



**EXTENDED ANNUAL REVIEW OF
UNICEF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
COUNTRY PROGRAMME 2002-2004**

GENDER ASSESSMENT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1.1	Conclusions	1
1.2	Recommendations	2
2	INTRODUCTION	4
2.1	Objectives	4
2.2	Methodology	4
2.3	Limitations	5
3	UNICEF'S POLICY ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING	5
4	UNICEF BIH APPROACH TO MAINSTREAMING GENDER	8
4.1	Review of Country Programme documents	8
4.1.1	Master Plan of Operations (MPO)	8
4.1.2	Programme Plan of Operations (PPO)	10
4.2	Assessment of mechanisms and attitudes	10
4.2.1	Absence of a clear ownership and responsibility for gender mainstreaming	11
4.2.2	Lack of organisational mechanisms to ensure implementation	13
4.2.3	Lack of gender specific competence and operational tools/guidance	14
4.3	Conclusions	15
4.3.1	Progress to date	15
4.3.2	Constraints	15
4.3.3	Recommendations	17
5	GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN UNICEF BIH SUPPORTED PROJECTS	18
5.1	Review of UNICEF supported projects	19
5.1.1	Early Childhood Development	19
5.1.2	Child-Friendly Schools	20
5.1.3	HIV/AIDS Prevention	21
5.1.4	Transformation of Institutional Care (Child-Friendly Hospitals)	22
5.1.5	Strengthening of Child Protection Mechanisms	23
5.1.6	Mine Injury Prevention	24
5.2	Conclusions	25
5.2.1	General findings	25
5.2.2	Constraints	26
5.2.3	Recommendations	26
6	ANNEX	27
6.1	Gender Focal Point draft Terms of Reference	27
6.2	Gender assessment tools	28
6.2.1	Gender Roles Identification: types of work/triple role	28
6.2.2	Gender Needs Assessment: practical gender needs/strategic gender interests	28
6.2.3	Gender Policies: gender-blind/gender-aware	29
6.3	List of documents, meetings attended, and people interviewed	30
6.3.1	List of documents	30
6.3.2	List of meetings attended	30
6.3.3	List of people interviewed	31

**“Gender...? I never think about it.
Gender mainstreaming is not a big issue here.
But the more I learn about it I recognise the need for it.”**

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This assessment of the extent of gender mainstreaming in the planning and implementation of UNICEF programmes in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) was carried out along side the Extended Annual Review consultations during February-April 2003. This assessment made no attempt to evaluate UNICEF supported projects and their outcomes. It provides a *description* of mechanisms for gender mainstreaming set up in the UNICEF BiH office, and an *overview* of the extent of gender mainstreaming in UNICEF-supported projects as well as attitudes among UNICEF staff and partners towards gender.

1.1 Conclusions

In general, the attitude among UNICEF BiH staff members and UNICEF implementing partners to gender mainstreaming is predominantly open and positive. During the past two years, considerable progress has been made to move towards the integration of a gender perspective in programming, including:

- Appointment of a Gender Focal Point as a resource for gender mainstreaming;
- A gender training workshop was held for all programme staff in February 2001;
- MPO objectives make clear references to the CEDAW and women’s rights;
- New projects have been initiated on domestic violence and prevention of trafficking of women and children specifically addressing women’s rights and resulting in strengthened links between UNICEF and women’s NGOs;
- UNICEF also began to integrate CEDAW into its rights promotion approach at the policy level through supporting government to prepare first CEDAW report and to implement the new Gender Equality Law;
- Adjustments are sometimes made during project implementation based on feedback from the field in order to better target and meet the needs of girls and boys, women and men. These changes provide good examples of the possible outcome of gender mainstreaming, which can be transferred to other projects and activities.

Despite these positive developments, this assessment reveals that a gender perspective has not been systematically mainstreamed through out the programme cycle. It has become visible that despite good will and an opened attitude to gender issues among staff members and partners, several concurrent factors put up considerable constraints for a successful implementation of gender mainstreaming:

- **Gender not systematically mainstreamed**

A gender perspective is not systematically incorporated throughout the programme cycle in accordance with the UNICEF’s policy on mainstreaming gender. Most projects are gender-blind in the sense that the gender dimension has not been systematically included in the development of the project, or in the monitoring and evaluation of its outcomes. The extent of the integration of a gender perspective seems to be largely a result of the perceptions and priorities of the project officers, or the implementing partner’s previous experience.

- **The operational meaning of gender mainstreaming unclear**

Gender mainstreaming is often perceived as a vague and academic concept. “Gender” is often understood as “women’s rights” and “women’s projects” which entails that boys and men are

excluded from the discourse. Several UNICEF staff members and partners state that it is difficult to understand what gender mainstreaming would entail and would bring about on an operational level.

- **Lack of comprehensive gender analysis and gender disaggregated data**

Even if gender disparities and inequalities in the BiH society are recognised, a common opinion is that gender-based discrimination does not constitute a problem of substantial magnitude. Few consider it an issue of priority: “It is important but not urgent”. This perception is reinforced by the lack of gender analyses in key programme documents, and the fact that structural gender inequalities, and their basic causes, are not systematically identified and highlighted.

- **Lack of mechanisms and standards**

In UNICEF BiH office, there are considerable uncertainties on “*How to do it*”. There is a general need for country specific guidelines on how to implement and monitor gender mainstreaming, in combination with good examples and best practices. Needs include: training on operational tools and clarification of important concepts such as *gender redistributive policies* and *women’s strategic needs*; earmarked resources and time for the implementation of gender mainstreaming; and adequate support from persons with gender-specific knowledge. The Gender Focal Point needs TOR and a realistic working plan. There is also a common perception that the gender mainstreaming tools should be adapted to the specific context in BiH.

- **Lack of dialogue and information**

None of the implementing partner organisations state that they have been informed of the UNICEF gender mainstreaming policy. Few say that the gender issue has been brought up in discussions by UNICEF at the planning phase of a project. Among the UNICEF staff members, there is no common understanding or approach on how to work with partners in regard to gender mainstreaming. Dialogue and networks between implementing partners and national women’s NGOs with comprehensive knowledge and experience of gender mainstreaming can be explored.

1.2 Recommendations

As a complement to the progress and work already initiated to mainstream gender into the programme cycle in the UNICEF BiH and UNICEF supported projects, this assessment puts forward suggested recommendations for an Action Plan for changes at three levels:

1. Country Office policy and accountabilities;
2. Programme planning documents and tools;
3. Implementation of UNICEF supported projects.

It is envisioned that these changes could occur in parallel, where the piloting of case studies for the gender mainstreaming implementation would take place simultaneously to the elaboration of a UNICEF BiH country specific policy. During these two processes, it would be possible to elaborate and try out mechanisms, standards and tools at the same time. This process could also be linked and coordinated with the gender mainstreaming processes in other UN Country Team agencies.

- **Elaboration of a BiH UNICEF country programme specific policy**

A country specific written policy would reaffirm UNICEF’s commitment to gender mainstreaming, and provide important guidance for the particular context of BiH. Such a document could include:

- A policy that provides the rationale behind a decision to mainstream gender in the specific context of BiH – “*The Why*”;
- Concrete and operational objectives for gender mainstreaming;
- A country-specific strategy that applies to the particular conditions of BiH. – “*The What*”. The strategy should clearly point out priorities, i.e. if some particular issues or all projects should be targeted for gender mainstreaming;
- Guidelines – “*The How*” – including clarification of important concepts, instruments for policy dialogue with partners and definition of UNICEF’s advocacy role on gender mainstreaming, tools adapted to the specific needs in BiH and best practices on gender mainstreaming;
- Clear allocation of responsibility, earmarked resources and time for gender mainstreaming. This might include support for partners in order to make it feasible for them to answer to UNICEF request for gender mainstreaming;
- TOR and a realistic work plan for the Gender Focal Point;
- Mechanisms and standards for implementation. These should be developed in partnership with governments and implementing partners.

- **Selection of pilot project**

Two or three pilot projects could be selected as case studies in how to implement gender mainstreaming. These projects should not be women-specific, but addressing women and men, girls and boys. The selection of at least one pilot project should preferably be based on the possibility to integrate a gender perspective already at the planning stage. One important objective for such a pilot project could be to transfer good examples of gender mainstreaming from existing women-specific projects, such as prevention of domestic violence. This would promote the creation of links and networks between implementing partners and national NGOs and other actors with relevant gender expertise.

- **Development of standards and tools for gender mainstreaming**

As part of the pilot project/case studies existing tools for gender mainstreaming could be tried out and adopted to the specific context of BiH. Mechanisms and standards for implementation of gender mainstreaming could be developed in partnership with governments and implementing partners and tried out in practice.

- **Incorporation of a gender perspective in key programme documents**

During the pilot projects a gender perspective should be integrated in key documents. This could include for example a *gender analysis* that identifies gender inequalities and discrimination - and their basic causes - relevant to the project, gender sensitive *objectives* and gender sensitive *indicators* in order to facilitate the *monitoring* and *evaluation* of gender-outcomes. In the beginning of the next country programme cycle, it is also recommended that a gender perspective and analysis is elaborated by a gender specialist and incorporated in the Situation Analysis in line with the recommendations made in the *Gender Mainstreaming Guide*.

- **Training on gender and how to use gender mainstreaming tools**

Even if the pilot projects will function as a capacity-building exercise in themselves, additional trainings might be needed. The level of awareness on gender issues varies among both UNICEF staff members and partners. Some staff members and partners have previous experience of gender mainstreaming; for some this will be a first encounter with the concept. This means that both training on operational tools (developed during the pilot projects), and sensitisation on the concept might be necessary in order to create a common basic understanding of gender mainstreaming.

- **Link UNICEF gender efforts to other agencies**

2 INTRODUCTION

This report is divided into six sections:

Section 1 summarises conclusions and recommendations of the report.

Section 2 outlines objectives, methodology and limitations of the review.

Section 3 presents UNICEF's commitment to gender mainstreaming, a basic definition of the concept and a brief presentation documents and tools provided for its implementation.

Section 4 gives an account of gender mainstreaming in the BiH country office. An analysis of the gender aspect in key documents is made. Constraints for the implementation of gender mainstreaming are identified, and presented along with subsequent recommendations.

Section 5 presents overview of the extent of gender mainstreaming in UNICEF supported projects and subsequent conclusions and recommendations.

Section 6 contains an Annex with TOR of the Gender Focal Point, Gender Assessment Tools and list of documents reviewed, meetings attended and people interviewed.

2.1 Objectives

This assessment of the extent of integration of gender analysis in the planning and implementation of UNICEF programmes in BiH was initiated as part of the Extended Annual Review of UNICEF and BiH country programme of cooperation 2002-2004. The objectives of the assessment were:

- To assess the systems, mechanisms, responsibilities and accountabilities set up in the Country Office for ensuring implementation of the UNICEF policy on gender mainstreaming;
- To assess the extent of integration of gender analysis, planning tools and gender sensitive indicators in the programme/projects framework, objectives and implementation;
- To identify gaps/needs/areas for support.

2.2 Methodology

The methodology used included:

1. Review of documents and reports;
2. Participation in consultation meetings during the Extended Review consultations in February and March 2003;
3. Interviews with UNICEF programme staff;
4. Interviews with selected key persons in UNICEF's implementing partner organisations (*See Appendix, list documents, meetings attended and people interviewed*).

The analysis of the UNICEF programme documents (MPO and PPO) is based on recommendations made in the *UNICEF Gender Mainstreaming Guide*. In all parts of the assessment a variety of analytical tools were used. The gender analysis is based on the concept of gender-blind and gender-aware policies. It also takes into account the triple role of women – reproductive, productive and community work – and the practical and strategic gender needs discussed by Caroline Moser (See Annex 6.2. Gender assessment tools). During the interviews, questions provided in the *UNICEF Gender Mainstreaming Guide* and the *How to address gender disparities in the Five MTSP areas* were tried out and used.

2.3 Limitations

This assessment makes no attempt of being an in depth case study of UNICEF supported projects. It provides a *description* of mechanisms for gender mainstreaming set up in the Country Office in BiH, and an *overview* of the extent of gender mainstreaming in UNICEF supported projects as well as attitudes among staff and UNICEF partners towards gender.

The part of the study covering the extent of gender mainstreaming in UNICEF-supported projects was carried out along side with the Extended Annual Review consultations of the *UNICEF-BiH Country Programme for Cooperation 2002-2004*. Selected key persons in implementing partner organisations were interviewed. No attempt was made to evaluate the projects and their outcomes.

3 UNICEF'S POLICY ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING

3.1. What is gender?

In order to understand the term *gender mainstreaming*, it is essential to understand the concept of *gender* itself. This concept is one that makes it possible to distinguish biologically founded sexual differences between women and men from the culturally determined differences between the roles given to or undertaken by women and men in a society. It is easy to understand the biological differences between men and women, as these are universal. The socially constructed differences are not always so easily discernible. The concept of gender assists us in recognizing the socially constructed roles and relationships defined for men and women within a society. These roles and relationships are learned, change over time and have wide variations within and between cultures.

Gender roles are affected by a number of factors such as age, class, race, ethnicity, religion and ideologies, in addition to the geographical, economic and political environment. Roles may be flexible, rigid, similar or different as well as they may be complimentary or conflicting. Policies and social structures are instrumental in institutionalising the maintenance and replication of the social construction of gender.

3.2. Why should UNICEF policy-makers and programmers be concerned about the differing social roles between men and women?

The relations that are derived from the socially constructed roles impact on the capacity of men and women, girls and boys, to attain their full potential within the process of sustainable human development, and as beneficiaries of development and humanitarian assistance. Gender relations may constrain or enlarge the enjoyment of equal opportunities and rights, and as such can lead to discrimination.

If the mandate and mission of UNICEF are to be fulfilled, attention must be given to all forms of discrimination and measures adopted to redress inequalities created by socialised gender roles and expectations.

3.3. What is Gender Mainstreaming?

Mainstreaming is the term used to describe the integration of any policy prescriptions into national development policy and programmes at all levels and throughout all sectors. In particular, *gender mainstreaming*, is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of men, women, boys and girls an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that everyone can benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

The **Platform for Action** agreed on at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 demonstrates a political commitment on the part of governments to work towards equality between women and men and to pursue **gender mainstreaming** as a strategy for achieving equality. It states that

" ... to ensure effective implementation of the Platform for Action and to enhance the work of the advancement of women...the United Nations system and all other relevant organizations should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective, inter alia, in the monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes, so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made on the effects of women and men, respectively" (Para.292)

The **Agreed Conclusions 1997/2**, adopted at the meeting of the **United Nations Economic and Social Council** in 1997, addressed mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. **Mainstreaming a gender perspective** was defined as

" ... the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."

These conclusions were reinforced by the UN Secretary General in his communication of October 13, 1997, to Heads of UN Funds and Agencies, calling on them to ensure that specific strategies are formulated to bring gender issues into the mainstream of organisational activities. The UN system was directed to adopt specific steps to ensure gender differences are fully taken into account when applying the dimension of gender to policy formulation:

- (a) *Formulate specific strategies for ensuring that gender issues are brought into the mainstream of activities;*
- (b) *Systematically use gender analysis of information disaggregated by sex and age, sector-specific gender surveys and gender-sensitive studies on particular issues in the preparation of reports or in operational activities;*
- (c) *Prepare medium-term plans and programme budgets in such a manner that a gender perspective is apparent.*

Such an approach would promote gender equality, with equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life, with full participation of women and men in society.

3.4. UNICEF's policy

Two international human rights instruments form the basic frame of reference of UNICEF's work: the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC), and the *Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW). The two conventions share important principles of non-discrimination including affirmative action to redress discrimination. CRC and the CEDAW function complementary to each other, and together they provide an essential framework for the eradication of gender inequality and discrimination of girls and women.

In the UNICEF mission statement, it is spelled out that "UNICEF aims through its country programmes to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the social, economic and political development of their communities."

In the *A Human Rights Approach to UNICEF Programming for Children and Women*, adopted in 1998, the complementary relationship between the CRC and CEDAW is clearly spelled out, and the importance of the CEDAW for UNICEF focus on especially girls is reinforced. But UNICEF is also committed to support the equal rights of women, in line with the CEDAW, "because the right of women to participate in decisions that effect them is central to the realisation of the rights of children; and because the rights, equality and empowerment of women are especially important to healthy child development and to building healthy families, communities and nations" (*UNICEF's Priorities for Children 2002 – 2005*).

The strategy to counteract gender discrimination and ensure the promotion of gender equality in policies and programmes is gender mainstreaming. This means that - in compliance with the UNICEF's 1994 Policy on Gender and Empowerment of Women, the Beijing Platform for Action and the 1997 ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions – a gender perspective should be present and visible in all UNICEF's policies and programmes at all stages of the programme cycle, that is in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes/projects. The aim is to ensure girls and boy's, women and men's equal participation in and benefit of all UNICEF's activities, and to guarantee the absence of discrimination and violation of rights on the ground of gender.

3.5. Tools for implementation of gender mainstreaming policy

To facilitate the compliance with the UNICEF's policy commitment on gender mainstreaming, and to meet the demands from UNICEF field staff for technical support, several tools have been developed. For this assessment the following key documents were considered:

- a) In 2000, *Gender Mainstreaming: A Guide for UNICEF-Assisted Programmes* was produced and distributed to all offices. The document is a guide designed to serve all field staff; representatives, programme co-ordinators, evaluation officers, technical specialists, project officers and consultants. It includes guidance, among other things, on how gender can be mainstreamed into both the country programme cycle and sectoral and cross-sectoral areas. It also gives a monitoring and evaluation framework for mainstreaming gender.
- b) UNICEF has also adopted the *Women's Equality and Empowerment Framework* (WEEF), as a tool for the incorporation of a gender perspective in UNICEF's programming and capacity building. Five levels of equality have been visualised -

welfare, access to resources, access to training, participation in decision-making, and empowerment - with empowerment of women as being the final goal of gender mainstreaming.

- c) A checklist *How to address gender disparities in the Five MTSP areas* has also been elaborated. It provides strategic questions to increase the gender perspective in UNICEF's five priority areas; Girl's education, Early childhood, Immunization 'plus', Fighting HIV/AIDS and Protecting children from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination.

The above-mentioned guides and tools are to be used together with the UNICEF document *Rights-based approach to programming*. In conjunction they are supposed to enable all staff - gender specialists and non-specialist - to ensure that the needs of girls and boys, women and men, are equally met in UNICEF supported projects.

4 UNICEF BIH APPROACH TO MAINSTREAMING GENDER

4.1 Review of Country Programme documents

For this report, the Master Plan of Operations (MPO) and the Project Plan of Operations (PPO) were considered key documents in order to assess the presence of a gender perspective in UNICEF-supported projects. It must be mentioned that the *Gender Mainstreaming Guide* clearly underlines that if a gender perspective is to be successfully mainstreamed throughout the programme cycle, it is crucial that a gender perspective is present in the Situation Assessment and Analysis (SITAN). Structural gender inequalities should be identified in the SITAN, and necessary steps to eliminate these disparities should be spelled out. In addition, it is stated that the process of developing the SITAN should be utilized as a capacity-building exercise, training the programme officers in gender analytical methodologies. This has not been the case in the BiH country office.

Compared to a previous assessment of programme documents made during the Mid-Term Review of UNICEF BiH country programme 1999-2001, substantial improvements have been made. For example, in the 1999-2001 BiH country programme MPO and PPO, the framework for the rights-based approach was exclusively CRC, reinforcing the focus on women only in their role as mothers. In MPO 2002-2004 the framework is expanded to include the CEDAW and thus embracing all women's rights.

Nevertheless, a general observation of both the MPO and the PPO is that the gender perspective has not been mainstreamed in accordance with the UNICEF policy and recommendations in the *Gender Mainstreaming Guide*.

4.1.1 Master Plan of Operations (MPO)

The MPO is a three-year programme of cooperation between the Government of BiH and UNICEF, which is to be implemented during 2002 – 2004.

In the MPO, both the CRC and the CEDAW are included in the framework for the rights-based programming approach. The description of the situation for women and children in BiH, it is clearly highlighted that these rights, although formally guaranteed by laws, are "violated due to disrespect and ignorance, and the lack of organised support services, information, and awareness about children and women's rights".

In general, the description of the situation in MPO and PPO is, however, gender-blind. For example, when the situation for children is described, no distinction is made between the differences among girls and boys. Structural differences and possible inequalities between girls and boys are subsequently not possible to detect.

A few references are made to the particular situation of women, such as the large number of female-headed households. This is though not followed by a gender analysis and a description of structural differences, for example: how and why are female-headed households more vulnerable than families single-headed by men? do these women require different support than men in the same situation? is the increase of female-headed families something that needs to be systematically addressed? how are identified differences addressed in objectives, strategies and evaluation?

In the *Gender Mainstreaming Guide* it is frequently underlined how important it is that goals and objectives specifically address the needs and rights of girls and boys, women and men. In the MPO, with one exception, this is only visible in the policy, development and advocacy programme area where clear reference is made to both the CEDAW and women's rights.

In the section on strategies, it is clearly spelled out that UNICEF should support gender sensitive research. This is a basic precondition for any kind of gender analysis and crucial for the possibility to address structural gender inequalities. The strategies also point out that UNICEF will work to strengthen women's networks. During the last years this has been initiated through activities in the area of domestic violence and trafficking of women and children.

To ensure the implementation of gender mainstreaming, systematic monitoring and evaluation of actions for gender mainstreaming should be integrated in the MPO. Nevertheless, in the section of monitoring and evaluation there is no mentioning of any kind of gender perspective. It is therefore not possible to say if and how both gender mainstreaming actions and gender specific outcomes, are monitored and evaluated.

It is also observed that gender issues sometimes have a tendency to "disappear" along the way. Disparities may be identified but then not included in the objectives. For example, in the section of Lessons Learned it is recognised that focus has been put on provision of services and less on protection and "participation of children and families, particularly women, in decision-making". Despite this, in the Programme priorities and strategies the aspect of women's participation in decision-making is no longer present.

The conclusion is that even if a gender perspective is present to some extent in the MPO, it is not mainstreamed in accordance with the UNICEF commitment to gender mainstreaming. When structural gender inequalities and their basic causes are not clearly identified and spelled out, they are consequently not adequately addressed in the objectives and strategies. It is therefore very difficult to get a comprehensive picture of how and to what extent UNICEF's work actually address structural gender inequalities. As mentioned above, one central lesson learned is that UNICEF focus has been on provision of services and less on protection and participation. This is important also from a gender point of view. If gender equality is to be promoted, substantial attention must be made to especially girls and women's strategic needs. That is, in addition to the provision of services, a stronger focus must be put on the strategic needs that carry a potential for empowerment and transformation of gender relations.

4.1.2 Programme Plan of Operations (PPO)

The Gender Mainstreaming Guide recommends that if the SITAN has not identified specific inequalities in relation to sectors, an analysis should be made using the WEEF framework. Specific inequalities between girls and boys, men and women, and their underlying causes, should then be identified in relation to each sector and project. In the PPO for 2002 – 2004 such an analysis has not been made.

Even if special needs of women are outlined to some extent, no special attention is paid to possible differences between girls and boys. On the contrary, it is highlighted that there is a general lack of data disaggregated by sex that would determine whether girls are disadvantaged compared to boys. The analysis and description of children's situation is therefore gender-blind.

In general, the project objectives and activities do not address basic causes of gender inequality. Nor are they elaborated to systematically reduce or change stereotypical roles and social relationships of girls and boys, women and men. In fact, it is evident that women are generally addressed in their roles as mothers. Also in projects where it is clearly spelled out that *both* parents should be targeted, in reality it seems that very little attention is paid to fathers.

It seems that the CRC forms the overall framework for the elaboration of the PPO to address the special needs of children and women. Reference is not made to the CEDAW in neither the Child Protection and Participation Programme nor the Child Survival and Development Programme.

There are two obvious exceptions from the above stated. *Firstly*, in the Policy Development and Advocacy Programme, objectives as well as activities and key indicators clearly include both the CRC and the CEDAW, and specifically point at women and women's rights. In the situation analysis, it is also recognised that "the international agencies working on Bosnia and Herzegovina need to increase their awareness of the specific and special needs of children and women within their interventions in the country". *Secondly*, a few gender-specific projects mainly targeting women have been initiated during the last years, namely Prevention of Abuse and Violence and Prevention of Trafficking in Women and Children, both addressing gender-based violence and abuse.

The conclusion is that the examples mentioned above clearly point to improvements made in order to meet the UNICEF commitment to gender mainstreaming. Nevertheless, it is visible that the CEDAW is not consistently used as the base for the rights-based programming in accordance with UNICEF's policy, nor is the gender perspective mainstreamed throughout the programmes.

The gender-blind approach to children highlights the risk that differences in needs and inequalities between girls and boys are overseen. As mentioned above, women are also predominantly addressed as mothers and very little attention is paid to support and strengthen the role of fathers in providing care for children in families or communities. Subsequently UNICEF both runs the risk of reinforcing the stereotype role of women as being responsible for the reproductive work, and may fail to systematically address the possible renegotiation of gender roles and responsibilities.

4.2 Assessment of mechanisms and attitudes

Based on the desk review of selected key documents, interviews with staff members, minutes from previous Gender Focal Point meetings, and interviews with UNICEF's implementing partners, it becomes visible that a gender perspective and analysis is not systematically mainstreamed into UNICEF BiH programming. Despite open attitude, gender mainstreaming appears to be a largely marginalized and token issue. This seems to be a consequence of three basic factors:

1. *Firstly*, the absence of a clear ownership of gender mainstreaming and individual responsibility for its realisation;
2. *Secondly*, the lack of organisational mechanisms to ensure the implementation of gender mainstreaming;
3. *Thirdly*, the lack of gender specific competence and operational tools/guidance for gender mainstreaming.

These basic factors will be explained and discussed below.

4.2.1 Absence of a clear ownership and responsibility for gender mainstreaming

All interviewed UNICEF staff members state that they know of the existence of a UNICEF gender mainstreaming policy. However, very few actually know what it really signifies. Several staff members stated that there is an overall uncertainty *if* and to *what extent* there really is a demand for gender mainstreaming. Several important questions seem to be left without a clear answer:

a) Who is actually responsible, when everybody is?

- “It’s high time we systematically mainstreaming gender, but nobody really bother to sit down and get things started”.
- “Gender mainstreaming is something that everybody should but nobody does. It has become just another thing to check”.
- “We are mainstreaming gender out of existence; in the end it has become a way to get rid of women’s rights issues”.

These three quotations largely capture the atmosphere in the office; when everybody is responsible for the realisations of gender mainstreaming nobody, seems to actually feel obliged or accountable. In an environment where time and resources are always constrained, what staff chooses to focus on becomes a matter of prioritisation. As a consequence of many uncertainties surrounding gender mainstreaming, in combination with the lack of absolute demands on its realisation, the issue is not prioritised.

b) Is there really a need for gender mainstreaming in BiH?

Despite the opened and positive attitude towards gender issues, the concept of gender mainstreaming seems to be largely perceived as an imposed obligation from HQ, rather than a useful tool to avoid gender-discrimination and promote gender equality. There seems to be uncertainties on both *why* and *how* to implement gender mainstreaming in the specific context of BiH. The argument is mentioned that the HQ’s decision on gender mainstreaming is based on the needs of other countries, such as Afghanistan and Ethiopia, and not intended for countries like BiH.

Among the staff members, there are significant differences in the perception of inequalities between girls and boys, women and men in the BiH society. Besides problems that clearly violate women's rights and victimise women, such as domestic violence and trafficking for forced prostitution, gender differences are recognised but not necessarily perceived as leading to inequality: "Even if women and men have different roles, does that make them unequal?"

A common opinion is that gender disparities and gender-based discrimination does not constitute a problem of substantial magnitude: "It is important but not urgent". Both staff members and UNICEF partners mention, as an explanation or pretext for the absence of gender mainstreaming, two other aspects:

- There is no evidence that shows that gender roles in BiH context lead to unequal treatment of girls and boys that would cause gender differences in areas that are usually pointed out as crucial survival and development "gender inequality areas" for example; basic education attainment, access to social services and child mortality.
- As a result of the former socialist government's achievements, for example women's employment¹, BiH is a fairly gender-equal society, and does not have the same level of gender discrimination that affects mortality or education rates of girls vs. boys as in many countries of similar level of development.

The above-mentioned arguments are reinforced by the fact that no comprehensive gender analysis is made during the UNICEF programme cycle, which clearly points out and describes existing gender inequalities and gender-discrimination.

In the end it, therefore, seems to be the personal opinion of the Programme/Project Officers that ultimately determines if and to what extent a gender perspective is to be incorporated in the programming. This is problematic, as it is based on perceptions and attitudes, which could be simply reflecting the existing status quo, i.e., perpetuating inequalities.

c) What does the CEDAW signify on the operational level?

Although UNICEF has adopted both the *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)* and the *Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)* as the framework for programming, the CEDAW seems to be largely token. As one member of staff expressed it; "The CRC is the foundation of our work. The CEDAW, well I haven't even read it".

Even if the importance of the CEDAW is recognised by some staff members, it is not obvious to everybody what the adoption of the CEDAW entails for UNICEF's mission and work; is it in UNICEF's mandate to – in line with the CEDAW - target all women or only mothers and women in relation to the childcare and family?

The question was even raised if UNICEF does not work in contradiction to the spirit of the CEDAW, if women in practice are only targeted by UNICEF programmes as mothers. Instead of promoting gender equality, this can reinforce stereotype gender roles of women as care takers and responsible for all the reproductive work.

¹ It must be noted that women's participation in the labour force is the lowest in Southeastern Europe – it is estimated that only about 30% of women in BiH are employed in the formal and informal economy.

d) Who should set gender mainstreaming on the agenda, UNICEF or its partners?

Several members of staff stress the need for a strategy on how to work with their partners when it comes to gender mainstreaming. The situation is explained as follows: “the lack of gender mainstreaming is a reflection of the context we work in. Priorities are identified by our partners, and if they don’t think it’s an issue, we don’t stress it. On the other hand, as long as we don’t act, it won’t happen”.

On the other hand, interviewing UNICEF implementing partners it becomes visible that the partners in some cases might be more opened to gender issues than assumed by UNICEF staff members. This highlights the need for a more focused and active dialogue between UNICEF and its partners on gender issues.

4.2.2 Lack of organisational mechanisms to ensure implementation

UNICEF-BiH does not have its own written gender policy that reaffirms the UNICEF commitment to gender mainstreaming. This implies that there is a lack of a strategy that clearly provides guidance to the staff members how gender mainstreaming is to be addressed; that is if a gender perspective should be present in all programmes/projects or if special focus should be put on some specific issues of certain strategic importance.

The absence of organisational mechanisms implies, as mentioned above, that no clear *responsibility* is allocated for the implementation of gender mainstreaming. Besides the appointment of a Gender Focal Point (GFP), who serves as a resource for the office, no field specific structures or procedures are developed to *ensure the implementation of* gender mainstreaming. This indistinctness is reinforced by the fact that no special mechanisms are set up to *monitor* the extent of gender mainstreaming in programmes and projects on a regular basis.

No specific time is set aside for the staff to ensure that gender is mainstreamed. In an environment where time is always short in relation to the magnitude of the task, it is clear that this is one important factor explaining why gender mainstreaming is not prioritised.

There are also no financial resources earmarked to ensure that gender is mainstreamed, this includes capacity building for both staff members and partner organisations. Despite a gender training workshop in 2001 and additional briefings on the theoretical meaning of gender, no training on how to use existing tools for gender mainstreaming has been provided for the staff. This underlines the fact that the formal demand for gender mainstreaming is not met with adequate preparation and guidance for the staff members.

The GFP functions as a resource for the office. It is up to the programme officers to consult her and instruct her to review and comment on draft programme documents. In reality, few people seem to be aware of the GFP’s mandate, and what kind of support they may require from her.

According to the GFP there are several factors that constrain the work of the GFP:

1. *Firstly* the GFP has not had a proper working plan. A draft ToR is currently under elaboration and should be officially adopted in a near future. This will facilitate the GFP’s work and give her the formal mandate to request assistance and cooperation from colleagues.

2. *Secondly*, the workload has increased during the last years, and as a consequence the GFP responsibilities are sometimes token even for the GFP, as other priorities always take precedence.
3. *Thirdly*, the placement at the sub-office in Banja Luka has made it more difficult for the GFP to serve as a resource for the staff members on a daily basis. Subsequently, the GFP has become a bit of a “police function”, a person who tells the colleagues what they have not done instead of building the work on interaction and participation in discussions.
4. *Fourthly*, the lack of gender disaggregated data, which makes it difficult both to identify gender inequalities and to integrate a gender perspective in objectives and measurable indicators.

Considering the specific situation in BiH, and the fact that the concept of gender mainstreaming is fairly recently introduced in the region, the GFP is content, but not satisfied, with the progress made during the last years. The key issue for the GFP is to include a gender perspective into the planning process in a more visible and comprehensive manner.

4.2.3 Lack of gender specific competence and operational tools/guidance

The greatest challenge for UNICEF-BiH seems to be to understand how to make gender mainstreaming operational in the specific context of BiH. Even if the will and good intentions may be present, there is a need to visualise *how* the gender aspect could be included into the programme cycle in a feasible manner.

Since the staff is not generally prepared or trained for the task of mainstreaming gender, there is not a common understanding of what the concept actually means and what it would bring about if implemented. This highlights not only the need for training, but also that gender mainstreaming should be recognised as a fairly difficult task that requires certain expertise, skills and assistance.

To a large extent, gender mainstreaming seems to be addressed from the standpoint of benefiting women through access to services and resources, rather than re-negotiating the respective roles of girls and boys, women and men. Equal sign is often put between gender mainstreaming and projects specifically targeting women such as domestic violence. The roles, responsibilities and special needs of boys and men are seldom addressed. If UNICEF programmes are to consistently promote gender equality and a more balanced relationship between the genders, the awareness and understanding of *gender redistributive policies* and women’s *strategic needs for empowerment* must be raised.

The “gender terminology” seems to constitute a hindrance in itself. As an example the question was raised on gender-sensitive laws; “What is that, aren’t laws supposed to be equal for everybody? I want concrete examples of what the gender people talk about!”

Gender Mainstreaming: A Guide for UNICEF-Assisted Programmes is the main instrument provided to the staff for mainstreaming gender. Even if it is designed to suit also non-specialists, it is perceived as fairly complicated and difficult to grasp. In addition to this, few staff actually know of its existence and even fewer have made use of it. If gender is going to be mainstreamed training on how to use *the Guide* might be needed.

The *Women’s Equality and Empowerment Framework (WEEF)* adopted by UNICEF and presented in the *Gender Mainstreaming Guide* is familiar to very few staff members. During the programme developing process it has not been used at all. One comment on the *WEEF* is

that it is actually not useful for UNICEF as it only applies to the situation of women and gender-specific projects targeting women (“We are not UNIFEM!”).

The checklist *How to address gender disparities in the five MTSP areas* is also scarcely spread among the staff. During the assessment questions from the checklist were used in the interviews. In many cases they were useful in order to open up a more detailed and less generalising discussion on the gender component in the projects. It was also discernible that the questions often led to increased interest of the gender aspect among the people interviewed. In contrast to this, at some occasions, the questions were perceived as either biased themselves (“These questions reinforce my stereotypes of the gender people!”) or difficult to answer in relation to the BiH society (“This is not Afghanistan!”). This highlights the need to develop and adapt gender-mainstreaming tools that answer to the needs in the specific context of BiH.

4.3 Conclusions

4.3.1 Progress to date

In general, the **attitude** among staff members **to gender mainstreaming is predominantly positive**. During the last years considerable progress has been made in the BiH country office to move towards the integration of a gender perspective in programming. This includes:

1. Appointment of a GFP as a resource for gender mainstreaming, although without clear terms of reference or work plan.
2. A gender-training workshop was held for all programme staff in February 2001.
3. In the objectives of the MPO 2002-2004 clear references are made to the CEDAW and women’s rights.
4. New projects have been initiated on domestic violence and trafficking of women and children specifically addressing women’s rights and resulting in strengthened links between UNICEF and women’s NGOs.
5. UNICEF also began to integrate CEDAW into its rights promotion approach at the policy level through supporting government to prepare first CEDAW report and to implement the new Gender Equality Law.
6. In addition to this, adjustments are sometimes made in projects, based on feedback from the field, in order to better target and meet the needs of girls and boys, women and men. One example is that the whole approach changed for the Schools for Pregnant Women, when fathers showed up during the trainings and wanted to participate. These are today Schools for Future Parents, addressing both knowledge and skill of mothers and fathers in caring for newborn babies. These changes provide several good examples of the possible outcome of gender mainstreaming, which can be transferred to other projects and activities.

4.3.2 Constraints

Despite these positive developments, this assessment reveals that a gender perspective has not been systematically mainstreamed through out the programme cycle. It has become visible that despite of good will and an opened attitude to gender issues among staff

members, several concurrent factors put up considerable constraints to a successful implementation of gender mainstreaming:

- **Gender mainstreaming is not a priority**

Although the general attitude of staff towards gender mainstreaming is positive, few consider it an issue of priority. There is no common understanding of what the concept really would signify on an operational level. There is also an overall uncertainty *if* and *to what* extent gender mainstreaming is really a requirement.

- **Gender not systematically mainstreamed**

Despite the fact that considerable progress is made, a gender perspective is not systematically incorporated throughout the programme cycle in accordance with the UNICEF commitment to gender mainstreaming. The extent of integration of a gender perspective seems to be largely a result of the perceptions and priorities of the programme/project officers.

- **The operational meaning of the gender mainstreaming policy unclear**

All interviewed staff members state that they know of the existence of a UNICEF gender mainstreaming policy. Very few however understand what it really signifies, and what it would entail if implemented in programmes and projects. There are considerable uncertainties on “*How to do it*”, and a general demand for best practices and good examples.

- **Unclear ownership and responsibility**

The formal responsibility for gender mainstreaming lies with the programme/project officers, with GFP being a resource person for the office but not personally responsible for mainstreaming gender in projects. When everybody is responsible for the integration of gender mainstreaming, nobody seems to actually feel accountable. In an environment where time is always short in relation to the multitudes of tasks and priorities, there is a high risk that the issue will not be prioritised. This is reinforced by the fact that the country office does not have its own written gender policy that reaffirms the UNICEF commitment to gender mainstreaming, and provides country specific guidelines for its implementation.

- **Divergent view on the need for gender mainstreaming**

Even if gender disparities and inequalities in the BiH society are recognised, a common opinion among the staff members is that gender-based discrimination does not constitute a problem of substantial magnitude; “It is important but not urgent”. This seems to be an important factor why the issue is not prioritised.

- **Lack of comprehensive gender analysis in programme documents**

The fact that gender mainstreaming is not prioritised is reinforced by the lack of gender analyses in key programme documents. This is stated to be partly caused by a general lack of gender disaggregated base-line data. Nevertheless, a clear and comprehensive identification of structural gender-based inequalities and discrimination, and their basic causes, is vital to facilitate the attempts to mainstream gender.

- **The CEDAW perceived as token**

Even if the CEDAW is predominantly perceived as important, it does not seem clear to many staff members what the adoption of the CEDAW in addition to CRC as basis for UNICEF rights-based approach to programming really entails for UNICEF’s work. It is also not obvious what it signifies on the operational level.

- **Lack of dialogue on gender issues with implementing partners**

There is a need for a strategy on how to work with partners in regard to gender mainstreaming. The assessment shows that UNICEF implementing partners in some cases might be more opened to gender issues than assumed by UNICEF staff members.

- **Lack of mechanisms to mainstream gender**

There is a general need for country specific guidelines on *how* and *to what extent* to implement and monitor gender mainstreaming. This includes earmarked resources and time for the implementation of gender mainstreaming, and clarification of important concepts.

- **GFP not integrated as intended**

Few members of staff seem to be aware of the GFP mandate, and what kind of support they may require from her. GFP does not have clear terms of reference, which are included in the PER.

- **Shortage of gender specific knowledge and training**

The staff members are not specifically prepared for the task of mainstreaming gender and are not trained in how to use operational tools such as the *Gender Mainstreaming Guide*. In addition to this type of “operational training” there seems to be a need to increase the understanding of *gender redistributive policies* and *women’s strategic needs* for empowerment.

- **Guidelines and tools not adopted to BiH**

A common perception is that the tools and guidelines provided by the HQ need to be adapted to the specific context in BiH. Tools and guidelines are often found to be either too general, or based on assumptions drawn from countries in other regions of the world (e.g. Africa or Asia) with a high level of gender discriminations that are very different from BiH.

4.3.3 Recommendations

- **Elaboration of a country specific policy**

There is a need for a country specific written policy that would reaffirm the UNICEF commitment to gender mainstreaming. Such a document could include:

- **A policy** that provides the rationale behind a decision to mainstream gender in the specific context of BiH – “*The Why*”.
- Concrete and operational **objectives** for gender mainstreaming.
- A country-specific **strategy** or Action Plan that applies to the particular conditions of BiH. – “*The What*”. The strategy should clearly point out priorities, i.e. if some particular issues or all projects should be gender mainstreamed.
- **Guidelines** – “*The How*” – in the form of e.g. clarification of important concepts, instruments for policy dialogue with partners and definition of UNICEF’s advocacy role on gender mainstreaming, tools adapted to the specific needs in BiH and best practices on gender mainstreaming.
- Clear allocation of **responsibility, resources** and **time** for gender mainstreaming.
- Realistic work plan for the GFP.
- **Mechanisms** and **standards** for implementation. These should be developed in partnership with governments and implementing partners (see recommendations in Section 5).

- **Selection of pilot project**

Two or three pilot projects could be selected as case studies in how to implement gender mainstreaming (see recommendations Section 5). These projects should not be women-

specific, but addressing women and men, girls and boys. The selection of at least one pilot project should preferably be based on the possibility to integrate a gender perspective already at the planning stage.

- **Review and development of tools for gender mainstreaming**

During the pilot project/case studies existing tools for gender mainstreaming could be tried out and adopted to the specific context of BiH. This could include the elaboration of checklists, and the development of mechanisms and standards for implementation of gender mainstreaming in partnership with governments and implementing partners.

- **Incorporation of gender analysis in the SITAN and other key programme documents**

The elaboration of a comprehensive gender analysis that identifies existing gender inequalities and their basic causes would considerably facilitate the incorporation of a gender perspective in the programme cycle. The provision of base-line data disaggregated by sex is also crucial for the possibilities to monitor outcomes related to gender.

- **Training on gender and how to use gender mainstreaming tools**

- **Link UNICEF gender efforts to other agencies**

5 GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN UNICEF BIH SUPPORTED PROJECTS

The most important aspect of UNICEF's gender mainstreaming policy is that gender analysis is integrated in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of UNICEF-supported activities. As mentioned earlier, UNICEF supports a few gender-specific projects primarily targeting women. These include support for the government's first report on the CEDAW under the Policy Development and Advocacy Programme, and projects on domestic violence and trafficking of women and children under the Child Protection and Participation Programme.

It is clear that UNICEF's commitment to gender mainstreaming is not limited to this type of gender-specific women-focused projects. The intention is that a gender analysis should form part of development and implementation of *all* projects. This is to make sure that both genders benefit equally from UNICEF supported activities, and that gender equality is systematically promoted by the activities carried out.

This assessment shows that gender is not systematically mainstreamed through UNICEF's programmes and projects. Nevertheless, many examples of positive "gender-outcomes" can be observed in several projects. Sometimes these are pointed at as evidence that gender mainstreaming is not needed. From another perspective, they show the potential of gender mainstreaming, that is, the results that might be achieved if gender can be lifted from the level of individual initiatives to a systematic approach.

UNICEF BiH country programme 2002-2004 is organised along three programmes: Child Survival and Development, Child Protection and Participation, and Policy Development and Advocacy. The consultant participated in the following six consultation meetings of the Extended Annual Review:

1. Child Survival and Development Programme: Early Childhood Development

2. Child Survival and Development Programme: Child Friendly Schools
3. Child Survival and Development Programme: HIV/AIDS Prevention
4. Child Protection and Participation Programme: Transformation of Institutional Care
5. Child Protection and Participation Programme: Strengthening of Child Protection Mechanisms
6. Child Protection and Participation Programme: Mine Risk Education

The consultant did not participate in the consultation meeting on the Promotion of Children's and Women's Rights under the Policy Development and Advocacy Programme and a meeting on Trafficking and Domestic Violence under the Child Protection and Participation Programme, as these programmes specifically target women's and girls' rights and gender-based violence.

The findings from each consultation are discussed below. These are not in depth case studies but an overview of the extent of gender mainstreaming in UNICEF supported projects, and a reflection of the views of key persons working in partner organisations expressed during interviews.

5.1 Review of UNICEF supported projects

5.1.1 Early Childhood Development

The Early Childhood Development project covers the stages from pregnancy, birth and the early post-natal period to the child's age of five years. It focuses on two separate parts: care & nutrition and vaccination against childhood disease. Activities include training of health professionals, certification of "Baby Friendly Hospitals", support for Schools for Future Parents, and development of training manuals and materials.

The project is gender-blind in the sense that a gender perspective i.e. the addressing of gender disparities and possible gender discrimination is not visibly included in the planning of the project. In the PPO, it is highlighted that there is no data disaggregated by sex available to determine whether girls are disadvantaged more than boys in the area of early childhood development.

Among the implementing partners, there seems to be a certain hesitation towards the need for gender mainstreaming in this field, as the common perception is that girls and boys are treated equally.

Nevertheless, based on reactions from the field, adjustments have been made to specific activities to better meet the needs of both men and women. One example is the Schools for Future Mothers, where men were initially excluded. The whole approach had to be changed when future fathers turned up and wanted to participate in these support groups. These schools are today Schools for Future Parents addressing both mothers and fathers.

In integrating a gender perspective in a more comprehensive manner, there are two specific areas that might be of particular interest for the Early Childhood Development project: women's access to management/decision-making professional positions and gender roles on the intra-household level. Even if most people working with early childhood development are women, it is noted that there is no gender balance when it comes to top management/decision-making level. One example is that all directors of the Baby Friendly Hospitals are men. Another is that the area of immunization is dominated by men, and it is suggested that this is a consequence of the fact that there is more money in this field as

compared to breast-feeding. This could be of relevance for UNICEF's work to empower women in accordance with CEDAW.

In BiH, gender roles are still traditional when it comes to the reproductive work. Women, also those who work full time, generally have the full responsibility for the maintenance of the household, including caring for the children, the family's healthcare, food preparation, shopping, cleaning and washing etc. This gender division of work often put up considerable constraint to women's possibilities to undertake productive and community politics activities, and thus has a fundamental impact on the equality between men and women. As these roles are often reinforced when the first child is born, it might be vital to systematically address the gender division of labour and responsibilities in the Early Childhood Development project.

5.1.2 Child-Friendly Schools

The Child-friendly School project is implemented by the NGO Step-by-Step/Centre for Educational Initiatives. The goal of the project is to introduce and implement child-centred education and child-friendly environments in all primary schools in BiH. The approach is to answer to every child's individual needs no matter learning styles, gender or ethnic background. It also aims at parent's active involvement in their children's education. Activities include training in child-friendly school management and child-friendly teaching, definition of standards, development of training modules and teaching manuals, and provision of basic equipment.

The overall observation is that NGO Step-by-Step is positive to gender mainstreaming and considers it an important factor in the creation of a non-discriminatory educational environment. Gender is acknowledged, along with other issues such as nationality and disabilities. However, no special analysis has been made to identify possible collective inequalities and differences in the needs of girls and boys. Gender equality is not spelled out as a separate and visible goal in the objectives of the project. It is therefore, not clear to what extent the activities will promote gender equality and address underlying and basic causes of gender discrimination.

At this point, no special attention is given to gender during trainings of teachers. This is more a matter of priority than lack of interest; "We have to be aware of our behaviour vis-à-vis girls and boys, and a lot of teachers have a hard time to see their own roles. But there are a lot of important things we do not have time for". The same goes for several other areas of development mentioned by the partner for example; review of teacher's manuals and children's books from a gender perspective; data showing disparities in needs and performances of girls and boys; assessment of teachers' gender biased behaviour such as how often they call on girls and boys; how and to what extent both fathers and mothers are increasingly involved in their children's education, and empowerment of women professionals and introduction of democratic selection procedures to promote more women principals (while the majority of teachers are female, most of school directors are male).

Despite the lack of a systematic approach to gender, it is possible to detect several examples of positive gender related outcomes. *Firstly*, as all children are given the same duties in the classroom, it is possible to see boys cleaning the floor, something that would rarely happen in their homes. *Secondly*, after training some teachers increasingly note how gender stereotypes are reinforced in children's books, for example in exercises where pupils should couple people in a picture and different items, it is not correct to make a pair of a father and an iron, or a grandmother and a newspaper.

The challenge for the project would be to move from personal good will and initiatives, to find a strategic approach that corresponds to the projects holistic methodology: “It’s necessary with a special focus on gender. But right now I can’t see the solution under the umbrella of child-friendly school. I’m afraid to isolate it and make it a solitary issue.”

Expectations vis-à-vis UNICEF on gender mainstreaming would be resources for assessments and professional support on “how to do it”.

5.1.3 HIV/AIDS Prevention

The objective of this project is to prevent HIV infection among young people by reducing their vulnerability and risk behaviour. One of UNICEF’s main objectives is to ensure that national policies and strategies to prevent HIV infection are approved and action plans are implemented. The capacity of local NGOs is also strengthened. Activities carried out by NGOs include; information in schools, video production, media events, education of health workers, support for people living with aids, counselling and testing, research, needle exchange programme, and web communication.

This project seems to be gender-blind in the sense that objectives and activities do not appear to be based on a basic gender analysis of general differences in girls and boys sexual behaviour, power in sexual negotiation, vulnerabilities and needs. Different vulnerable groups are identified, such as drug users, sex workers etc., but the only gender-specific example that was mentioned was information targeting homosexual men.

None of the partners state that gender mainstreaming has been brought up as an issue by UNICEF in the planning of the projects. According to the implementing partners, they do not have their own policies on gender equality or gender mainstreaming.

The general assumption when targeting young people appears to be that, besides lecturing in pairs of one woman and one man, there is no apparent need to pay special and different attention to boys or girls. As most information is said to promote steady relationships, or is focused on objective facts, the messages are supposed to suit both boys and girls. The apprehension is that the attitude to sex is opened among young people, and that there is therefore no need for separating the sexes when lecturing. On the other hand, it was acknowledged that there is a need for an assessment to detect where and how gender could be relevant.

Although the general perception appears to be that girls and boys do not need to be addressed differently, several examples were given where differences between girls and boys have actually led to, or might lead to, changed activities. One partner has reformulated its messages on sex as they had to be less “scary” to suit women. Another example was a suggestion that more focus should be paid on empowerment of young girls, and that they should be given more knowledge about their own bodies and their right to say no to sex. It was also stated that there is a very big differences in addressing youth in urban areas or rural communities where genders roles are more traditional.

Other areas where no gender analysis has been made and where activities consequently are gender-blind include special counselling hours for women, or information targeting sex buyers who are generally in a strong negotiation position on safe sex. According to the Assistant Programme Officer, recent feedback from the field indicate that there might be a need for separate counselling for girls.

The lack of a gender analysis indicates that also specific needs of men are overseen, for example information for young men who accompany their girlfriend to the gynaecologist. It was also stated that it has been more difficult to engage men in the project “What every adolescent has a right to know”, which might indicate the need for a special attention to boys.

All partners stated that even if gender was not at present a question of priority, they would be interested in further development of the issue in partnership with UNICEF. Expectations on UNICEF’s role were, except for resources and know-how, a will to be linked to other national NGO’s that already work with gender in order to initiate collaboration.

5.1.4 Transformation of Institutional Care (Child-Friendly Hospitals)

The project on Child-Friendly Hospitals is carried out by the implementing partner Health Net International (HNI). The aim is to ensure children’s rights in hospitals by increasing the understanding of these rights among health workers, and to promote the inclusion of parents in the care of their children in hospitals. Changes in hospital environment are also addressed. Target groups are, among others, parents, Parents Associations, professionals in hospitals, health service staff and students.

This is a typical gender-blind project in the sense that the gender dimension has not been incorporated into the planning of the project, nor in the monitoring and evaluation of its outcomes. No basic gender analysis has been made which would identify possible gender discrimination and existing inequalities. According to HNI, UNICEF never mentioned the gender aspect when the project was developed. HNI has not been informed about the UNICEF gender mainstreaming policy, nor does it have its own gender policy.

The general observation is that gender is perceived as superfluous to this project, and that UNICEF should focus on other “more important” problems, such as refugee children’s access to health services. This apparent scepticism towards gender mainstreaming might be explained by the understanding of gender, as limited to the equal medical treatment of girls and boys in hospitals. The assumption is that no such disparity exists and that girls and boys are equally treated.

A specific gender perspective has not been incorporated into activities carried out. For example, in the training of professionals no special focus is put on the staff’s possible gender biases. No gender assessment has been made to detect if such biases exist and if they lead to differences in treatment of girls and boys in hospitals, for example if girls and boys are equally prepared for painful treatments.

It was made clear by HNI that if the promotion of gender equality should be integrated into the project, it is crucial that a concrete goal is identified; “I must be able to see the result of gender mainstreaming in front of me. What does gender equity mean? Isn’t the concept culturally defined?” Despite of this general scepticism, there seems to be a willingness to integrate a gender perspective in the project “if UNICEF can show us that it is needed”.

Comparing the PPO and the results of the interviews, a discrepancy is revealed between the gender-neutral language in the documents and the reality on the ground. The PPO clearly points out the goal of increased inclusion of *both* parents in the care of children in hospital. However, it seems that in the implementation of the project “parents” become “mothers”. One example is that in the hospital that was visited during the consultation it was not possible for fathers to stay overnight with their children as there were windows between the rooms

preventing privacy. The right of fathers to stay could easily be met by the instalment of curtains.

In general, very little focus seems to be put on the strengthening of fathers as caretakers of their children. It is not possible to say if the project will reinforce existing gender roles, but a good opportunity to change stereotype gender roles may be lost.

Using the Moser framework it becomes clear that several gender aspects have not been analysed or taken into consideration in this project. Three examples will be mentioned here:

Firstly, when mothers are encouraged to take the full responsibility for the reproductive work including attending hospitalised children, it is not obvious how this may affect these women's productive work e.g. possibilities for employment or advancement;

Secondly, when parents are involved in decision making of children's care it may be important to take into consideration how decisions are actually made in the family, that is, if mothers and fathers have equal control over decisions or if any disparities should be taken into account;

Thirdly, it is not clear how the knowledge and experiences of different working groups are taken into consideration, for example to what extent nurses, who are mainly women, are involved in the planning of the project. Nor is there a mention of the possible empowerment of professional women to increase their number as hospital directors (all hospital directors in BiH are men).

5.1.5 Strengthening of Child Protection Mechanisms

The planned project on Child Protection Mechanisms will be developed and implemented by the partner Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues (IBHI). The aim is to ensure the protection of children's rights through training of social workers, and increase their capacity to prevent and respond to violence, abuse and neglect, exploitation and discrimination of children.

IBHI has previous experiences of gender mainstreaming and gender projects carried out in partnership with the Finish government. IBHI has its own guiding principles on gender issues: gender should be mainstreamed in all projects, and material and manuals from earlier projects are to be assessed by a Gender Focal Point. A gender officer works in the office, and it was suggested that her knowledge and previous experience might be taken into account in the planning of this project.

According to IBHI, the gender aspect of the project on Social protection mechanisms has already been addressed during initial meetings between IBHI and UNICEF. In UNICEF's checklist *How to address gender disparities in the five MTSP areas* the introduction to Child Protection states:

“Across cultures, from the earliest stages of life, males and females are socialized with different expectations about how they are allowed to respond to their environment, what they can and cannot do, think or feel, and who they are and cannot become. These different worlds encountered by girls and boys imply different ways in which girls and boys are affected by violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

Recognition of the existence and understanding of the nature and scope of this difference highlights the gender dimension in child protection. Sex disaggregated data forms a critical core of any analysis of child protection that takes into consideration boys as well as girls and their different protection needs.”

One aspect of gender mainstreaming would be to integrate this understanding of differences between girls and boy’s protection needs into the training of social workers.

At the consultation meeting, it was expressed that one role of UNICEF in this project would be to ensure a connection between the grass roots and government level, and to make sure that their experience and knowledge are included in for example the drafting of laws. One protection measure targeting women was specifically mentioned at the meeting by the representative from the RS Ministry for Health and Social Protection: a newly passed law will give mothers with children with disabilities the right to work part time but with full payment from the employer. On a direct question if this law also covers the right of fathers, it was not possible to get a more clarifying answer than that the question was irrelevant as it would never happen that a father stays at home to take care of a child: “Don’t forget this is the Balkans”. It was also unclear how this law would affect the job possibilities for professional women with children with disabilities. This example shows how initiatives of good faith might back fire if they are not based on a holistic (gender) analysis.

Using the Moser framework it is possible to detect other possible gender aspects to this project. As pointed out in the UNICEF-BiH PPO 2002 –2004, a majority of beneficiaries of governmental social welfare services are women and children. A gender analysis might help to detect differences in vulnerabilities and needs between women and men on social welfare. Outcomes might enable social workers to better understand and target not only the beneficiaries’ practical needs, but also women’s strategic needs to become self supportive, for example the forming of support groups, education or even access to children’s day-care.

Earlier experiences of the implementing partner also indicate the need for empowerment of social workers that are mostly women. Social workers are sometimes not allowed to attend trainings, and equipment and resources earmarked for social workers engaged in child-protection have sometimes been confiscated by superiors (who are overwhelmingly male). The need for empowerment could be included in either the trainings or through support for organisation and networking.

5.1.6 Mine Injury Prevention

One of the main focuses of the mine injury prevention project is on mine risk education. The aim is to change people’s behaviour on how to live with mines. There is a clear gender aspect to the mine project: 90% of all people injured or killed by mines are male. This is explained as a consequence of the fact that mostly men are farming, including in areas that have not been completely cleared from mines. Those women and girls that are injured and killed by mines are mostly widows and women in single headed families who perform traditionally male activities such as farming and herding, or collection of firewood and objects for recycling.

The need for a gender sensitive mine risk education mainly targeting men is recognised among implementing partners. In the “Mine Risk Education Programme for BiH 2003” the partner BH-MAC explicitly identify *male residents of rural contaminated areas* as their priority target group. The programme analysis also points out that even if women and children represent a fairly low proportion of casualties they constitute an excellent vector of

behaviour change and can be effectively used to target other groups such as men and teenagers.

Even if the PPO points out that mine awareness education should be gender-sensitive this does not seem to be the case, according to UNICEF's Mine Risk Education Advisor. Although adult men are identified as the main target group, most education is provided to children. This is said to be a consequence of practical circumstances, that is, that children are easier to target as they are already in school. This point at the fact that even if a gender analysis sometimes exist, it is not necessarily carried out because of practicalities in the reality.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 General findings

- **Positive attitude to gender**

Based on interviews with key persons in UNICEF's partner organisations the overall observation is that the **attitude** to gender mainstreaming is positive. Several of the partners recognise the need for some kind of "gender antennas".

- **Not systematically addressed**

It is not possible to say that these issues have been systematically addressed in the **consultations during the Extended Annual Review**. When gender specific needs of women do come up, it is because the discussed problem specifically concerns women, for example breastfeeding or domestic violence. In more general discussions, such as healthcare and social welfare, different needs of girls and boys, women and men do not seem to be disaggregated or differences identified for discussion.

- **Most projects are gender-blind**

In **practice**, the impression is that gender does not have a significant impact on either the planning process nor the implementation of activities. Most projects are **gender-blind** in the sense that the gender dimension has not been systematically included in the development of the projects, nor in the monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes.

- **Lack of information**

None of the implementing partner organisations state that they have been **informed of the UNICEF's gender mainstreaming policy**. Some have a vague idea of its existence but they do not have a more detailed knowledge of its contents. Only one of the interviewed partner organisations says that the gender issue has been brought up to discussion by UNICEF at the planning phase of a project.

- **Few have their own gender policy**

Only a few of the organisations have an **own gender policy**. When they do, it seems to be a result of either the fact that they work with very gender specific issues such as domestic violence or trafficking, or have previously carried out specific gender programmes for an international donor. But the existence of a gender policy is no guarantee that gender will be mainstreamed in UNICEF-supported projects, if the issue is not properly addressed. As one person in a NGO with a gender policy puts it; "All our project can be gender mainstreamed if there is a demand for it". This highlights the **importance of UNICEF's advocacy role**.

- **Big interest in development of gender mainstreaming**

All partners have stated that they would be **interested** in both integrating gender in a more systematic way in their projects, and to participate in gender training or further collaboration with UNICEF on this issue.

5.2.2 Constraints

- **Perceived as a vague and academic concept**

Gender mainstreaming is often perceived as a vague and academic concept. It is difficult to see how gender mainstreaming will be made operational, that is "how to do it".

- **Boys and men are excluded from the discourse**

Certain ambiguities related to the concept of gender mainstreaming are discernible. There is an understanding that gender is only related to "women's rights", and that **boys and men are excluded from the analysis and discourse**. This "misconception" has to be addressed in order to advance gender mainstreaming.

- **Lack of gender disaggregated data**

In BiH there is a general lack of **gender disaggregated data**, and even in those cases where such data is available it seems that it has not been systematically put together and analysed. **This can lead to:**

- **Not prioritised:** In a situation where there is an overflow of urgent problems to solve, it is logic that unclear "gender-issues" will not be **prioritised** or addressed.
- When gender inequalities and subsequent goals are not clearly identified anywhere in the programme cycle, it is up to **the judgement of individual UNICEF programme/project officers and implementing partners** to determine whether such problems exist and if they need to be addressed. The conclusion can be very different as the perceptions and attitudes among both UNICEF staff and partners are very diverse, from almost total denial to the opinion that gender-based discrimination is a big problem in BiH.
- Gender mainstreaming runs the risk to be dispatched as "**Western ideas of how women and men should be**", instead of perceived as a tool to identify and avoid possible discrimination. Obvious differences between girls and boys, women and men are explained as "cultural" or "natural", but not analysed as possible discrimination.
- As the presence of actual gender based discrimination is not analysed, UNICEF runs the **risk to reinforce existing stereotype gender roles and existing gender inequalities**.

5.2.3 Recommendations

- **Define concrete and operational objectives for gender mainstreaming**

If the promotion of gender equality should be successfully integrated into UNICEF supported projects, it is therefore crucial that **concrete and operational goals** are defined.

- **Develop mechanisms and standards for implementation**

Mechanisms and standards for implementation of gender mainstreaming should be developed together with the government and NGOs.

- **Select pilot projects**

Two or three pilot projects should be selected as case studies in how to implement gender mainstreaming. These projects should not be gender-specific but should address both women and men, girls and boys.

- **Create networks and transfer lessons learned**

Good examples of gender mainstreaming from existing gender-specific projects, such as domestic violence, should be transferred into these pilot projects and thus into a broader context. To promote BiH specific knowledge on gender issues, as well as a local ownership, an important role for the UNICEF could be to encourage the creation of **local networks** between implementing bodies and national NGOs and other actors with relevant gender competence.

- **Combine demands with adequate support and resources**

There is a big difference between the organisations in both their own perception of the need for a gender perspective, and their capacity to answer to a possible request from UNICEF to mainstream gender in their projects. This underlines the need for UNICEF **to combine initiatives in gender mainstreaming with adequate support and resources.**

6 ANNEX

6.1 Gender Focal Point draft Terms of Reference

The following draft ToR for a Gender Focal Point developed during a meeting of the Balkans Area Gender Focal Points (13-14 June 2001 in Sarajevo):

Responsibilities (to be incorporated into PER):

1. To serve as office resource on information from HQ, RO, country and other networks on gender mainstreaming and issues specific to women. (This may include establishing working reference area; bulletin board; etc; which is available to all staff);
2. To support the process of mainstreaming gender and women's/girls rights and specific issues in the country programming process, particularly in situation analysis and including CCA; MTRs; CN; CPRs; MPO; programme and project objectives; evaluations and studies; and all communications material;
3. To identify and support staff and counterparts development needs to enhance gender mainstreaming as part of UNICEF collaboration;
4. To identify/network with national/international resource persons/agencies to support gender mainstreaming in UNICEF partnerships and promoting their participation in relevant national seminars, meetings, conferences, workshops, consultations, etc;
5. To participate or delegate participation in the gender coordination groups/meetings and report on progress and outcomes;
6. To provide two brief reports of country efforts in gender mainstreaming – end February and end September for RMT meetings;
7. To encourage and share all documents of 'best practices' in gender mainstreaming and women's and girls' rights;

Required Resources:

1. Time: 20% allocated to GFP responsibilities;
2. Commitment: 2 years minimum;
3. Member of the CMT;
4. Adequate resources for training/capacity building for UNICEF programme staff and for counterparts;

5. Resources to support UNICEF staff and counterparts to participate and or/organise seminars/conferences on gender issues and women's rights;
6. Management commitment and support/guidance from RO/HQ.

Selection should be made on the basis of qualification (background and experience) and/or interest, and training ensured.

6.2 Gender assessment tools

6.2.1 Gender Roles Identification: types of work/triple role

(Caroline Moser Framework. Source: The Oxfam Gender Training Manual, 1994)

Mapping the gender division of labour

Work can be divided into three main categories. Women's roles encompass work in all these categories, and this is referred to as women's 'Triple Role'.

Productive Work involves the production of goods and services for consumption and trade (farming, fishing, employment and self-employment). When people are asked what they do, the response is most often related to productive work, especially work which is paid or generates income. Both women and men can be involved in productive activities, but for the most part, their functions and responsibilities will differ according to the gender division of labour. Women's productive work is often less visible and less valued than men's.

Reproductive Work involves the care and maintenance of the household and its members including bearing and caring for children, food preparation, shopping, housekeeping, and family health care. Reproductive work is crucial to human survival, yet it is seldom considered 'real work'. In poor communities, reproductive work is, for the most part manual-labour-intensive, and time-consuming. It is almost always the responsibility of women and girls.

Community Work involves the collective organization of social events and services: ceremonies and celebrations, community improvement activities, participation in groups and organizations, local political activities, and so on. This type of work is seldom considered in economic analyses of communities. However, it involves considerable volunteer time and it is important for the spiritual and cultural development of communities and as a vehicle for community organization and self-determination. Both women and men engage in community activities, although a gender division of labour also prevails here.

Women, men, boys and girls are likely to be involved in all three areas of work. In many societies, however, women do almost all of the reproductive and much of the productive work. Any intervention in one area will affect the other areas. Women's workload can prevent them from participating in development projects. When they do participate, extra time spent producing, training or meeting, means less time for other tasks, such as childcare or food preparation.

6.2.2 Gender Needs Assessment: practical gender needs/strategic gender interests

(Caroline Moser Framework. Source: The Oxfam Gender Training Manual, 1994)

Practical gender needs:

Practical gender needs are the needs women identify in their socially accepted roles in society. Practical gender needs do not challenge the gender divisions of labour of women's subordinate position in society, although they rise out of them.

- they are a response to an immediate perceived necessity
- they are formulated from concrete conditions
- they are derived from women's position within the gender division of labour (i.e. the women's role)
- they do not challenge the subordinate position of women although they arise out of it
- they are needs mainly arising from and reinforcing women's reproductive and productive role

Practical gender needs may include:

Health care
Income earning for household provision
Housing and basic needs
Family food provision

They are needs shared by all household members yet identified specifically as practical gender needs of women, as it is women who assume responsibility for meeting these needs.

Strategic gender interests:

These are needs/interests identified to transform the existing unequal relationships between men and women.

Strategic interests vary according to particular contexts. They relate to gender divisions of labour, power and control and may include such issues as legal rights, domestic violence, equitable wages and women's control over their bodies. These are formulated by an analysis of women's subordination in society

- when addressed, they should lead to the transformation of the gender division of labour
- they challenge the nature of the relationship between men and women
- they aim to achieve greater equality

Strategic gender interests may include:

Abolition of sexual division of labour
Alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and childcare
The removal of institutionalised forms of discrimination such as rights to own land or property
Access to credit and other resources
Freedom of choice over child bearing
Measures against gender based violence and male control over women

6.2.3 Gender Policies: gender-blind/gender-aware

(Naila Kabeer's Social Relations Framework. Source: A Tool Kit, Concepts and Frameworks for Gender Analysis and Planning, Gender & Development training Centre, Netherlands, 1996)

Gender-blind policies recognise no distinction between the sexes. Assumptions incorporate biases in favour of existing gender relations and so tend to exclude women and perpetuate existing inequalities.

Gender-aware policies recognise that development actors are women as well as men, that they are constrained in different, and often unequal ways, as potential participants and beneficiaries in the development process and that they may consequently have differing and sometimes conflicting needs, interests and priorities.

Gender-neutral policy approaches:

- use the knowledge of gender differences in a given context to overcome biases in delivery to ensure that they target and benefit both gender effectively in terms of their practical gender needs
- work within the existing gender division of resources and responsibilities

Gender specific policies:

- use the knowledge of gender differences in a given context to respond to the practical gender needs of a specific gender
- work within the existing gender division of resources and responsibilities

Gender redistributive (transformative) policies:

- are interventions which intend to transform existing distributions to create a more balanced relationship between the genders
- may target both genders, or one or other gender specifically
- touch on strategic gender interests
- may work with women's practical gender needs, but do so in ways which have transformatory potential: that is which help build up the supportive conditions for women to empower themselves.

6.3 List of documents, meetings attended, and people interviewed

6.3.1 List of documents

- UNICEF Guidelines for Rights Based approach to programming
- Gender Mainstreaming: A guide for UNICEF-assisted programmes
- Checklist: How to address gender disparities in the five MTSP areas
- UNICEF BiH Master Plan of Operations 2002-2004 (MPO)
- UNICEF BiH Programme Plans of Operation 2002-2004 (PPO)
- UNICEF BiH Mid-Term Review October 2000
- UNICEF Balkans Area Office. Report on Status of Gender Mainstreaming in CEE/CIS (meeting of Gender Advisors/Focal Points 12-15 June 2000 in New York)
- Minutes of the UNICEF Balkans Area Gender Focal Point Meeting (13-14 June 2001 in Sarajevo)
- Draft Report on the UNICEF BiH Gender Mainstreaming Workshop (20 February 2001 in Sarajevo)

6.3.2 List of meetings attended

- Early Childhood Development, 7 February 2003, Sarajevo.
- Child Friendly Schools, 22 February 2003, Zenica.
- HIV/AIDS Prevention, 4 March 2003, Sarajevo.
- Transformation of Institutional Care, 3 March 2003, Mostar.
- Strengthening of Child Protection Mechanisms, 5 March 2003, Zenica.
- Mine Risk Education, 12 March 2003, Sarajevo.

6.3.3 *List of people interviewed*

UNICEF staff:

- Yulia Krieger, Programme Officer, Policy Development and Planning
- Erna Ribar, Assistant Communication Officer
- Jill Zarchin, Project Officer, Child Survival and Development
- Selena Bajraktarevic, Assistant Project Officer, Early Childhood Development
- Sania Memisevic, Assistant Project Officer, Child Friendly Schools
- Amna Cerimagic, Assistant Project Officer, HIV/AIDS
- Jens Matthes, Project Officer, Child Protection and Participation
- Berina Arslanagic, Assistant Project Officer, Child Protection and Participation
- Selma Turkic, Project Assistant, Child Protection and Participation
- Natalie Prevost, UNICEF's Mine Risk Education Advisor
- Slavenka Grahovac, Assistant Project Officer, Banja Luka sub-office (Gender Focal Point)

UNICEF's partners:

- Gena-Sanja Hanzar, Centre for Educational Initiatives/Step by Step
- Radmila Jusovic, Centre for Educational Initiatives/step by Step
- Esref Kenan Rasidagic, Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues
- Ljuban Krnjajic, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare RS
- Dubravka Vokic, HealthNet International
- Rea Maglajlic, HealthNet International
- Taida Kapetanovic, NGO HealthNet International
- Dr.Mira Ademovic, Breastfeeding Coordinator and Coordinator for the project "Mothers Support Group"
- Dr. Aida Cemerlic; Deputy Director of FBiH Public Health Institute
- Dr. Aida Ramic; FBiH Public Health Institute
- Prof.Esma Zecevic; President of Pediatric Association BiH; Coordinator for prevention of childhood diseases
- Dr. Nakash, National Coordinator for HIV/AIDS
- Tomo Lucic, Ministry of Health FBiH
- Marin Kvaternik, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare RS
- Amela Lolic, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare RS
- Dr. Mitar Tesanovic, Public Health Institute RS
- Vasilija Veljkovic, NGO DUGA
- Elis Hrkalovic, NGO Youth Against Aids
- Emir Nurkic, NGO International Forum of Solidarity