted to help him but we didn't know how,*

and we were all scared because we didn't know what awaited us in the future," said Hasan, Ali's* older brother.*

However, all that has changed during his stay in the temporary reception centre in Una-Sana Canton and the support provided by Save the Children in partnership with other local and international organizations to provide every child with the necessary quality development and happy childhood.

Due to his long recovery, Ali* needed all the help and support, which he got thanks to the Child Friendly Space (CFS), run by the local organization LAN in partnership with Save the Children. The basic task of the CFS is to provide children with a safe environment and opportunities for growth. Initially, Ali* was withdrawn and alienated, unable to communicate with other children and staff in the center. He just sat at the corner of the room, silent, indifferent... However, this did not discourage the staff, as they would approach Ali* with extreme empathy trying to gain his attention and trust. After

It is Save the Children's belief that by shifting greater capacity, means and ownership to national and local actors, it will result in more timely, appropriate and effective outcomes for the most deprived, vulnerable and marginalized children and their communities and better fulfil the rights of children.

some time, they managed to gain his interest in various activities of the corner through numerous educational and creative workshops, and individual work with the boy.

"At first he came with his parents, and after a while he started coming alone, which meant a lot to everyone involved in his recovery, especially his parents and the dedicated CFS staff. Every time he came, the smile on his face grew bigger and bigger, and that bright smile of his was the greatest reward and confirmation of good work. He became curious, playful and interested in the world around him. In our CFS Ali started communicating with us and the other children, learning, pronouncing words correctly in English, and showing closeness to the people who were there for him every day. Through the daily work and selfless efforts of our team, significant progress has been made in the mental and physical health of this child," explained Dr.sc. Izolda Osmanagić, LAN President.*

What difference does our partnership have on children?

- Children feel empowered and openly express their opinions and wishes for current improvements and for the future, as a result of the gained trust and confidence in the staff who work with them.
- Children learn that being different is an opportunity to meet others, and they socialize with locals which has helped them to establish contacts and build new friendships.
- Children learn about classroom environment and how to use various materials in class, including learning about life skills, socialization as well as awareness of nature, values in life and self-esteem. Continuous work in these areas show that the children who come to LAN's corner are visibly progressing in education and in life skills, and building self-esteem.
- All activities done with children are planned activities suitable for children and aimed at developing their potential, which are implemented through introductory activities. These activities support children's development in the areas of health and nutrition, education, psychosocial support and through various creative, sports and leisurely activities.
- Children are supported in their work, every step is respected and appreciated, and they actively encouraged to participate in activities, try their best and are happy to get involved in content aimed at presenting their work they create themselves through 'exhibitions'.

Why is this important?

LAN has achieved to become one of the go-to civil society organizations, increasing its reputation in the field of child rights, education and specifically in the humanitarian context, by building a network and cooperation with other partners in this area. Their goal, especially in working with migrant children, is to strengthen children's skills and abilities, that will help them better cope with life's challenges. LAN also focuses their attention on supporting parents who are an inevitable partner in a quality education.

LAN continues to advocate in the community to ensure stakeholders such as children, parents, teachers and other community members are part of public mobilization towards positive change in children's rights.

It is Save the Children's belief that by shifting greater capacity, means and ownership to national and local actors, it will result in more timely, appropriate and effective outcomes for the most deprived, vulnerable and marginalized children and their communities and better fulfil the rights of children.

PARTNER QUOTE



Dr.sc. Izolda Osmanagić, LAN President

“The support of Save the Children in the work of the Association so far is of great importance. The trainings we went through, thanks to this cooperation, strengthened our team primarily in the organizational sense. In addition, the staff recognized the importance of teamwork and the role of each individual in the team. Their capacity building has helped us to us raise the level of knowledge, and develop a sense of responsibility and confidentiality in performing work tasks. Thanks to good cooperation, we have developed a Child Protection Policy, which is an integral part of our work tasks.

“Helping those in need it is an obligation of all of us, and when it comes to children it is an even greater obligation, which enables us and makes us better as people.”

Dr.sc. Izolda Osmanagić, LAN President