“Beyond Institutionalization”
Module II: Changing law, policy, attitudes and practices
2022
CREATING CONDITIONS

STEP 1
Developing readiness

WHAT DO WE NEED TO REFORM CHILD PROTECTION AND CARE?

- International evidence
- Common language
- Shared vision
- The right people
- Clear & strong government mechanisms
- Co-operation
- Investment
- Engagement help

STEP 2
Setting change in motion

HOW TO REFORM CHILD PROTECTION AND CARE, THE THEORY OF CHANGE

- Common language
- Government collaboration
- NGO collaboration
- Commitment to invest in children

TIMELINE

Some steps may be achieved in a short period while others may be achieved in the longer term.
nd resources. Engage as widely as possible
Communication and advocacy goals and strategies

✓ High level commitment in place to investing in children
✓ High level commitment and plans to invest in capacity building of a national social workforce
✓ A clearly articulated vision for reform
✓ A broad understanding of deinstitutionalisation as a key driver of child protection and care system reform
✓ A clear understanding of key terminology translated and agreed for use in national context
✓ Cooperation across government ministries and a functioning inter-ministerial working group
✓ Support for a collaboration with civil society and open channels of communication
✓ Understanding of and access to expertise and resources from within civil society

With these elements in place, you can capitalise on the progress you have made and turn your attention to ensuring you create the conditions that will enable you to set change in motion.
HOW TO REFORM CHILD PROTECTION AND CARE, THE THEORY OF CHANGE

- Develop business case and cost for transition
- Estimate cost of sustaining the new system
Communication and ADVOCACY

ORPHANAGES HARM CHILDREN

VIOLENCE, ABUSE & NEGLECT in orphanages is pervasive

WHY NEGLECT MATTERS

Children lose on average 1 MONTH’S GROWTH FOR EVERY 3 MONTHS spent in an orphanage

ORPHANAGES HARM SOCIETY

Of those who survive childhood in an orphanage:
- 22% become HOMELESS
- 50% are IN CONTACT WITH THE LAW
- 90% are NOT PREPARED for independent living

ORPHANAGES PERPETUATE TRAUMA

ALMOST 50 PER CENT of parents in Ukraine who had their babies placed in orphanages, HAD GROWN UP IN INSTITUTIONS THEMSELVES
ORPHANAGES VS FAMILY CARE

10 TIMES AS MUCH

Our work in Bosnia shows that orphanages can cost nearly as keeping a child safe at home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bosnia Herzegovina</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>€ 4,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 4,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 3,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 2,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€ 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Active Family Support programme | Orphanage (estimated)
UNACCEPTABLE.
In 2010 Bulgaria launched a national scale reform of the child protection and care system outlined in a nation strategy “Vision for De-institutionalisation of the Children in the Republic of Bulgaria”. The strategy’s first Action Plan created the management and coordination structures essential for unlocking the reform and overcoming initial resistance.

The Interdepartmental management and coordination working group was established at the highest political level to:

- manage the overall implementation of the Action Plan;
- monitor and evaluate the implementation of the specific activities and projects under the Action Plan.
Assessment of institutions influencing government commitment: Rwanda

Hope and Homes for Children, in partnership with the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), conducted a national survey of residential institutions for children in Rwanda in 2012\(^28\). Due to the lack of data on children’s institutions and the children residing within them, evidence had to be generated to inform national care reform strategy and planning.

The assessment revealed the perceived attractiveness of services offered by institutions, noting: “the very existence of an institution increased the likelihood of a child from that neighbourhood to be placed in an institution.” It highlighted that, when there are no residential care facilities nearby, families find other care options such as kinship or informal foster care.

The findings and recommendations significantly informed and influenced the current care reform process in Rwanda\(^29\), forming the basis for planning the Government of Rwanda’s Strategy for National Child Care Reform\(^30\) and its implementation.
Communication and ADVOCACY
Ukraine (research led advocacy)

How a Hope and Homes for Children study informed the child protection system: Over 2015-16, Hope and Homes for Children conducted a study of the care system in Ukraine. To ensure comprehensiveness, the study included components focused on different levels of the child protection system (national, regional and local), and combined both quantitative and qualitative approaches and methods.

The study focussed on children in institutions. The findings revealed that, in many cases, reform has simply meant renaming an institution without changing how it operates. In addition, there was evidence of institutions being artificially ‘filled’ with children to preserve their funding.

The study identified that there were no clear roles and responsibilities for the different state agencies responsible for child protection and care. This made it challenging to assess the validity of decisions relating to a child.

The institutionalisation of a significant number of children could have been avoided if a local infrastructure of support services for children and families was in place. The analysis confirmed that the number of child protection specialists, and their professional capacity, was very low and insufficient to prevent institutionalisation and to provide support to children and their families.
Communication and ADVOCACY

Youth Led Advocacy:

Understanding how the child protection system is experienced from the perspective of a child can highlight gaps and incoherency in the system. Children’s opinions and views can help shape and improve interventions and solutions.

Precise response (elements of system strengthening and how)

A 2020 study, ‘More Independence, More Rights’, captures the experiences of 100 young people who have already left or are preparing to leave care in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru.

Impact of the change

This research offers recommendations for developing public policies to support transition of adolescents and young people from the alternative care system to independent living, and to contribute to the reform of child protection systems with a rights-based approach, moving from models based on residential care to models based family and community care. The evidence is informing Governments and policy makers through national launches and care leaver advocacy in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru as well as contributing to the growing momentum across the continent.
Demonstrating that change is possible: Rwanda

The first comprehensive and successful closure of an institution in Rwanda was the Mpore Pefa institution, which closed in 2012. In order to pilot care reform and deinstitutionalisation at a local level, Hope and Homes for Children, with the support and oversight of Rwandan national and district government authorities, ensured the transition of every child residing in the institution into family- and community-based care.

This enabled the complete closure of the institution, with all 51 children transitioning into family and community-based care, and services in place to prevent new children from being institutionalised, by supporting families at risk and developing alternative care services.

The successful closure of Mpore Pefa institution served as a defining demonstration project, providing both “proof that a transition to family care is possible, and a model for others to follow”\(^3\). The model, lessons learned and team involved in the project, directly informed Rwanda’s Strategy for National Child Care Reform and its implementation.
Relevant links and contacts

Hope and Homes for Children (2020). Beyond Institutional Care: A roadmap for child protection and care system reform for governments in Latin America and the Caribbean. **Available** on www.hopeandhomes.org


For more information, contact Victoria.olarte@hopeandhomes.org