

**Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the Republika Srpska**

**United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**

**Save the Children UK**

***Policy on Protection of Children without Parental Care  
and Families at Risk in Bosnia and Herzegovina  
2006-2016***

**May 2006**

***Policy on Protection of Children without Parental Care  
and Families at Risk in Bosnia and Herzegovina  
2006-2016***

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1.	<b>Development of policy for the protection of families and children without parental care.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.2.	<b>Review of the overall situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.2.1	<i>General situation.....</i>	<i>5</i>
1.2.2	<i>Legal framework for the protection of children without parental care and children at risk of separation from parents.....</i>	<i>6</i>
1.2.3	<i>Role and relevance of centers for social work.....</i>	<i>6</i>
1.3	<b>Children in the social welfare system in BiH.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.3.1	<i>Institutional placement of children deprived of parental care.....</i>	<i>7</i>
1.3.2	<i>Non-institutional placement of children deprived of parental care.....</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>Fostering.....</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>Adoption.....</i>	<i>8</i>
1.3.3	<i>Data gathering and analysis.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<b>II</b>	<b>Policy on protection of children deprived of parental care and families at risk in BiH.....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1	<b>Purpose and goals of the policy on protection of children and families.....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.2	<b>Principles of policy on protection of children and families at risk.....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.3	<b>Characteristics of the policy on protection of children deprived of parental care and families at risk in Bosnia and Herzegovina.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>III</b>	<b>Strategic guidelines for implementation of the policy on social protection of children and families.....</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1	<b>Strategic goals and result indicators.....</b>	<b>13</b>
3.2	<b>Timeframe for implementation.....</b>	<b>14</b>
3.3	<b>Bodies responsible for implementation.....</b>	<b>14</b>
3.3.1	<i>Coordinating body at BiH level.....</i>	<i>14</i>
3.3.2	<i>Expert groups.....</i>	<i>15</i>
3.3.3	<i>Groups for planning and operations in the regions.....</i>	<i>15</i>
3.4	<b>Inter-body coordination of work between bodies responsible for implementation of the policy.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>IV</b>	<b>Prioritized policy areas.....</b>	<b>17</b>
4.1	<b>Gate-keeping in social protection of children and families system.....</b>	<b>17</b>

<b>4.2</b>	<b>Family support services.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Substitute families as form of care.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>4.4</b>	<b>Non-family placement of children.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Annexes.....</b>		<b>22</b>
Annex 1: Plan of transformation of institutions for children without parental care.....		22
Annex 2: Structure and functions of bodies responsible for reform of protection of children deprived of parental care and families (2006 – 2016).....		24
Annex 3: Glossary of terms .....		25

## I Introduction

### 1.1 Development of policy for the protection of families and children without parental care

This document is a result of a joint initiative of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the Republika Srpska, UNICEF and Save the Children UK, undertaken as a part of Policy Development for the Protection of Children Deprived of Parental Care in Bosnia and Herzegovina Project. This initiative, implemented during the period from December 2004 to April 2006, gathered a large number of experts, theoreticians and practitioners engaged in social and child protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina, both from the governmental institutions of the social welfare system, and from the non-governmental organizations that operate in this field.

Policy presented in this document is an outcome of the conclusions and recommendations from the *Conference on Protection of Children Deprived of Parental Care in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, held in springtime 2005, and the subsequent efforts of four thematic groups, established to work on the following key thematic areas: transforming institutional care for children without parental care; development of alternative forms of care for this category of children; strengthening the capacity of centers for social work in delivering child protection for children deprived of parental care; development of a legal framework for protection of families and children; whereby prevention of separation of and raising awareness of significance of children growing in the family environment, are the cross-cutting components which underpin each of the aforementioned themes. Based on outcomes and recommendations of thematic groups, professional consultants worked on compiling and formulating policy and strategic guidelines for its implementation.

In their efforts to define the orientation presented in this Document, the stakeholders that are implementing this initiative draw upon the current activities, experience and expertise in BiH, as well as upon theoretical and practical knowledge from the developed countries. This policy document also reflects a whole series of international legal instruments that regulate child, human, and social rights, in an effort to establish a system that will be based on the best interests of this group of children and families at risk and a system that will be fully responsive to their needs.

### 1.2 Review of the overall situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

#### 1.2.1 General situation

It is estimated that children up to 14 years age constitute 18,33%<sup>1</sup> of the total BiH population. According to latest data, the population of BiH is 3.828.397<sup>2</sup> whereas population growth displays worrying tendencies: since 2002, the trend has been negative in RS and equaled -1.1 for 2004, while in FBiH in the same year it amounted to 1.7.<sup>3</sup>

The last ten years in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been characterized by the transition processes in all spheres of the society which, directly or indirectly impact on the lives of children. The country is additionally burdened by efforts to overcome consequences of the recent conflict, while adverse economic fluctuations also reflect on the increase in poverty rates. According to the data from 2004<sup>4</sup>, 17.8% of the population lives below the general poverty line, with estimates that another 30% lives just above the poverty line. The poorest categories of population include families with three or more children (66% of this population is poor), as well as the households with two children (nearly one third, or 32% of this population is poor)<sup>5</sup>.

Health, education, and social welfare systems have also suffered major changes, both in terms of the quality of services they provide, and in terms of the methods and scope of funding. The issue of funding of the social protection services, which is not uniform at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is crucial. FBiH does not have one single system of public revenue collection that would ensure a minimum of social security, or a part of solidarity funds of any type for the Cantons that are not able to realize such funds. Significant portion of income is allocated to the Cantons, with Cantonal regulations that ensure types and levels of income that they provide to the municipalities. In RS, the funding is provided from the Municipal level, whereas child protection entitlements are financed from the child protection contributions, through the (RS) Child Protection

---

<sup>1</sup> Statistical Bulletin 2, 2004, BiH Statistics Agency

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> RS Statistics Institute and FBiH Statistics Institute

<sup>4</sup> EPPU/PIMO: Preliminary Report on Poverty Status in BiH for 2001 – 2004.

<sup>5</sup> National Accounts, BHAS, 2004

Public Fund. In 2005, allocations from GDP to social and child protection made 1.1% in FBiH and 1.0% in RS<sup>6</sup>.

The relevance of social and child protection is stressed in several strategic state documents: Action Plan for children of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2002 – 2010; Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP); Public Investment Program (PIP); and Mid-term Budget Frame (SOR; EPPU, 2004).

#### *1.2.2 Legal framework for the protection of children without parental care and children at risk of separation from parents*

BiH has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which is contained in the Annex I of the BiH Constitution (additional human rights documents to apply in Bosnia and Herzegovina). However, the BiH Constitution does not address the issue of the manner of application of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (directly or through the adoption of national legislation), or the primacy in case of conflicting provisions with the national legislation. It is particularly significant that no bylaws exist regulating in detail the criteria for enforcement of child rights and accountability for their violation, and that the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child have not been incorporated into all of the legal branches.

The BiH Constitution delegates the social protection issues to Entity level and does not specifically emphasize the issues of family and child protection. Therefore, legislation at the state level does not exist; rather there are several laws in force at different levels that regulate certain segments of protection of children without parental care, while bylaws only exist in RS.

In spite of numerous laws that regulate field of social and child protection in BiH, the conclusions are that there is no minimum of standards in the protection of children and families, which would be harmonized at the state level. In the RS there are minimum standards for child welfare set at the Entity level and met through the Law on Child Protection. In line with the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, it is expected that future developments in FBiH will go along the lines of similar solutions in this Entity as well.

#### *1.2.3 Role and relevance of centers for social work*

In both entities, key role in social protection and placement of children deprived of parental care rests with the centres/services of social protection at the local community level. In Brčko District, social and child protection is within competency of the Department for Social Protection of the Brčko District.

According to the official statistics from 2005, in BiH there are 101 centers for social work (44 in RS and 57 in FBiH), 40 social and child protection services (18 in RS and 22 in FBiH), 2 centers for social work at the Canton level, and the social protection sub-department of the Brčko District. In the context of post-conflict and economic transition, the centers for social work in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been faced with the increased workload (increased number of clients, wider and more complex types of problems), while, at the same time, their capacities (staff, financial, equipment) were significantly weakened and are inadequate to respond to the growing needs.

### **1.3 Children in the social welfare system in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Data available for year 2005 indicate that there are about 3,000 children without parental care in BiH (according to the incomplete data, there are about 2,062 children in FBiH; 626 children registered in RS; and 53 children without parental care in Brčko District). In addition to the exact figures, at the level of BiH there are data missing on the reasons for the separation of children from parents. In the RS there are records on children without parental care, which include main information on children, the reasons for the separation of children from parents, and measures, both undertaken and necessary, for the protection of the child.

Reliable data on children that are at risk of separation from parents do not exist. One of the causes for that is that this is a heterogeneous population composed of a number of categories and sub-categories of children, which come in contact with the social protection system for different reasons - children that live in disturbed family relations, caused mainly by the labor status of parents (unemployment, "on waiting lists"); children of divorced parents; children born outside of the wedlock; children of single unemployed mothers; and children

---

<sup>6</sup> Social Policy Conference, 2006, page 87 (DfiD, IBHI, EC Delegation in BiH, World Bank, FBiH Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, RS Ministry of Health and Social Welfare), publication about conference held on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2006 in Sarajevo.

with special needs. Data on the number of children in foster care in BiH are incomplete and they show that only portion of children without parental care and in foster care.

### *1.3.1 Institutional placement of children without parental care*

Slightly more than 1,000 children in BiH are placed in 15 institutions for children deprived of parental care officially registered with the competent bodies (about 930 children in 13 institutions in FBiH and about 130 children in 2 institutions in RS. Of these 15 institutions, 5 are very large with the capacity to place 100 or more children, and 4 institutions have the capacity to place 50-100 children<sup>7</sup>. It is important to stress out that European Union defines an institution as a large if its capacity to place is more than 12 children. In addition to these, there are two institutions in FBiH of religious nature for placement of children, which in general do not provide data to responsible Ministries on the numbers and the categories of children for whom they provide care.

According to the data from 2005, occupancy rate in the institutions is about 80% of the capacities, and approximately 50% of the children have been in the institutions longer than three years. From the analysis of available data on the number of children in the institutions for the period 2001 - 2004, a conclusion is that there was not a significant decrease in the number of placed children. Some of the potential reasons for this remain in relatively simple procedures of placing children in the institutions in comparison to some other forms of care, absence of foster families at some locations, in which cases placement in an institution represents the most efficient choice, and traditional reliance to the institutional placement.

It is significant to say that in BiH, in addition to the aforementioned 17 institutions for placement of children without parental care, there are also institutions for placement of other categories of children - social protection service users, primarily children with special needs and children and youth in conflict with the law, that also require special attention, protection and support. In FBiH there are two institutions for the persons with special needs, where children make the minority of the clients (a total number of 72 children were registered in 2005), and in RS there are two such institutions that provided placement for 17 children with special needs in 2005. In FBiH, there is one functional institution for placement of (male) children and youth in conflict with the law in Sarajevo and, according to the information from 2005, it provided placement for 21 clients. Correctional facility was established in the Republika Srpska but, due to the lack of financial resources for its operation, it is not functional, and because of that, in 2005, two minors sentenced to be placed in a correctional facility were put in Banja Luka Penitentiary, which is a correctional facility for the adult population of convicts<sup>8</sup>.

According to the data from 2005, about 34% of children deprived of parental care in FBiH belong to the age group of 15 to 18 years. General impression is that institutions are not effective enough to prepare children without parental care for independent living, both in terms of acquired knowledge and level of education, and in terms of skills necessary for independent living. Aware of the fact that they will lose the right to social protection after they reach the age of 18, young people most commonly select three-year vocational schools. The records also show that the network between these institutions and other relevant institutions in the community is not developed adequately, which could represent a significant support to children and young people after they become independent.

Very frequently, the funding of institutions is inadequate, vaguely defined and varies from one Canton to another, as well as between the Entities. Majority of institutions employ inadequate numbers of professional staff in comparison to the numbers of children (frequently, there is only one or two members of trained staff at most during one shift that provide placement for a group of about 25 or more children). This makes it impossible for care providers to pay appropriate attention to the individual needs of the child, and it leads to the absence of care and protection plans for individual children. Because their jobs are specific and demanding, care providers and other professional staff members are at a great risk of professional burn-out. The fact that there is no officially established system of additional training, learning about modern methods of work, and in particular, supervision in the social protection in BiH, intensifies this largely.

### *1.3.2 Non-institutional placement of children without parental care*

#### Fostering

There are about 1,400 children in BiH placed in foster families (according to the data from 2005, there are 805 children in FBiH, 500 children in RS, and 47 children in Brčko District). Available data indicate that in FBiH fostering is developed at different levels in different Cantons: highest number of children without parental care is placed in the foster families in Tuzla Canton, Sarajevo Canton, and Zenica-Doboj Canton, and the unofficial data from Hercegovina-Neretva Canton indicate that there is a much higher number of children in the foster families than it is officially registered. Also, data from 2005 say that there are 283 children without parental care registered

<sup>7</sup> An institution is defined as large if its capacity exceeds 12 children (in line with European standards)

<sup>8</sup> Data taken from the information of BiH Ministry of Security from 2005

in Una-Sana Canton, and only 38 children are placed in the foster families, which indicates the inadequate development of this form of placement for children. In the RS, placement of children deprived of parental care with foster families is more widely used than other forms of placement because 79.5% of children without parental care are placed with foster families.

Largest proportion of foster children is placed in extended families (with relatives). Comparative data for the period 2003 - 2005 show a decrease in the number of children placed in foster families in BiH. This may be a result of the fact that a large number of children, who lost their parents during the war operations in BiH, have become of legal age and that the capacities of residential care for these categories of children have been expanded by the activities of non-governmental and/or religious organizations from this field in the post-conflict period. Absence of standard procedures for recruitment, selection, training, support and supervision of foster families is seen as an obvious problem for the regulation of fostering. Funding and regular payments of cash benefits for the costs of meeting the needs of children placed in the foster families are different between the entities, as well as between cantons.

#### Adoption

Complicated adoption procedures put serious limitations on potentially stronger application of this form of care for children. If managed professionally and in accordance with the criteria for the selection of both the children and the adoptive parents, adoption is considered the best solution. This is not only a long-term but permanent solution for the care and protection of children without parental care. Available data are incomplete and, thus, cannot be used for a true insight in the frequency of use of this form of placement for children without parental care. Even though official data for FBiH show only 4 cases of adoption in FBiH during 2003, internal data of non-governmental organizations that address issues of this child category show that there were 19 adopted children in the same period. Data for RS also indicate a small number of adoptions – only 7 children in the period of 2 years (2003 – 2004). In the same period in Brčko District there were 6 children adopted.

#### *1.3.3 Data gathering and analysis*

Absence of a functional information system at the state level on social protection clients, including children without parental care, which would have single standards in gathering, processing and dissemination of data, makes the registration and monitoring of clients very difficult. In view of the fact that neither classification of families at risk nor interventions in families are clearly defined and monitored, the existing statistical data on professional and social welfare services cannot indicate whether the prevention of separation of children from parents is adequately present in the activities of the centers for social work. Data are said to be relatively reliable and exact, because practice shows that the number of interventions is sometimes equalized with the number of clients and, in fact, one client can use a number of interventions simultaneously.

In addition to the relatively reliable data on children without both parents (children whose parents died, are missing, are unknown or without a known address for more than a year, children of parents who are deprived of their parental rights and children whose parents are absent and cannot provide care for the children), who are registered in the social welfare system by a decision of responsible authorities, there are children who are taken away from their parents without the knowledge of responsible authorities (children left to the care of extended family or friends, street children, children-victims of trafficking, and similar), whose numbers are not determined exactly, which makes the data on them incomplete and unreliable. There are also children that are placed in the institutions established by religious communities and/or non-governmental organizations, whose data are also incomplete or unavailable.

World Bank SOTAC project established a framework which should provide a functional information system for the social welfare system at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This project is an opportunity to include data relevant for the protection of children without parental care into the system.

## II The Policy on Protection of Children without Parental Care and Families at Risk in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The policy on protection of children without parental care in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a part of the state's overall social policy and represents a comprehensive system of organizational, economic, legal, scientific, informational and staffing principles, characteristics and measures aimed at improving the quality of caring for children without parental care.

Responsible Ministries in Bosnia and Herzegovina are determined to implement the protection of children without parental care and families at risk, which focuses on respect and exercise of the rights of the child and on the preservation of a family, as an optimal environment for the social integration and complete development of the child, as it is presented in the plans and strategic documents of the mid-term and long-term period in BiH. Responsible institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina recognize their especially significant role in the protection of children without parental care, since these children are deprived of immediate protection of their primary care takers – parents.

Policy on protection of children without parental care, presented through this document, is related to children under the 18 years of age that are at risk in terms of their physical, mental, intellectual and social development, because they live outside the family environment, either because the child does not have both parents or the parents are permanently prevented to live with the child or because the child is at risk of separation from the parents due to the dysfunction of the families, suffered violence, disturbance in behavior or due to the fact that the child has special needs<sup>9</sup>. Further, this policy is related to the young persons from 18 to 27 years of age that have had the status of a child without parental care at the time when they became of legal age. Also, the policy of social protection and guidelines for its implementation are related to the families that need additional assistance and support of the society to strengthen and become ready to provide care for children, in order to prevent separation of the child from their biological families.

Furthermore, it is expected that the situation of current social welfare recipients, which at present time is not up to the standards to be developed during the reform, will improve before long, and that the current practice will be replaced by the application of new standards for all social protection beneficiaries.

### 2.1 Purpose and goals of the policy on protection of children and families

Responsible Ministries in Bosnia and Herzegovina accept special responsibility in terms of providing support and monitoring of all children deprived of parental care: children placed in state institutions; children placed in institutions established by non-governmental organizations and/or religious communities; or in the foster families.

In situations where it is not in the best interest of the children to stay with their own families, responsible authorities will provide a series of alternative forms of care based on the family model and support them, both financially and by providing a variety of professional services.

Placement in an institution will be used exceptionally, as a last resort and an interim measure, when the needs of a child cannot be adequately met through the family placement, as the UN Committee for the Protection of Child's Right recommended in its first Country Report on the State of Child's Rights in BiH.

**The goal** of the policy is to develop a system of protection with capacity to provide an optimal response to the needs of children to live in their biological families, as well as to the needs of children without parental care to get such protection that will be in accordance with the best individual interest of the child. Such system favors family forms of care for children without parental care, transformation of large institutions into small reception and placement units, where the existent capacities and resources will be transformed in a number of services, primarily focused at prevention of separation of children from parents.

**The overall goal** of the policy is to set up legal and professional criteria, dynamics and implementers of the initiatives and programs of this reform, which would in the future contribute to a comprehensive and uniform social protection of children without parental care, and which would within ten years at the latest, result in a completely reformed system of social protection of children without parental care and families at risk in BiH.

---

<sup>9</sup> It is particularly important to develop specific guidelines to improve the position of children with special needs within the social protection system. In resolving this complex issue, the things to consider are inclusive education, day centers and centers or specific services to support children and their families.

## 2.2 Principles of Policy on Protection of Children without Parental Care and Families at Risk

- **Principle of the best interest for the child**

All actions concerning the child will be taken in the child's best interest. Responsible Ministries agree that this principle, which is one of the fundamental principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 3), provides a key criterion in the decision-making process. This requires that all stakeholders involved have in-depth understanding of the child's needs, capacities and problems, and acknowledge the views of the child him/herself. Interests of other persons in these actions will be subordinated to the best interest of the child and individual responsibility for the violation of children's rights will be identified and sanctioned.

- **Avoiding unnecessary separation**

Separation of children from their families is likely to have serious and potentially negative effects on children's development. Separation can affect the children's growing capacity to establish close relations with other people; it may weaken or destroy their personal family and community identity, and deny them the informal support that is often provided by extended family and original communities. Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 9) emphasizes the right of the child to live with his/her parents, unless this is not in accordance with his/her best interests.

Furthermore, in case the child is separated from his/her family, the child's right to maintain contact with both parents is always respected. This requires that focus be placed on avoiding unnecessary separation of children from their families by providing appropriate services to support children and their families. In cases where separation is deemed to be in the best interest of the child, a proactive approach will be taken to ensure that the child remains in contact with his/her family (ensuring the principles of family connection and closeness). It is important to emphasize that every attempt needs to be made to return children to the care of their families where this is in their best interest.

- **Family-based care**

We acknowledge that almost all forms of residential care can have extremely poor developmental outcomes for children: this is especially the case with regard to young children and when the child spends a period of many years in residential care. Placement with a family potentially offers the individual child the individual care, protection and love from a parent-figure, opportunities to learn about the roles within the social structure of the family and community and to be involved with common activities within the family, community and wider culture. These all make it more likely that the child will enter adulthood better equipped to cope practically and emotionally with independent living.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 20) asserts the rights of a child who is deprived of a family environment to be provided with alternative care. It also emphasizes the desirability of continuity in the child's upbringing and the importance of the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic heritage. This article gives strong preference to family-based care option.

In realizing the right of the child to live in a family environment priority will be given to fostering, in care for children separated from their families and, in terms of permanent solutions based on legal assumptions, priority will be given to adoption.

- **Planning and monitoring the quality of child protection**

Individual care plans, based on the overall assessment of the child's needs, and periodical reviews of these plans, with active involvement of children and all persons of relevance in their care, provide the ground to keep the focus on the issues of significance for the child: Does certain form of care meet the needs of the child?; Is there a need for change?; What happens in the family of the child? How will the child be supported in the process of becoming independent?

Child's feeling of security is often endangered when the child does not have a feeling of permanence and belonging. Children placed outside their own families are entitled to periodical reviews of all aspects of their placement (Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 25). Review is required to confirm that the best interest of the child is still the leading principle, as well as to check whether the views of the child are taken into account in provision of care services.

- **Child participation**

According to Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, each child has the right to express his/her views and the right to have those views taken into consideration in making decisions concerning them (decisions related to planning, monitoring and evaluation of the program, how the protection is provided, development of policy, research, etc.), which requires that information are given in the way that is

appropriate to age and stage of development of the child (Article 17). Only decisions that are underpinned by the views of the children themselves can be in accordance with the best interest of the child (affirmation principle).

- **Empowering children and their care providers**

Children need to be empowered by making them aware of their rights and by treating them not only as citizens with rights but also as people who can play an active role in their own protection and care. Peer-group support can be hugely important to children and can be significant in helping them to protect themselves. Education of children, acquisition of knowledge and skills that will be of significant assistance in the process of independence should also be given due attention.

Similarly, empowering parents and other caretakers (adoptive parents, foster parents and guardians) can be beneficial in enabling them to respond appropriately to the issues they face and take active participation in planning and revision of measures and services.

- **Non-discrimination of beneficiaries**

All rights are applied to all children with no exceptions. No child should be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, color, language, nationality, physical or mental impairment, or their or their parents' financial position or status (Convention of the Rights of the Child, Article 2). It is especially relevant to children outside of parental care as such children frequently experience discrimination, especially if they are brought up in residential care.

- **Protection of children from harm**

Articles 19 and 34 of the CRC emphasize the right to protection from neglect, abuse and exploitation. Children who are outside of the care of their parents may lack their protection as the primary caretakers and are especially vulnerable to neglect, abuse and exploitation. This requires that the state takes all measures and activities, including the establishment of clear procedures that can be addressed by either the children suffering from violence or the persons that know about it, to prevent such incidents, and to provide appropriate support to the abused children.

- **Multi-sectoral approach**

All care and protection assistance to children and families requires a multi-sectoral approach involving all the responsible Ministries, centers for social work, non-governmental organizations, religious organizations, and other structures in the local communities. These different structures and services will have an important role to play in supporting children and families, provided that they work in a coordinated way to provide a coherent package of protection and care for each individual child.

All material and procedural issues in social protection of children and families that require preventive or complementary time coordinated protective actions of various services and state bodies, like issues related to family income, housing, health care, education, and activities of administrative and judicial organs, will be coordinated between responsible sectors and between Entities. Subsequently, it is important to address the issues such as: property rights issues of children in foster care, health insurance for children under the age of 18 or 27, for full-time students (regardless of the status of their parents or guardians and residence), as well as free primary and secondary education for children without parental care.

Local coordination and planning of joint actions related to the groups at risk will be defined and developed in joint memoranda/agreements, protocols or other acts, that will oblige the responsible services to act coordinated and to provide quick responsive action in each individual case of the child and families at risk.

- **Principle of harmonization**

There is a need to harmonize legislation at all levels. Minimum standards of protection of children and families need to be harmonized at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina and harmonized with the relevant multilateral conventions and other documents related to family relations and international legal cooperation in family matters.

Services need to be organized at the local, inter-Municipal and state levels, depending on their complexity, numbers and best interest of potential clients. It is necessary to be sensitive to equal access to services, regardless of residence of children and families.

Where possible, services at the inter-Municipal level should function as mobile services/teams that visit clients at their place of residence (*'outreach'*), and services from the state level should be reduced to the minimum, that is, state services should cover only extremely complex or restrictive treatment (treatment

carried out in the closed type of institutions) and/or treatments that imply relatively short separation from the families and the local environments.

- **Principle of continuous planning and operating**

Short-term and mid-term planning and actions will be harmonized with the long-term goals to ensure that the desired goals are indeed implementable. Qualitative and quantitative indicators, as well as outputs planned for each period of time, will be defined in all aspects of changes, where possible, and it will be especially significant to develop transitional mechanisms of management and funding for the costs of transition and transformation of current institutions.

- **'Money follows the client' principle**

Improvements in process and resources management require reallocation of existing budgetary means and insurance of minimum of services for all, regardless of possibilities of funding from the municipal budgets.

Short-term, this means that cost of returning clients from residential care to their families or shift to alternative forms of care is primarily funded from the existing budgetary resources for institutions. Mid-term and long-term, this means that services of family support and substitute families should be funded from the same sources, to eliminate incentives for institutional placement (which is funded from central sources), contrary to the absence of incentives for alternative solutions (that are funded from the local sources, if possible).

## **2.3 Characteristics of the Policy on Protection of Children without Parental Care and Families at Risk in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**Innovations in comparison to the current policy on social protection of children without parental care and children at risk of the separation from parents in Bosnia and Herzegovina are as follows:**

Each social measure of child protection will embrace and **empower biological families** or their temporary or permanent substitutes and, in case there is a need to provide care for the child, family based placement will be primary choice of placement.

Transfer from categorical treatment to the **social inclusion model**. For children at risks or with special needs this means that the model of social integration will be applied, instead of isolation that limits the possibilities of socialization and interaction between the equals and leads to further loss of personal and family identity.

Shift from a system based on large institutions to the system that will consist of a **series of services** that provide support to the family, prevent separation of children and parents and provide various models of care as temporary or more permanent substitute for the family.

Gradual introduction of the **mixed system of services** provided by state institutions, non-governmental organizations and private service providers, with defined standards, costs and various funding sources, whose activities will be approved by responsible public administration bodies.

**Preventive programs** will be provided and implemented along with the implementation of primary services for clients with risk already manifested.

**Public information** on needs, rights, entitlement and methods of their realization for social protection clients will be enhanced by media campaigns and through daily information for citizens and clients, as well as through new types of services – independent advocating for clients, empowering clients to self-advocate, and services of mediation between potential or existing clients and institutions that are legally responsible to respond to their needs or to protect their rights.

### III Strategic Guidelines for the Implementation of the Policy on Social Protection of Children and Families

#### 3.1 Strategic goals and result indicators

Starting with the predetermined purpose, goals, principles and characteristics of the policy, in this part of the document we propose the function of coordination and reform management, timeframe for implementation, indicators of outcomes and the more detailed consideration of priority areas and the implementation strategy.

The following are general **strategic goals** of the reform of system of social protection of children and families:

- It is necessary to develop and harmonize at the state level and within the Entities, legal regulations, planning, management and financial and other resources management in the social protection sector and in the sectors of social and economic development, which will contribute to the reduction and elimination of risks that could lead to the separation of children and parents, as well as to the prevention of the separation of the families.
- Create conditions to integration good practices, developed through pilot projects and the activities of NGOs, into the system and to set up and implement clear and binding legal and other professional and ethical standards, as well as for monitoring and quality control thereof.
- Develop action plans (with clearly defined implementers, timelines and resources, as well as qualitative and quantitative indicators) to implement the reform-related activities and achieve the aforementioned goals in line with the predetermined priority areas.

The above goals will be accomplished through a series of complementary activities in four priority areas:

- Monitoring beneficiaries of the social protection of children and family system;
- Developing services to assist families;
- Developing and empowering family based care of children without parental care; and
- Transforming the non-family based care system.

In those regions where it is possible, the expectation is to immediately start planning and implementing changes, to include determining short-term quantitative indicators. At the state level, the expectation is that at the end of the second year, it will be possible to quantify the results/indicators for the next period for the overall implement of the reform.

**Indicators of results** will be related to the following:

- Having updated record on children without parental care;
- Decreasing the number of children separated from their biological families;
- Decreasing the number of children placed in institutions;
- Decreasing the number of newly-placed children in institutions (especially under the age of eight);
- Increasing number of services supporting families and increasing number of beneficiaries of these services (children and families);
- Allocation of the child protection budget in two parts: one part that will support the preventive work with families and another that will support protection of children that are already in the public care system;
- Increasing the number of adopted children;
- Introducing different forms of fostering and increasing the number of children placed in foster families;
- Prioritized placement of children from institutions in substitute families and return to their original families, with a support to these families;
- Shortening the time children spend in institutions and foster homes;
- Proportionally increasing the number of children separated from their families that have made and maintained contact with their biological families\*;
- Ensuring that all new clients enter the social protection system with assessed needs and individual care plans and increasing the number of reviews of individual care plans for children in the social protection system;
- Proportionally increasing the number of children that were provided with support in their efforts to live independently and to find employment after they leave the institution\*;
- Proportionally increasing the number of children in social protection whose results in terms of psycho-physical development, gained skills, knowledge and relations with the family and the community are better than those achieved in the previous years.\*

\* *Proportional increase in relation to total number of children without parental care*

## 3.2 Timeframe for implementation

It is expected that the reform of the system on protection of children without parental care in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be implemented during the period of ten years in three stages. **Short-term** and **mid-term** it is planned to improve the position of majority of children without parental care and at risk of separation from their parents. **Long-term**, it is expected that all children without parental care and families at risk will be included in the system as well as the prevention thereof in line with the recommendations in this document.

Short-term period includes first two years from the beginning of the process; mid-term period would be from the year three to the end of the year six; and the long-term from the year seven to the end of the year ten of the implementation of the reform.

## 3.3 Bodies responsible for implementation

Responsible Entity ministries will take ownership of the implementation of the policy and the coordination of activities during the reform process.

Key implementing bodies will be the coordinating body at the level of BiH, Expert groups and Regional Groups for planning and operation.

### 3.3.1 Coordinating body at BiH level<sup>10</sup>

This body is a key to the reform process and the transformation of the system of social protection of children without parental care and families. It will be established at the beginning of the reform and will work through to the end of the ten-year period. Considering the inter- and cause-effect relations between the different parts of the system, and potential resistance or unequal progress in the reform of certain parts of the system, this body will have a mandate and responsibility for planning, implementation and monitoring of the transformation process at the state level, as well as for the coordination between the governmental and non-governmental sectors in the implementation of policy. To achieve this, the Coordinating body will establish four expert groups and initiate and monitor the establishment of appropriate number of Groups for planning and operation in the regions.

Responsible Entity Ministries will nominate representatives of the Coordinating body, and in addition to the representatives of the Republika Srpska Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Federation Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of and the Brčko District Social Protection Sub-department, it will be composed of the representatives of Ministries of Education, Ministries of Finance, Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH, Public Fund for Child Protection of the Republika Srpska (as well as Public Fund for Child Protection of the Federation of BiH, after its establishment), non-governmental organizations, and experts in the field of protection of children without parental care, as well as the donor representatives. They will work on these tasks in an *ex-officio* capacity.

Short-term, the Coordinating body will primarily be responsible for the following:

- **Inter-sectoral issues, including long-term funding of the social protection sector in transition**, which is related to the co-operation with all sectors involved in the prevention and the protection of families and children, as well as the cooperation with international organizations, especially in specific thematic projects (for example, children with learning disabilities, children in conflict with the law, children-victims of violence) that will be implemented simultaneously with the work on the components of the reform. This will also include urgent measures of collect resources from the budget and elsewhere to improve the situation of groups of children that are at greatest risk.
- **Initiating changes in the legislative framework**, as well as the harmonization of laws, which will enable the development of the system of services to prevent separation of parents and children and accomplish family-based model of protection for children without parental care.
- **Monitoring planning and actions at the regional level**, including introduction of models of good practice developed through pilot projects, as well as innovative solutions that have already been

---

<sup>10</sup> According to BiH administrative establishment, the role of the Coordinating body could be taken over by the Council for Children, which is also in line with its composition and mandate.

applied at some locations, aimed at reducing the number of children in residential care, developing and restructuring family support services, and developing substitute forms of care.

- **Adopting an Action plan for the transformation of institutions for placement of children without parental care**, which includes defining sequences and priorities in placement of children from the residential care, with the application of certain criteria (for example: age of the child; duration of stay in an institution; conditions and situation in biological and extended family of the child), and the selection of the institution where the transformation pilot project will be implemented.

Regarding mid-term activities, the Coordinating body will be primarily engaged in the following:

- **Proposing changes in the existing structures within, but not limited to responsible bodies, to support and to realize strategy of the continuous implementation of the reform through the following:**
  - Established services for technical monitoring and supervision;
  - Licensing and accrediting service providers;
  - Systemic training of the staff;
  - Establishment of a comprehensive database at the state level, which will contain data on children without parental care, potential adopters and foster families;
  - Informing and establishing relations with the public and the media; and
  - Other components of management, supervision, monitoring, planning and operational research.

**Monitoring and evaluation of achieved results**, including the development of monitoring plans with the defined indicators and the periodic progress reports on the implementation of the reform will be an **ongoing** activity of the Coordinating body throughout the duration of the reform.

### 3.3.2 *Expert groups*

Expert groups will work on the definition of standards, actions, methods and propositions for statistical monitoring of specific segments of social and legal protection of children without parental care and families at risk. Their mandate will include proposing changes to the legislation, initiating and drafting secondary legislation and decrees necessary for the reform changes to become officially entailed within the system.

Coordinating body establishes and nominates expert groups. There will be an expert group, comprising practitioners and theoreticians, established for each of the four priority areas. Each group will work in the priority area for which it is established, and will be involved in regions where the reform is implemented, where it will support the work of the Groups for planning and operation.

Expert group will report to the Coordinating body and maintain direct contacts and consultations with other expert groups and with groups for planning and operation in the regions

### 3.3.3 *Groups for planning and operation in the regions*

During the ten-year planned duration of the reform, it will be carried out gradually, from one region to another, with the activities which will build on the experience from the previous region. In the context of this reform, a region is being defined as a geographical area where the reform takes place and involves all relevant departments, institutions, and non-governmental organizations directly involved in the process of changes (responsible ministry of social protection/policy, centers for social work, residential institutions, family counseling and other services that operate in this field, non-governmental organizations and/or associations of citizens experienced in this field, and alike). Regions will be characterized by joint planning and cooperation of municipalities within FBiH Cantons, and groups of municipalities in the RS or Brčko District.

Groups for planning and operation will, depending on their authority given by responsible Ministries, be in charge of planning, implementation and monitoring of improving the work of the centers for social, developing of a network of new services (by proposing restructuring and improving of the existing and establishing of the new services), and transforming the institutions for placement of children without parental care.

These groups will be responsible for mapping of service supply and demand in the region and for defining target groups and outcome indicators of the reform, with a focus on meeting the needs of the following priority target groups:

- Children in residential care, that can potentially be returned to their biological families, or placed in substitute families, or provided with some of the new forms of care, if such services are in their best interests;
- Families and children that are at risk of separation and are already clients of non-residential forms of social protection;
- Children and families who are already social benefit clients and who, in addition to the poverty problem, are also at risk or at a combination of risks, such as disability, disturbed behavior, dysfunctional family relations, domestic violence, and/or similar, which could make them the new clients for services.

Using good practice and experiences from the pilot project, groups for planning and operation will begin their activities where possible (depending on staff, material and other prerequisites), and not waiting for secondary legislation that will concurrently be developed by the expert groups. Groups for planning and operation will consult with the coordinating body and expert groups, in order to avoid establishment of new organizational structures that are not in accordance with the reforming guidelines.

Groups for planning and operation in the regions will comprise representatives of relevant Ministries, centers for social work, managers and staff members of the institutions for the placement of children, representatives of municipalities, and non-governmental organizations from the regions where the reform is implemented. Institutions where the reform will be implemented will work in closest collaboration with the group for planning and operating in the region, as it is deemed that this will be the best way to make the transformation of existing services into the non-residential forms of protection for current and potential clients from the regions. These groups will not become new administrative structures, their establishment is a transitional measure, and the members of these groups will work in an *ex-officio* capacity.

### **3.4 Inter-body co-ordination of work between bodies responsible for implementation of the policy**

Expert groups and groups for planning and operation in the regions will operate in co-operation, and their relations will be two-way: on one side, expert groups will involve in their work individuals from the regions and municipalities that have already developed innovative practices relevant for the systematization, such as standards and other instruments of work and, on the other side, groups for planning and operation will in their work consult the expert groups, as well as individuals and teams from the regions and municipalities that have already introduced innovations in their system of work<sup>11</sup>.

---

<sup>11</sup> Annex 2: Structure and functions of bodies responsible for reform of protection of children deprived of parental care and families

## IV Prioritized policy areas

### 4.1 Gate-keeping in social protection of children and families system

This component pertains to the standardization of criteria, decision-making process, responsibility for and methods of needs-assessment of clients, development of individual plans, implementation of measures, services and other activities that the Centers for Social Work, the courts (based on existing powers and future amendments to the Law on Organization of Courts) and the commissions for categorization of children with special needs (in terms of methodology of assessment and suggesting measures and services) decide, propose and/or implement solutions.

In terms of main duties, it is necessary to formalize the cooperation and division of labor with nongovernmental and other social service sectors, and draft proposals for professional documentation and categories for statistical monitoring of clients and the procedures of the competent bodies.

The Expert Group will work on making criteria, methods, procedures and standards operational, as well as on proposals for improving the statistical monitoring of clients, and the indicators for monitoring and evaluation. In other words, this group will create professional foundation for adoption and harmonization of laws and secondary legislation, as well as for other instruments of professional work, primarily in CSW, which will regulate issues as defined below.

Work based on **case management** for all CSW clients is especially important for children without parental care. This type of work involves regular and systematic care planning, monitoring and periodic review of forms of care for each individual child without parental care. This includes an obligation to develop **individual care plan** for each child without parental care, to provide the most adequate form of care for the child, which will be monitored and revised quarterly at least. An **independent body** should be set up which would be authorized to receive and review children's complains about any aspect of their placement.

Introducing **professional standards and norms in social work and services** means having proper staff at the CSW (the numbers and professional background of employees in relation to the needs and the population, social issues, remote areas of coverage), standardization of services, harmonization of cash benefits for clients at the level of Entity/state, and establishment of single registrar and monitoring of clients. Register is especially important for children without parental care, because it will provide full and updated data on this category of children, reasons for their separation from parents, forms of placement, potential foster and adoptive families, etc. The experiences from the RS will be valuable here because they have introduced norms and standards for work, as well as the register of children without parental care which contains reasons for separation of children from their parents.

Staff at the Centers for social work must work in accordance with a **professional code of conduct** to be drafted by the Expert Group, which would be aimed at increasing standards and quality of work.

**Training the professional staff** of the centers for social work is a continuous activity necessary for the improvement of the professional work and its harmonization with the latest international methods. Secondary legislation will regulate the rights and the obligations of employees to spend a certain number of days in a year in advanced professional training. This implies harmonized educational programmers, developed in co-operation with ministries of education, universities, professional associations and non-governmental organizations.

**Division of labor within CSW into main and specialized** will allow for the establishment of specialized teams and profiling of experts for working with families, issues of foster care, adoption, etc. Certain specialized activities may or may not be carried out in CSW, but should be provided at or for the municipal level.

**Review organization of work** in Centers for Social Work with the emphasis on professional rather than administrative work, as well as the **management of professional work, support and supervision** of the CSW (and all other institutions irrespective of their founders and other service providers) will also be regulated in the amendments to the law.

**Specialized training of judges/establishment of family departments** within general courts, which would deal with the issues pertaining to children and families and pass decisions on specific issues (such as adoption, separation of child from parents, contacts between child and family, retention of parenting rights)

and would operate in line with proposals of the competent CSW and in cooperation with the CSW expert team.

Secondary legislation will also regulate the composition, competencies, funding and methodology of work of the **commission for assessment of ability**<sup>12</sup> of children with special needs.

The Expert Group which will be working on these issues will report to a coordinating body and will maintain direct contact and consultation with other expert groups and groups for planning and coordination.

## 4.2 Family support services

This area deals with the standardization of existing and future family support services, including both prevention and empowering families to enable them to properly carry out their parental duties, as well as the standardization of services to families with specific risks.

The Expert Group will propose amendments to the laws, the adoption of secondary legislation and a decision on normative standards and criteria for quality of work. Professional standards for each group or sub-group of services should be defined separately (mediation, training, psycho-physical support, daily activities outside of families, outreach, or home visits or other forms of at-home assistance, which is the service most often missing, and whose wider application should reduce the risk of separation of parents and children). In defining these professional standards, particular attention should be given to quality of services with an emphasis on the outcomes that each service should produce for the clients. Furthermore, criteria for determining cost of services will be set, the proposal being a standard unit of time to be used to calculate the cost of services.

With the view of overcoming the category-based approach to structuring of services, services will no longer be divided according to types of beneficiaries or categories of children and families, but rather each group or sub-group of services will be comprised of a specific treatment, type of additional support and cost of that service.

It is important to point out that an individual or a family will receive one or more services at any given time, meaning that an individual needs-based approach will apply. It is considered that this will contribute to the social inclusion of beneficiaries and that it will help meet his/her needs (in terms of education, health care, and employment) in a normal environment whenever possible. At the same time, with the goal of encouraging social integration, special attention will be paid to delivering additional and/or special support services, according to individual needs (parent/family counseling, assistance for provision of medical/learning aid, transport reimbursement, etc.).

**Professional work with and counseling of families** is a continuous activity, which involves identification of families at risk and strengthening parental capacities by providing training in responsible parenthood, planned parenthood, and/or by cash benefits, as well as preventive work with expecting mothers who are at risk of abandoning their newborns. In addition to working with families to prevent separation and entering the system of public care, the work with families is important in maintaining regular contacts between the child temporarily separated and his/her parents, as well as during adaptation of the child in his/her return to the biological family.

**Developing capacities of the community by strengthening partnership of the centers for social work with other institutions, services, non-governmental organizations and private sector** aimed at better quality and more comprehensive services for clients. In the short-term period, each community should map out the resources and establish a formal cooperation by defining roles, responsibilities, procedures and competencies in service provision. Detailed definitions of quality of these services, with emphasis on expected outcomes for clients, and flexible definitions of organizational types, create potentials for some of the services to be implemented as additional activities of the centers for social work, or independent activities of other providers, which could provide these to clients from a larger number of municipalities.

**Establishment of a regional service to provide support to families at risk and work on prevention of separation** is a specific task of the Group for planning and operation in the region that should be realized at the very beginning of the reform process, in the planning stage. The task of this service would be that, after it has made an assessment of the needs of families and the potential reasons for separation, to provide support to family to keep children with their parents. These services would be provided by current service

---

<sup>12</sup> A decision was brought in FBiH on establishing an institution for providing medical expert opinion and assessment of ability in order to contribute to equal treatment of all children with special needs.

providers (Centers for social work, professionals from the transformed institutions for placement of beneficiaries, and certain NGOs), but also some new service providers (both private and NGOs) will also qualify to provide services upon endorsement by the competent administrative body.

**Application of models of good practice in support of families and children.** Short-term, there is a need to identify and apply models of good practice, as pilot projects in different regions, and then, in the mid-term period, with appropriate law and secondary legislation, include these in the regular services that will be provided by centers for social work, non-governmental organizations or other service providers.

#### 4.3 Substitute families as form of care

This area is related to promotion, implementation and additional development of family based care for children without parental care. Children growing up in residential care, from earliest age until they become of legal age, are examples of insufficient implementation of family based care in BiH. This causes concern, especially when available data indicate that the number of potential adoptive parents is higher than the number of children that are eligible to be adopted.

Available data shows that a certain number of children placed with foster families have been abandoned by both parents, which brings into question limitations of the existing adoption regulations since adoption or placement with foster families, which includes specific responsibilities of foster parents to provide more permanent placement, would be in the best interest of those children. Adoption requires special norms of “free to be adopted” in cases when it is not possible to obtain parental consent; whereas a procedure for the selection of foster families includes a special obligation on the part of foster parents that they may not “opt out” of care for a child without the appropriate decision of the competent authority.

**Adoption** is the best form of care for children without parental care, which, after all efforts to keep children in the care of their biological parent have failed, is recommended to be implemented in all cases related to this category of children. This implies a set of activities, the implementation of which can ensure permanent care for a significant number of children. Adoption should be a prioritized form of care for children without parental care and employees of centers for social work should maintain this form of care as the first option in deciding on the form of care for these children.

To promote adoption and to eliminate obstacles in its application under the conditions defined within the family legislation and in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Expert group should propose:

- Changes in legislation related to: increasing the age limit of children for complete adoption; non-discrimination of adopters in terms of residence and dual citizenship; and elimination of gaining indecent profit in the adoption process, which will be qualified as a criminal act;
- In-depth definitions in secondary legislation of adoption procedures and harmonization thereof at the state level (contents of adoption requests, list of documentation required, methods to assess the suitability of adoptive parents, preparation of adopters, timeframes of the procedure, etc.); and
- Accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in International Adoption, which deals with protection of children from negative effects of international adoption.

**Fostering**, as a form of protection of children without parental care that provides living in family environment, demands comprehensive regulation through laws and secondary legislation, and includes activities at several levels:

- Situation analysis in the regions where the reform will be implemented and, in accordance with this, strengthening professional capacities of the centers for social work staff;
- Work with potential foster parents; and
- Work with children to be placed in foster families.

In the legislation, Expert group needs to develop standards and methodology for the following:

- *Standard criteria for the selection of foster families*, including: registration procedures, recruitment, proactive selection, assessment, training, monitoring, support and supervision of foster parents. In determining these criteria, it will also be decided which of the above functions may be delegated to service providers outside of the CSW and outside of the municipality of child’s residence. Furthermore, the criteria will establish the number of children in a foster home, depending on the type of foster care, and the requirement to enter into a contractual relationship (to include the rights and responsibilities of foster parents and the CSW, information on foster parents – both spouses or single-foster parents), requirements for the child’s upbringing and education, timeframe of

placement). It is expected that the standard criteria will more clearly define the procedure and the proper selection of foster families who are extended families and suitable monitoring and support thereof.

- *Procedure for preparation, reception and monitoring of children* placed in foster families and a procedure for maintaining contact between foster parents and children and children's biological family.
- *Specialized fostering* for certain categories of children (for example, children with special needs, newborns, teenagers, for children-victims of violence, for children with behavioral disorders), as well as temporary fostering for emergency placement and short stay of the child in the foster family.
- *Introduction of professional fostering*, when a foster parent is a legal entity that works as an independent professional in fostering, receives a monthly compensation for his/her work and has all rights and obligations from this employment.
- *Setting the criteria for the selection of fostering modalities*, depending of individual situations of children.
- Setting compensation criteria:
  - Compensation for the expenses related to child support that should be paid to all foster parents, regardless of the form of fostering. It is also necessary to include the possibility to pay compensation for the child support to foster parents from extended families, if their financial status does not allow them to meet the legal obligations of child support.
  - Compensation for the engagement of foster parents when they do not work as professional foster parents.
  - Compensation for professional work of foster parents when they work as professional foster parents.
  - Compensation scales for foster parents for specialized forms of fostering.
- *Standardized professional documentation on monitoring children and foster parents* that would be managed by the staff of the Centre for social work.

**Service/team to work with substitute families.** International experience and experience with fostering in BiH indicate similarity of professional duties in work on adoption and fostering and a potential to establish a joint team or a service for adoption and fostering. This service will work in the region where the reform is underway and it will be composed of professionals from the community that will work closely with centre for social work to make an adequate selection of adopting or foster families, in accordance with the needs of the child. Duties of this Service are to prepare the family to accept the child, to provide proper support to the family and to monitor how it adapts to the child. In this case, the professionals from the Centre for social work focus their activities on the child, observing his/her needs and, in case of foster placement, they work on child's return to his/her biological family.

**Promotion of family based care of children without parental care.** Raising public awareness about children without parental care and different forms of care is a continuous activity implemented through media campaigns. The goal is to raise awareness of the need and significance to have all children living in families, to familiarize the public with the reality and the needs of children without parental care, to make the public interested in providing different types of support and, in particular, support for the care of this category of children in substitute families - adoptive or foster.

#### 4.4 Non-family placement of children

Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to deinstitutionalizing and transforming the existing institutions that care for children without parental care, which also includes developing and providing various services with which to ensure an appropriate support to families and children during the transformation and upon its completion.

**Transformation of all institutions for children without parental care**<sup>13</sup> will be carried out over the period of ten years. The Expert Group will draft proposals of laws and secondary legislation for standardization of non-family placement of children without parental care and for the standardization of services pertaining to this form of care. Short-term, on the basis of data gathered from the institutions on the number and flow of children, this Expert Group will work on drafting a National Action Plan of transformation of the existing institutions. The plan will be endorsed by the Entity ministries; it will be continuously implemented; and it will be binding on the directors of the institutions and the Social Welfare Centers and they will have to strictly abide by its norms in terms of taking in new beneficiaries.

In the short- and mid-term periods more permanent placement will be provided for a small number of children and by increasingly stricter criteria. In the long-term period, small capacity institutions of up to 12 children

<sup>13</sup> Annex 1 contains a possible plan of transformation of an institution.

will be a dominant form of residential care where, in comparison to the placement in the substitute families, a very small number of children without parental care will be placed. These capacities for placement will be filled with new clients/children that went through the process of assessment of their needs, but could not be placed in the substitute families, and with children that were placed in the large capacity institutions and whose return to their biological family, or their placement in the substitute families, was not possible.

Managers, staff members in institutions and group for planning and operating will develop a joint proposition for the displacement of children from institutions and an in-depth analysis of knowledge, skills, views and aspirations of the employees, and propose a plan of re-training, additional training, incentives to leave institutions, alternative employment, training for self-employment and similar, in accordance with the dynamics in the reduction of the number of children, and eventual plans to open new activities in the institutions or potentials of employment within the new services to be established in the region.

After the evaluation of the pilot project, transformation of all remaining institutions will be done according to the same model and by the established list of priorities. The reform should be implemented systematically, from institution to institution, with acknowledgement of experience that will be gained during the work. The role of the expert groups is to establish normative of standards and criteria of quality for the transformed institutions and for new services for children and families in the legislative framework.

It is important to point out that, concurrently with the implementation of the pilot project, other institutions will be active in the research of the potentials to return the children to their biological families or to place the children in the substitute families. This way, it is expected that some institutions will close down, and that other institutions, with location, physical infrastructure and staff potentials that could ensure this, become centers for various services for children and families.

**Emergency and short-term care.** Along with the standardization of services for a more permanent stay of children; other placement services will be standardized, such as: emergency and short-term care for children; mothers with children; victims of domestic violence; young people leaving institutions or foster families; and other categories of clients in need of such placement. Measures of protection and support for these young people will be planned even for the time after they reach the age of 18, until they become capable to lead an independent life and/or until they get employed (so called, *Half-way House*).

**Protection of children without parental care after they become of legal age.** Work on increasing the number of social skills required for a successful integration in the society, professional orientation and training for independent living are seen as priorities in cases of young people that leave a structured form of protection. Centre for social work has a duty to make protection plans for each of these young persons. The role of the groups for planning and operation, with the multi-sector approach, is to monitor adaptation and integration of these young people and to provide support and assistance in finding a flat, employment, getting the right to health care, and other significant issues. To make this possible, in the short-term period, the expert group should send amendments to the laws on labor, employment, health insurance and education that will provide the foundation for the realization of these rights.

## Annexes

### Annex 1: Plan of transformation of institutions for children without parental care

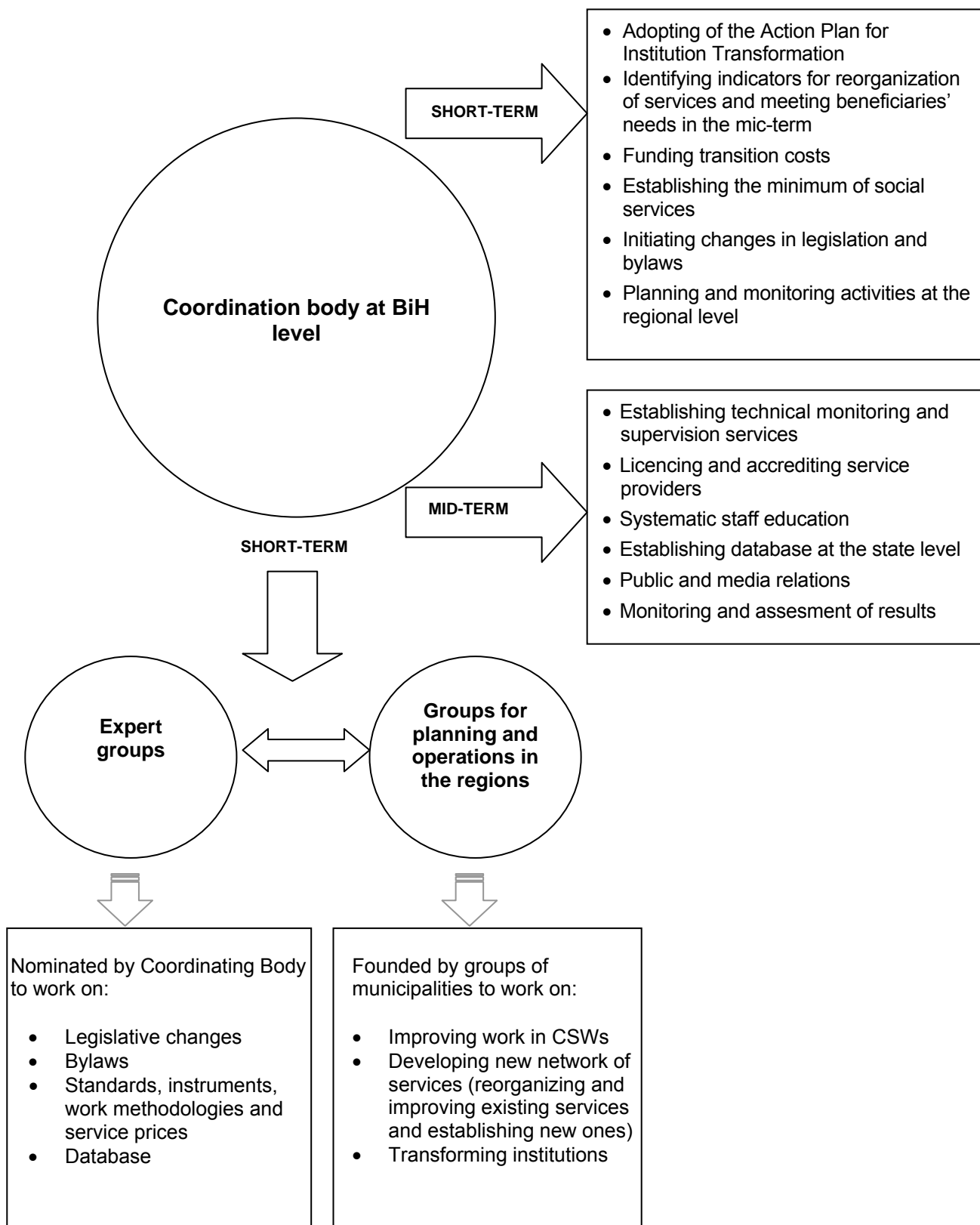
Short-term, in one region, a pilot project will be implemented in an institution to be transformed as follows:

1. *Assessment for each individual child in institution* and planning the best form of care.
2. *Analysis of number and flow.* In addition to seeing a picture of each child, it is necessary to see the picture of the overall flow of children through the institution. This is significant both for the children currently placed in the institution and for the children that would be placed in the institution in future. These information should contain: number of children entering and leaving by month; age group of children entering and leaving by month; information on where the children come from, listed by categories (biological family, extended family, other institutions, alternative services, street); information on where the children were sent after they left the institution, listed by categories (biological family, extended family, adoptive family – within the country or abroad, foster family, other institution, other alternative services; places/municipalities where children had lived before they came to the institution. The information is gathered by institutions and responsible centers for social work and is reported to the Group for planning and operating. Such information is useful in planning locations where new services will be established.
3. *Financial analysis.* There is a need to make an overall analysis of running costs for the institutions: to calculate costs for each individual child and overall costs of the institutions for the period of one year. Based on these data, it is necessary to make preliminary estimate for the new services, to ensure that these do not exceed the total amount of the budget. This way the authorities can ensure that new services are self-sustainable at the local level.
4. *Evaluation of staff members:* It is necessary to make a systematization of new jobs and, in accordance with this, rearrange the duties that will be appropriate for the professional education levels of the staff members and their desires and preferences. To make the overall process transparent, it is necessary to engage an expert from the field of human resources development.
5. *Plan to use the building in future.*
6. *Analysis of needs and resources.* Estimate the overall needs of families and children within entities/cantons/regions where institutions are located, taking into consideration the vulnerable regions and communities; evaluate resources (human, financial, buildings, land) that are available to the entire community to meet the needs; make a list of all current services provided by state and non-governmental organizations.
7. *Designing new services.* Based on the situation analysis, individual needs of the children, analysis of numbers and the flow, it is necessary to design new services and define a geographical location where they will be provided. These services can include the return to family programs, fostering, and in-country adoption, specialist care services and services in the community (day care centers and counseling).
8. *Financial estimation of costs for new services.* Based on the concept of new services, there needs to be an estimation of their regular costs. This assessment (preliminary estimate) needs to be compared with the overall budget of the institutions to ensure that it all stays within the boundaries of the available budget.
9. *Financial estimation of capital investments needed.* Based on the concept of new services, there will be an exact estimate of the necessary capital investments made. We need to consider both new and restored buildings, whitewashing, furniture and other pieces of inventory, as well as the costs of staff training. We should not forget that staff members are expected to work with children in a completely different way, and that investment in their training represents an investment in the quality protection of children in the future.
10. *Development of Action plan and log frame.* Based on the project and financial estimate, an Action Plan with clear time schedule will be developed. This Action plan involves a gradual transfer of children and staff members to the system of new services, as well as continuous training programs for the staff members, both before and after the transfer. This plan provides a detailed preparation of children for the transfer and the support they will be provided to get acclimated to the new situation, with a list of people

responsible for each planned activity. In transferring children, care should be taken as not to alternate from one mode of care to another too many times as this could additionally traumatize the children. Each institution suggests their own transformation programs that meet the needs of children in the best way (based on the child centered approach) and in accordance with the potentials and capacities of the institutions.

11. *Financial assessment of additional costs in the transitional period.* During the transformation it is necessary to have two parallel systems during a period of time, until the institutions become fully transformed, which will demand additional costs.
12. *Agreement between the partners:* It is necessary to draw up an agreement to specify the rights and the responsibilities of the stakeholders that will be approved by responsible authorities, together with the Action Plan. Local authorities need to show a true willingness to implement the transformation and to establish new services, and to give a clear consent that they will support the running costs of new services after the end of the transformation. Transitional costs, which will be provided with the services and paid by non-governmental organizations or other donor-partners, will have a time limit and will be agreed upon between the stakeholders in writing.

**Annex 2: Structure and functions of bodies responsible for reform of protection of children deprived of parental care and families (2006 – 2016)**



### Annex 3: Glossary of terms

**Adequate family placement:** placement of a child deprived of parental care into a family that can successfully take over parental duties, particularly in terms of the child's care, upbringing, education and incapacitating him/her for a life on his/her own, in line with the child's individual needs for physical, emotional, health, behavioural, social and educational achievements.

**Biological family/birth family** is a family made up of a child, parents and the child's brothers and sisters. The biological family is characterised by its specific functions: biological – reproductive, economic, protective, sexual, emotional, behavioural, educational and socialising.

**Child** means, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. In terms of social care of children, the following child categories are implied: children deprived of parental care, children whose development is impeded by family circumstances, abused children and children who are neglected or treated negligently.

**Child deprived of parental care** means, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child who has been deprived of his/her family setting, either temporarily or permanently, or a child who, for the sake of his/her own best interests, may not remain in his family setting. In terms of social care of children, a child deprived of parental care is a child without any of the parents (parents are either not alive or unknown or missing), or a child with living parents who, due to any reason, either temporarily or permanently, are unable to take care of him/her and perform their parental duties. The basic forms of the care of children deprived of parental care are custody, adoption, fostering and institutional care.

**Child whose development is impeded by family circumstances** means a child whose parents, due to unsettled family circumstances, material or other reasons, are unable to ensure conditions for his/her proper physical and mental development.

**Child care (social care of children)** is based on the rights and duties of parents to take care of upbringing and education of their children, rights of the child to such conditions of life that enable his/her proper mental and physical development, and the commitment of the state to assist them in their efforts. The fundamental aim of child care is to harmonise conditions for child development and to ensure a minimum of social security and basic developmental conditions for all children. Protection of children deprived of parental care, in accordance with the needs of this category of children and capacities of the society, is exercised through setting up conditions for their development, which should make up, in the best possible way, for the loss of parents or absence of parental care.

**Day care centre** is a form of child care (children deprived of parental care, children with special needs, children from impoverished families, children from single-parent families, and any other children), where it is possible to fulfil the needs their family fails to. Within the transformation of institutional care of children deprived of parental care, day care centres may be accommodated within the existing institutions. It is also possible to organise the so-called «shared family placement» between families (biological, foster), which are primarily aimed at children with special needs, but not exclusive of other children.

**State care/public care/social protection** means a series of systemically organised services and forms of the care of children deprived of parental care, which, in organisational and functional terms, rely on the possibility to choose from among as wide a range of quality services and service providers as possible, in order to attaining optimal standards of child care.

**Foster parent** is a person with whom a child deprived of parental care is placed, and with whom the competent social work centre signs an agreement on the placement in a family, i. e. agreement on fostering.

**Foster family** is a family made up of a foster parent and any other person living with the foster parent in the same household.

**Fostering** is a form of placement of children deprived of parental care with another, foster family, to which the child is trusted for the purpose of his/her accommodation, nursing, care and upbringing. Fostering is characterised by the following: it is a temporary, not permanent placement as is adoption; fostering does not change the child's identity; fostering may be cancelled for a number of reasons: changed circumstances in the child's biological family, termination of the agreement, child's majority, incapacitating the child for living on his/her own, adoption, etc.; during the placement in the foster family, the child does not break ties with his/her biological parents and relatives; during foster placement, parental rights of the biological parents are

not cancelled, except when so ordered by the court; the family in which the child is placed receives an allowance for costs of the child's basic needs.

**Foster placement** is placement with a family for which, as per the foster parents' wish, a cost allowance is not paid from the state budget, that is, costs are borne by the foster parent him/herself in his/her wish to help growing up and development of a child deprived of parental care.

**Institutional child care** means placement of the child in social care institutions, in order to ensure him/her care, housing, nutrition, clothing, health care, upbringing, help in education and making him/her capable of work, which is not possible to be attained in the family setting. This form of placement is applied as the ultimate resort. A child deprived of parental care is placed with an institution until his/her return to his/her biological family, adoption, foster placement, completion of education or rendering him/her capable of living on his/her own.

**A single parent family (incomplete, broken)** is a family with one parent missing. By the cause of incompleteness, they can be distinguished as: families that have been incomplete from the moment of their genesis (mothers with children) and families that were originally complete but subsequently lost one of the parents (when one of the parents, in most cases the father, leaves the family; widow families; families arising from divorced marriages with children).

**Beneficiary (client/party)** in the field of social care may be individuals, families, groups and communities experiencing difficulties in fulfilling their needs, which disrupts or disables their functioning and further development. The term *party* refers to any individual turning to institutions and is broader in meaning than the term *client*.

**Care management** means a contemporary model in child care based on separating the process of the client's actual need assessment from service planning. Such a model includes work of specialised teams, different financing mechanisms for social care services, inter-sectoral cooperation and a different practice of direct work with beneficiaries.

**Young adult deprived of parental care** is a person aged 18 to 26, who had a status of a child deprived of parental care at the moment of his/her majority.

**Banning a parent to live with the child** is a sanction imposed by the family law, which is pronounced to the parent jeopardising the child's interests and neglecting his/her parental duties to a considerable extent. Pronunciation of this measure by the court or guardian authority does not cancel other parental duties, rights and responsibilities towards the child.

**Depriving parents of their parental care/rights** is the most severe measure that may be pronounced to parents for improper parental care. It is pronounced by the court when parents abuse their parental rights and neglect their parental duties. Pronunciation of this measure does not cancel all parental obligations and rights towards the child, except the obligation to support the child.

**Custodian Authority** is a body competent for social care activities, and is vested with providing assistance and protection to the family and protection of the child's interests (in most cases, it is the social work centre). The competence of the Custodian Authority is determined according to the child's place of residence/abode. The Custodian Authority performs its tasks in a twofold manner: indirectly, through the appointed custodian and directly, through an expert person of the social work centre. Measures for the child's protection are undertaken by the Custodian Authority *ex officio*, which guarantees the protection of the child's interests.

**Families at risk** are biological families with multiple problems that negatively affect the proper development and growing up of the child, where a possible outcome may be separation of the child from the family and placement with an institution or another family. Problems may include: socio-economic problems of the family (poverty, housing problems, low educational status of the parents, unemployment, prostitutions, refugeehood, number of children; partner-related and family problems (disharmony and shaken relationship between the family members, divorce, leaving of either mother or father, abandoned pregnant women, new family of one of the biological parents in which there is no room for the child); health problems (severe illness of the parents or children, hospitalised parents or children, alcoholism, addiction on narcotics, psychiatric problems, inadequate level of mental development of parents and children, deaths in the family); destructive behavioural models (domestic violence, child negligence and molesting, parents or children in conflict with the law).

**Prevention** refers to different measures and activities with a view to identifying causes and establishing certain assumptions for reduction or elimination of the consequences brought about by the cause, which lead to the state of social need. The aim of preventive work includes efforts to reduce the possibility of serious social and personal need emergence through weakening of the risk factors and strengthening of the protection factors, such as social support and adequate social action. Also, the aim of preventive work is to encourage people to seek and find help as soon as the problem has emerged or intensified. The following are the levels of prevention: primary (within which a social action is streamlined towards prevention of emergence of conditions that are favourable for problem evolution), secondary (identification of different groups along with the provision of assistance in resolving the identified problem) and tertiary (implementation of different programmes and establishing links with other interventions).

**Prevention of separation of the child from his/her biological family** refers to the prevention of emergence or alleviation of the cause of the separation of the child from his/her biological family and to measures aimed at family preservation, focusing on the identification of family strengths and reshaping of the perception in order to mobilise the family to exploit its own strengths and positive aspects of the functioning of the family system as a whole. Preventive actions of the social work centre is reflected in its provision of assistance to parents and surveillance of parental care. The assistance the social work centre is authorised and obliged to provide may include material assistance, settling social circumstances and family relations, as well as elimination of any other problems that may emerge as the cause of deviations in the child's upbringing and raising. Preventive support to the biological family is provided through services based in the local community, which may be diverse, and is implemented in combination of services and counselling. This implies a plurality of programmes and services in the local community, as well as a plurality of service providers, regardless of the sector they are provided from, be it state, non-governmental or private.

**Child care reform** is a set of activities and measures that will ensure to all children approximately equal conditions for proper development of their personalities, and also help the family exercise its reproductive function with a view to improving the quality of children's lives.

**Reform of the care of children deprived of parental care** is focused on the child and his/her needs and capacities and directed at the family as the most natural setting for the child's growing up, development and upbringing. The reform process implies preventive work, it is founded on planning of every individual child's care and discusses development of cooperation among diverse stakeholders at the level of the broader community. In addition, it emphasises the importance of developing substitute families and strongly supports child placement with them.

**Parental rights/parental care** is a set of parental responsibilities, duties and rights that aim to protect the child's personal and property rights and interests. Parents are jointly and primarily responsible for the child's development and upbringing, care and raising, ensuring his/her education, representing him/her in legal affairs and proceedings before the court and administrative authorities, supporting him/her and managing his/her property.

**Social policy** is an academic exercise and practical, organised social activity, the essence of which is to streamline social development and ensure social security of citizens. The social policy includes state activities regulating provision of allowances and services to individuals and families that are, due to circumstances, lacking either completely or partially their income, and thus have found themselves in unfavourable living conditions. The foundation of the social policy is social welfare, social assistance, health care and social services. In broader terms, it includes educational and housing policies, as well as employment policies.

**Social need** is considered either a permanent or temporary state of an individual or family, caused by war, natural disasters and general economic crisis, mental and physical condition of the individual and other reasons that cannot be eliminated without the society's assistance.

**Social care** is an organised activity involving suppression and elimination of causes and consequences of the state of social need, as well as provision of the necessary assistance to individuals and their families in order for them to overcome social difficulties and fulfil their everyday needs. It consists of a number of measures aimed at protecting vulnerable groups.

**Specialised child placement** has been established in order to respond to specific features of every child and his/her personality, diversity of children's needs, diversity of causes of parental care absence and specific needs of biological parents. Specialised placement with another family or institution may be organised for children belonging to certain age groups (babies, teenagers), children in special living

conditions (children victims of violence, children in conflict with the law), children with special needs (physically, mentally or developmentally challenged).

**Kin family** is a form of the broadest family and involves all relatives recognised by the law: kindred, relatives by adoption or family-in-law.

**Standardisation of social care services** means shaping the basic approaches to work and work criteria into norms that reflect qualitative and quantitative performance indicators and services in social services. Standardisation in the area of the care of children deprived of parental care requires defining professional standards to improve the care of children in line with the fundamental criteria for the protection of children, their needs, special care and child's best interests as stipulated by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Standardisation raises the issue of redefining and profiling functions of the existing social services (social work centres and institutions for children and young adults) and their relation with a plethora of services and service providers.

**Guardian parent** is a person who has been appointed by the Custodian Authority to be responsible for the care of a child deprived of parental care. The guardian parent is responsible for the care of the child's personality, his/her health, upbringing, education, making him/her capable for living on his/her own, his/her property, as well as for representing the child, in the same manner as a parent. The guardian parent must consult with the child depending on the child's age and maturity.

**Custody** is a form of legal and social protection of the child deprived of parental care with a view to caring, upbringing, educating and ensuring property and other rights and interests of the child. A child with no biological or adoptive parents, or when, due to certain circumstances as indicated by the law, they fail to take care of him/her, is placed under custody. The legal purpose of placing a child under custody is to identify and appoint his/her legal representative, who will take care of the child in compliance with the law. The practical purpose is everyday care of the child, who is supplemented parental care. It is an efficient and available form of care and in some cases may be the first step towards the child's adoption.

**Permanent placement** of the child deprived of parental care refers to one of the following forms of care: re- placement of the child with his/her biological family after the rehabilitation of parental functions (where the child has living parents and provided the rehabilitation of parental functions is possible), adoption of the child and placement with a family, if extending to the child's majority.

**Adoptee** is a child that is adopted.

**Adoption** is a form of the child care arising from the family law, which is considered the most qualitative form of the care of children deprived of parental care. Through adoption, the relations established between the adoptive parents and adoptee are those of biological parents and their child, this with a view to ensuring the adoptee the conditions of life normally enjoyed by children living in a family. Rights and duties of the adoptive parent are identical to those enjoyed by the biological parent. Complete adoption establishes the kinship relations that are identical to those between parents and their children. Pursuant to the provisions of the RS Family Law, only a child up to 5 years of age may be completely adopted, whereas the provisions of the FBiH Family Law allow it for the child up to 10 years of age. Complete adoption may not be terminated. Incomplete adoption establishes the same kinship relations as between biological parents and their children but incomplete adoption does not affect the rights and duties of the adoptee towards his/her biological parents and other relatives. Incomplete adoption is allowed for children under 18 years of age, and a consent of a child who is over 10 years of age, and is capable of understanding the meaning of adoption, is required. Incomplete adoption may be terminated by a decision of the Custodian Authority, when it establishes that it is required for the sake of adoptee's justified interests.

**Adoptive parent** is an adult person adopting a child.

**Case management** is an approach of social work that includes activities focused on every individual client. In the case of a child deprived of parental care, it makes it possible to assess the needs of every individual child, to make the service provided as compatible with them as possible, and, while monitoring the achievements attained by the child in a precisely defined period of time, to regularly monitor and revise the needs and services alike.

**Substitute family** is a form of care of children deprived of parental care, which is supposed to make up for the absence of parental care for the child in the best way possible, and ensure a setting for a full emotional, physical and intellectual development. The following are forms of substitute families: guardian, foster and adoptive families.

**Safe house** is a temporary form of care/placement of children and young adults deprived of parental care until a permanent solution has been found, i. e. until they reach age of 18 when they are considered independent.

## **Participants in the policy drafting process**

### **Advisory Group Members**

Slobodan Nagradić, Vijeće za djecu Bosne i Hercegovine  
Asim Zečević, Federalno ministarstvo rada i socijalne politike  
Pavle Paunić, Ministarstvo zdravlja i socijalne zaštite Republike Srpske  
Miro Mauhar, Federalno ministarstvo rada i socijalne politike  
Budimir Pejić, Ministarstvo zdravlja i socijalne zaštite Republike Srpske  
Fatima Fazlović, Odjel za socijalnu zaštitu Brčko Distrikta  
Momir Popić, Javni fond za dječiju zaštitu Republike Srpske  
Vladan Remetić, Ministarstvo za rad i socijalnu politiku Tuzlanskog kantona  
Mirsada Poturković, Kantonalni centar za socijalni rad, Sarajevo  
Udžejna Habul, Fakultet političkih nauka, Odsjek za socijalni rad, Sarajevo  
Slobodan Mitrović, Centar za socijalni rad, Doboj  
Vesna Savić, Centar za socijalni rad, Bijeljina  
Vinka Belenzada, Dječiji dom „Rada Vranješević“, Banja Luka  
Sena Družić, Socijalno-pedagoške životne zajednice, Bihać  
Kerry Neal, UNICEF  
Julia Down, Hope and Homes for Children  
Taida Kapetanović, Health Net International  
Ešref Kenan Rašidagić, IBHI  
Jasmina Selimović, Save the Children UK

### **Thematic group on *Transforming the institutional care members***

Adila Hodžić, Federalno ministarstvo rada i socijalne politike, Sarajevo  
Jovanka Vuković, Javni fond za dječiju zaštitu, Bijeljina  
Danilo Ponjarac, Dječiji dom „Rada Vranješević“ Banja Luka  
Amir Zelić, Dječiji dom Bjelave, Sarajevo  
Admir Liješčanin, Centar za djecu bez roditeljskog staranja, „Duga“, Kulen Vakuf  
Damir Čorić, SOS KDI, Sarajevo  
Borka Vukajlović, Centar za socijalni rad Banja Luka  
Ragib Vajnaga, Kantonalni centar za socijalni rad Kantona Sarajevo  
Julia Down, Hope and Homes for Children  
Taida Kapetanović, HelthNet International

### **Thematic group on *Development of alternative forms of care members***

Budimir Pejić, Ministarstvo zdravlja i socijalne zaštite Republike Srpske  
Ankica Kostić, Federalno ministarstvo rada i socijalne politike  
Fatima Fazlović, Pododjel/pododjeljenje za socijalnu zaštitu Brčko Distrikta  
Mirsada Poturković, Kantonalni centar za socijalni rad Kantona Sarajevo  
Zora Dujmović, Centar za socijalni rad Mostar  
Smail Joldić, Centar za socijalni rad Srebrenik  
Vinka Belenzada, Dječiji dom „Rada Vranješević“ Banja Luka  
Julia Down, Hope and Homes for Children  
Jasmina Selimović, Save the Children UK

### **Thematic group on *Strengthening capacities of centers for social work members***

Miro Mauhar, Federalno ministarstvo rada i socijalne politike  
Muhamed Hadžić, Ministarstvo za socijalnu politiku Bosansko-podrinjskog kantona, Goražde  
Safet Helić, Centar za socijalni rad Gračanica  
Mira Čuk, Centar za socijalni rad Trebinje  
Slobodan Mitrović, Centar za socijalni rad Doboj  
Ljubica Miličević, Centar za socijalni rad Prijedor  
Jozo Barišić, Centar za socijalni rad Ljubuški  
Jasmina Selimović, SC UK  
Jasna Sofović, SC UK

### **Thematic group on *Legislative framework members***

Vahdeta Čimić, Federalno ministarstvo rada i socijalne politike  
Aleksandra Marin, Ministarstvo zdravlja i socijalne zaštite Republike Srpske  
Momir Popić, Javni fond za dječiju zaštitu  
Udžejna Habul, Fakultet političkih nauka, Odsjek za socijalni rad, Sarajevo  
Darko Radić, Pravni fakultet Banja Luka  
Vesna Savić, Centar za socijalni rad Bijeljina  
Natasha Lialina, UNICEF

**Technical consultants:** Vesna Bošnjak, David Tolfree

**Consultants in developing glossary of terms:**

mr. Jovanka Vuković, Javni fond za dječiju zaštitu, Bijeljina  
doc.dr. Udžejna Habul, Fakultet političkih nauka, Odsjek za socijalni rad, Sarajevo  
prof. dr. Željko Mirjanić, Pravni fakultet, Banja Luka

**Edited by:**

Jasna Sofović, Save the Children UK  
Natasha Lialina, UNICEF  
Julia Down, Hope and Homes for Children  
Bojana Matić-Ostojić, Save the Children UK