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MINISTRY OF CIVIL AFFAIRS
Attn. Secretary of the Minister

SARAJEVO

SUBJECT: Notice on the Conclusion of the Council of Ministers of BiH

At its 75th session held on February 10, 2005, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina reviewed and adopted the Strategic Directions for Development of Preschool Upbringing and Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This is a notice to you for the purpose of your further proceedings.

Best regards,

AS AUTHORIZED BY
THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF BiH
Karmelo Prlenda

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
Ministry of Civil Affairs

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL UPBRINGING
AND EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Sarajevo, 2004

The Strategic Education Reform Document presented in November 2002 to the Peace Implementation Council pledged for development of a strategic document in the area of preschool education (Pledge 2).

The OSCE, as the main coordinator of the education reform, and the UNICEF, as the co-presiding of the working group for modernization and quality of preschool, primary and general secondary education, in cooperation with the entity and cantonal ministries as well as with the appropriate department of the Brcko District, formed an expert team to work on drafting of the strategic development of preschool upbringing and education in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The document titled Strategic Directions for Development of Preschool Upbringing and Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina was completed based on the following reform documents:

- Education Reform – A Message to the Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Five Pledges, Sarajevo, 2002,
- Action Plan for Children of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2002-2010, Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, Human Rights Sector, Sarajevo, 2002,
- Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, 2003,
- Joint Strategy for Modernization of Primary and General Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (White Paper), Education Authorities in BiH, Sarajevo, 2003,
- Mid-Term Development Strategy of BiH, 2003-2007, Council of Ministers of BiH, Sarajevo, 2003.

The document was subjected to public debate for three months in the Federation of BiH, Republika Srpska, and Brcko District. The observations, proposals and suggestions from the public debate were integrated into the text of the document.

The approval for the document was granted by the education authorities of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska, and Brcko District.

The document was presented and accepted at the Third Education Forum organized by the OSCE on November 15, 2003.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The general goals of the preschool upbringing and education arise from the generally accepted universal values of the democratic society, and from one's own value system, based on the specific qualities of the ethnic, historic, cultural and religious traditions of the nations and ethnic minorities living in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

There is a generally accepted view that all children have the right to development which is harmonized with their individual abilities and skills, so that a well-organized preschool upbringing and education may ensure favorable conditions for overall development of children, a safe and happy childhood, mitigate, remove or exclude some negative socio-economical, cultural, health and other influences under an upbringing and education system designed in a modern manner, through an appropriate program of preschool upbringing and education. A good quality preschool upbringing assists in accomplishing of all intellectual and bodily skills of the man, their fundamental human rights, participation in the society, and it also contributes to reduction of poverty. This is corroborated by the latest scientific research in the world. The majority of developed or developing countries have recently placed focus on preschool upbringing and education.

The preschool upbringing and education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is characterized by the lack of the State Framework Law in this area, pedagogic standards and norms, design and strategy for development of preschool upbringing. The very constitutional provision on decentralization of the education system in BiH (Chapter III, Article 4B), without the mentioned legislation, has granted an option to the entities, cantons and local communities – municipalities – to differently regulate this matter. Each canton has passed its own standards and norms, laws on preschool upbringing and education, but without the necessary financing criteria. Volatile meeting of the founder's funds has been bringing this area into an ever more aggravating position.

This is why there is a need for urgent passing of the design and program orientation for the preschool upbringing and education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and of the Framework Law in this area.

2. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STATUS OF PRESCHOOL UPBRINGING AND EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Currently, there are 99 registered institutions for upbringing and education of preschool aged children in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with 179 facilities¹. Of this number, religious communities run 7 preschool institutions. We were not able to exactly determine the number of kindergartens due to the lack of data (we have the data for the Una-Sana Canton – 4, Herzegovina-Neretva Canton – 1, and Tuzla Canton – 1), nor were we able to determine whether they meet the existing prescribed norms and standards for preschool upbringing and education passed at the canton and entity levels, what curricula they use and how they are financed.

Some of the facilities that were in the function of preschool upbringing before the war now do not serve their purpose. Although we have no exact data for the whole territory of the state, the example of the Sarajevo Canton best illustrates this statement. Of the 59 pre-war facilities, still functioning are only 27, and 32 facilities are either devastated or have changed their

purpose. A similar situation exists in Banja Luka, where 23 kindergartens functioned before the war, and now there are only 17.

Preschool institutions are managed by directors. The Law on the Preschool Upbringing and Education of the cantons and the Law on Child Protection of the Republika Srpska provideⁱⁱ that a person that may be appointed director, in addition to the general requirements established in the law, must also have a completed higher or associate degree in the teaching or another social area. There is a common phenomenon that politically eligible instead of expert persons are appointed for these positions too, and this certainly affects the quality of implementation of the upbringing and education work programs. Therefore, in this segment, strategic documents and legislative provisions will have to provide more room for expertise rather than for politics.

3. ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL UPBRINGING AND EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND IN THE WORLD

An already rough analysis of the situation in preschool upbringing and education shows that this area has been marginalized, thus being in full contravention with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, also signed by Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This is corroborated by the comparative data on the numbers of children covered over the past 15 years. In the working year of 2002/2003, the preschool upbringing and education only covered 16,467 children. Thus, the number of children covered in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina fell to 5% of the total population, whereas in the Republika Srpska it is below this rate. The negative coverage trend was also contributed to by the fact on the fall of birth rate of children in both entities. This is testified by statistics on children in both entities, born in the period from 1996 to 2002 (Attachment 1).

If we compare this situation with the European countries, the integration with which we seek, we come to some ultimately appalling indicators. The coverage of children, for both nursery and kindergarten ages, in those countries ranges in the percentages from 40 to 100% of the total population. States such as France, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, Hungary, Great Britain, etc., have the coverage of three-year and five-year olds in preschool upbringing in the percentages ranging from 90 to 100% of the total population (Attachment 1).

It is noticeable that the European countries attach the same attention to work with children of nursery age, which is not the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The coverage of nursery aged children is up to 5% in urban areas, whereas in smaller communities this age has not been covered at all.

4. SOCIETAL NEEDS AND STATE INTEREST FOR PRESCHOOL UPBRINGING AND EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

With changes in the society, the family is becoming less and less capable of fully undertaking the attention related to care, protection and upbringing of children of the youngest age. On the other hand, development of pedagogical and psychological sciences has significantly contributed to establishment of the awareness that this is the crucial stage for learning, physical, bodily, emotional and social development of children. It is almost that the last remnants of the traditional understanding have been lost that in the early childhood, it is only necessary to keep, protect and feed children. This does not mean to say that the family,

through development of creative children's potentials, socialization, ensuring of conditions for healthy fun, and the like, will not continue to have the appropriate role. On the contrary, its own portion of the obligations and responsibilities in this segment is non-transferable to any one else, but it is also necessary to ensure in this process the participation of appropriate upbringing and education institutions and of the broader societal community.

“Over the past 10 years, increasing attention has been attached to preschool upbringing in the world, because the results of research have shown that such activity may contribute to the economic development of the society. It is increasingly clear that neglect of preschool aged children shows an overall life deprivation and that long-term benefits exist from investing into the area of preschool upbringing. Preschool upbringing and education have direct influence onto the overall life intellectual and bodily abilities of each individual in the society. In the opinion of experts, investing into preschool upbringing means the shortest way to stopping of the revolving cycleⁱⁱⁱ. Experts have also proved^{iv} that quality preschool upbringing directly affects:

- subsequent success of children in life,
- health of children, which later affects their health in life as well,
- a lower degree of asocial and criminal behavior later in life,
- increased equality in development opportunities on the cognitive and social level for children coming from poor environments.

Experts^v have classified the benefits and characteristics of quality preschool education for children and the society into the following knowledge:

- only good quality preschool programs have positive short-term and long-term effects to children and society;
- the earlier we begin intervening in the preschool upbringing, the effects are more lasting and better,
- investing into the preschool upbringing of children bring about changes with children, and also changes in the community opinion on the significance of education,
- all children benefit from quality preschool upbringing, in particular children coming from socially deprived environments,
- effects of quality preschool upbringing are visible on the short-term level in the area of children development, particularly in the area of cognitive and social development; at the same time, the majority of such effects are visible after one generation only;
- current costs for development in the area of preschool upbringing bring profit for the future, the investment pays off in terms of the later economic saving (less social support, a higher degree of employment, including a higher degree of tax that the state receives from citizens, a lower degree of dependency and criminality, etc.),
- quality preschool upbringing needs to be integrated with other children services and with family (health, food, social protection...),
- bureaucratic division of the sectors involved in preschool upbringing reduces the overall meeting of the needs of children and their families,
- the most relevant learning in the preschool age pertains to aspirations, performance of tasks and perseverance, social skills, development of responsibility and building of reliance into one's abilities,
- in order for the preschool upbringing to be of good quality and to influence future development, expert development of staff is necessary.”

5. FUNCTION OF PRESCHOOL UPBRINGING AND EDUCATION

The basic function of the preschool upbringing and education in Bosnia and Herzegovina so far has been predominantly in the area of social protection, and the upbringing, education and health components have been neglected due to the negative approach of the society, prejudice and traditional burdens in terms of this segment of upbringing and education, and also, they have been under the influence of restrictive economic measures aimed at saving and stabilization.

Changes in the preschool upbringing and education need to be viewed in the context of pursuing of the following functions:

- ensuring of conditions for optimum development of every child,
- assisting parents in ensuring care, protection, development, upbringing and general welfare of the child,
- supplementing the family upbringing,
- social investment into welfare and progress.

These functions require that the preschool upbringing and education have a special position within the upbringing and education system, which shall ensure it to influence the continuity of the upbringing and education in general.

In the year preceding to enrollment into primary school, preschool upbringing and education shall be mandatory for all preschool aged children.

6. POSITION OF PRESCHOOL UPBRINGING AND EDUCATION WITHIN THE UPBRINGING AND EDUCATION SYSTEM IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The preschool upbringing and education, based on humanistic approach to upbringing and development, modern scientific accomplishments and theories in child development and rights of the child, must appreciate the degree of child's development, specific qualities of developmental abilities and individual needs of the child, universal awareness of how the child develops and learns, and at the same time, it must harmonize its goals with the other segments of the upbringing and education system.

The preschool upbringing and education may only be further developed as an integral part of the single upbringing and education system, and only under the condition that in terms of planning, programming, organization, implementation and evaluation of the upbringing and education system, it is ensured the right of autonomy from the other segments of the upbringing and education system.

Therefore, preschool upbringing and education is the first, special and specific degree of the upbringing and education system involved in the upbringing of the preschool aged children. In this, preschool upbringing needs to be understood as a broader notion determined by the approaches and upbringing, education, care and protection.

7. SCIENTIFIC AND LEGAL GROUNDS FOR PRESCHOOL UPBRINGING AND EDUCATION

Modern preschool upbringing and education, such as we advocate for in our strategic document, is based on modern scientific knowledge and theories on child development. The new knowledge in the area of brain development, permitted by the most advanced technologies, exactly assure us of the significance of external influences on human

development, not only from birth, but also during the prenatal period. “Interaction and learning are much complex processes and they in fact have a direct impact on development of the nervous thread network, which on their part allow for some new and more complex forms of learning”.^{vi}

We also find the scientific grounds for our strategic document in application of human development theories which start from specific development laws in the early age and from appreciation of the child’s dignity and positive identity. The preschool upbringing and education are based on the general biological and social needs of the child. The child is seen as an active and interactive being, whose growth and development are decisively impacted by the quality of relations between themselves and the adults, and the ultimate goal of such relations should bring about development of full subjectivity of every child.

The holistic approach at the preschool upbringing and education level is an integral part of all human theories and it starts from the understanding that in the physiological and psychological sense, the organism can only function as a whole.^{vii}

There are four main tendencies of child education in early childhood that are part of the scientific grounds that we shall apply: individualization in the learning process, constructivism, development appropriateness, and progressive education.^{viii}

Individualization in the learning process starts from the assumption that there are no two children who enter the learning process in the same manner. Children integrate into learning their previous knowledge and experiences, features of the culture and tradition from the environment from which they come, learning styles, characteristics of sex, temperament, interest, needs, abilities and awareness of themselves. The individual approach in the upbringing and education process at an early age provides each child with an opportunity for development up to their full self-realization, in which they shall experience themselves as competent and self-reliant persons.

The constructivist approach starts from the fact that the child seeks to design the world surrounding them, integrating their previous knowledge and experiences into this process. Based on the previous knowledge and experience, and with the assistance of numerous materials and contacts with adults and peers from their environment, the child shall construe new knowledge and develop a better quality network of thinking operations.

The development appropriate curriculum means that each child is a unique and specific being. It is possible to apply the development appropriate curriculum if those who work with children know very well about the development features of each individual child, and based on this knowledge they plan games and activities to fit the development abilities, skills and interests of individual children, while at the same time serving to encourage growth and development. The education process at an early age must be viewed as a living process, and not only as preparation for the future. This is why it should be based on the child’s experience, which is socially conditioned. Progressive education is based on developmental and constructivist interaction principles.

This process is significantly affected by the role of adults (parents and expert persons in institutional upbringing), as well as the other adults and children from the environment. As emphasized in the development environment theory (Bronfenbrenner), impacts of the physical and social environment, starting from the micro-system (within the family), via the mezzo-

system (family, kindergarten and school), up to the macro-system (general features of the society the child lives in, the living standards, family policy, general cultural factors), which are constantly intertwining, have a significant impact on the child's norms, attitudes, actions and life goals.^{ix} It is exactly that this theory has offered the strongest arguments for involvement of families into the education curricula for early age children. In understanding the significance of family involvement to universal child development, we advocate for family involvement into all aspects of living and working at preschool institutions.

In terms of the legal grounds, we started from the major international declarations and conventions governing the issue of human rights and freedoms, children's rights in particular, which have been integrated into the state, entity, cantonal and local legislation. The General Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Convention against Discrimination in Upbringing and Education (1960), and World Declaration on Upbringing and Education for All, are the core United Nations and UNICEF documents defining upbringing and education as an overall life process starting from the earliest days. "Learning starts with birth. This means ensuring of protection from the early childhood and of primary education, using as needed various approaches including family, local communities or institutional programs".^x

As a signatory of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Bosnia and Herzegovina has accepted this proclaimed ethics towards the child, which is expressed in the logo: "Children First of All". We are referring to the commitments taken by Bosnia and Herzegovina in signing of such an important international document, including: "provision of assistance to parents in upbringing of children by developing institutions, benefits at the child care services; recognition of the right of every child to a living standard corresponding to the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development; recognition of the right for every child to upbringing and education, and to development of the child's personality, talent, mental and physical abilities, up to their full capacities."

The Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1994), inspired by the General Declaration on Human Rights and by the international treaties on civic and political rights for BiH, among other things guarantees the right to protection of family and children, and the right to education and social protection. The core provisions of the BiH Constitution have found their application in the entity and cantonal constitutions, which constitutes the starting legal grounds for the strategic development of preschool upbringing and education at all levels.

We have found a strong basis for quicker development of the preschool upbringing and education in the current education reform in BiH and its accompanying documents.^{xi} We expect that the results of the broad socially coordinated action shall reflect on the quality of primary education, starting from preschool institutions and further; on the passing of the new legislation at all levels (from state to local levels) serving for quicker development of this area, through development of modern preschool curricula and through increase of the number of children covered by the socially organized preschool upbringing and education; through development of new standards and good quality expert staff, and through their continuous professional development.

We find the basis for development of this document in updating of all the past laws on preschool upbringing and education, as published on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the Proposed Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Article 15), as well as in the Law on Local Self-Government, governing the

issues of self-governing action of municipalities and cities, regulating, among other things, the local needs of the population in terms of child care, education, upbringing, culture and physical culture.

The scientific and legal grounds addressed in this section may be recognized in all parts of the document on strategic development of preschool upbringing and education in BiH, and it shall also be consistently represented in its practical application.

8. GLOBAL GOAL

The goal of preschool upbringing and education as an integral part of the overall upbringing and education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina is: ensure optimum and equal conditions for every child, from birth to enrollment to school, to develop and realize all its intellectual and physical potentials, as well as competencies, through various forms of good quality and professionally autonomous, institutionalized and non-institutionalized preschool upbringing and education.

9. PRINCIPLES OF PRESCHOOL UPBRINGING AND EDUCATION

Starting from the global goal of preschool upbringing and education as an integral part of the overall upbringing and education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, aimed at future action in terms of implementation of the reform of preschool upbringing and education, we shall be guided by the following principles integrating the relevant aspects of the modern preschool upbringing that will contribute to raising of the life quality for children and families:

- Principle of democracy
- Humanistic development principle, and
- Principle of professional autonomy

Principle of democracy: We sought to integrate into this document the basic principles of modern democratic society in which the right of the man is among other things exercised through the upbringing and education process beginning by birth and lasting for the whole life. In terms of exercising of the principle of democracy, we refer to the major declarations and conventions governing the rights of all children to health and social protection, as well as the right to upbringing and education. Through the modern system of preschool upbringing and education, we shall foster education for tolerance, appreciation of differences and multiculturalism. We support the idea of pluralism and freedom in application of various work programs, methodical approaches, theoretic settings and organizational forms, aimed at meeting the various needs of children and families, in order to raise the quality of work that will be based on healthy competition. This also entails the obligation to provide the beneficiaries of organized preschool upbringing and education with the possibility of decision making, choice and appreciation of privacy. Respect for privacy is one more of the democratic principles which are the basis for the development of the preschool upbringing and education strategy in BiH.

Publicity, transparency and openness of the work towards family and the local community must be the obligation of all participants in organized preschool upbringing and education. The common responsibility for the quality of work at preschool institutions is borne by educators, other expert personnel, institution's management, and parents. In addition, the quality of work in preschool upbringing and education needs to be under continuous internal evaluation, but also under evaluation by external institutions responsible for this segment.

The openness of preschool institutions towards the local community is also reflected in the implementation of programs based on the community needs, in the contents of the work, transparency of activity, including the openness of institutions for admission of students from higher education organizations for implementation of their professional practical work.

Humanistic development principle: the Convention on the Rights of the Child integrates the core humanistic development principles, reflected in the right of the child to live in healthy environment, to have equal rights in terms of conditions for normal growth, development and learning, in order to optimally develop in the physical, intellectual and social sense. The humanistic development principle advocates for appreciation of the right of the child to the best social and health protection possible, as well as to ensuring of the most favorable conditions for their growth and development, that is, upbringing and education, thus opening up the opportunity for improvement of the quality of the child's life as a whole. An upbringing and development system designed in a modern manner, integrating an open, dynamic upbringing and development process, starts from the idea of humanism and the understanding that the specific nature of the child and their physical and spiritual development is based on the universal rights and needs of the child, and on the holistic approach in the upbringing process. Appreciation of the child's dignity is a guarantee for development of their positive identity and a precondition for development of a successful and effective adult. The humanistic development principle understands equal rights for all children, regardless of their physical and psychical level of development, their sex, their social status, cultural milieu, and the like.

The principle of professional autonomy: The principle of professional autonomy "... arises from the need for non-political activity and education of pedagogy as a science in a pluralistic and democratic society, as the basis for identical rights of sciences in general".^{xiii} There is no professional autonomy without the legal basis, transparency and publicity of work. We advocate that all forms of organized preschool upbringing be subject to public judgment and that their work be available for public verification. We have to build the modern system of preschool upbringing and education on worldwide recognized quality standards that we shall keep valuating and improving. The professional autonomy shall be significantly contributed to by the ability of expert personnel to render a critical overview and critical assessment of their work and its effects, which can be realized through continuous professional development and continuous supporting of the work quality.

10. PRECONDITIONS FOR REALIZATION OF THE GLOBAL GOAL

Curricula

Democratization, liberalization and professional autonomy in the area of preschool upbringing and education create an environment encouraging for development and existence of various curricula intended for preschool aged children (from birth to enrollment to school), as well as for other beneficiaries who are either directly or indirectly interested in development, upbringing, education and general benefit of children.

The preschool upbringing and education curricula should meet the following requirements:

- conformity with world and national general legislative enactments;

- compliance with the Law on Preschool Upbringing and Education and its bylaws governing the rights and obligations of the founders, implementers and beneficiaries of preschool curricula;
- correspondence with the applicable standards governing the conditions for its implementation;
- conformity and compliance with the starting points of the document Strategic Directions of Development of Preschool Upbringing and Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- being approved by the competent ministry of education, that is, another authority responsible for curricula, their monitoring and evaluation.

10.1.1. Curricula for Children

The preschool upbringing and education curricula should ensure:

- meeting of the primary needs of the child,
- influencing of all aspects of the child's development (such as development of skills and recognition of emotions, and simulation of emotional experience and expression, fostering of independent opinion, intuition, investigative spirit, development of language skills – listening, speech, pre-reading and pre-writing, simulation of artistic experience and expression, supporting of physical and social development),
- Development and expansion of interests and abilities of the child, while at the same time monitoring of special interests of the child and their progress,
- Appreciation of the special qualities of the child,
- Learning as an interactive process (learning through active investigation via interaction with other children and adults), on the various aspects of science and everyday life,
- Promotion of humane values and democratic social orientation, such as development of the ability to understand one's self and others, development of negotiation ability, appreciation of differences, cooperation with others and learning about multiculturalism and equality of sexes,
- Appreciation of the needs of family and broader social community,
- Implementation of various activities and use of various materials,
- Training on protection of environment,
- Encouraging of educators to select in their work such forms and methods of work as ensure optimum results in development of individual children,
- Balance between rest and activity,
- Development of independence in taking care of one's self and one's health,
- Prevention of all types of addiction.

Non-family preschool upbringing and education curricula in the public and private sectors influencing the child's development may be:

- Overall development curricula
- Specialized development curricula
- Intervention, compensation and rehabilitation curricula

10.1.2. Curricula for Strengthening of Parents' Competencies

Strengthening of parents' competencies in the area of care and encouragement of early development of the child requires continued and intensive affirmation of the parents' role, programmed training of parents and use of all parent potentials in preschool upbringing and education.

It is possible to accomplish goals in the area of strengthening of parents' competencies based on the previously prepared and designed curricula. The curricula for strengthening of parents' competencies may be in the function of:

- Development of awareness on the importance of the parent role in family and non-family upbringing of preschool aged children,
- Information and expert assistance to parents in development and upbringing of children,
- Acquisition of knowledge and skills important for timely and appropriate meeting of the child's needs and for appropriate stimuli for the child's development,
- Training of parents for stronger involvement in non-family curricula, social events and action, public action and debates related to child care and stimulation of child development.

The curricula for strengthening of parents' competencies may pertain to the following areas:

- Protection and improvement of child's health,
- Attention, care and feeding,
- Protection of the rights of the child,
- Family and non-family upbringing and stimulation of the child's development,
- Upbringing and education of talented children,
- Navigation and functioning in life situations specific for the child,
- Upbringing and stimulation of children born with risk factors,
- Rehabilitation and integration of children with development problems, and the like.

Beneficiaries

Given the broadly accepted view that each child has the right to development, in line with their individual abilities and capacities, and that organized preschool upbringing and education may ensure favorable conditions for an overall development of the child, a safe and happy childhood, as well as mitigate some socio-economical, cultural, health and other influences, the primary core preschool curricula should be intended for all children, from their birth until enrollment into the primary school.

The beneficiaries of various preschool upbringing and education curricula may include:

- children, from their birth until enrollment into primary school;
- parents (guardians) of children, by taking part in planning and implementation of the upbringing and education contents at preschool institutions, taking part in specific children projects and projects by the upbringing and education institutions in early childhood, in projects for their own education;
- broader social community, as the end beneficiary, through development of humane approach to upbringing and education of children of the early age, as a beneficiary of specific projects involving the education and cultural contents by the child upbringing and education institutions.

In terms of the child beneficiaries, we refer to:

- children covered by institutional care through nurseries and kindergartens, traveling kindergartens, playrooms, workshops, and the like;
- children not covered by institutional preschool upbringing and education;
- children who have specific problems in development, upbringing and education, and talented and gifted children (children with special needs);

- children from minority groups (Roma, Ukrainians, Russins, and the like) in the local community;
- children treated for specific diseases, or who are on treatment (hospitalization) at some of the health institutions;
- returnee children, and children of our nationals abroad.

The local administrative unit (municipality, canton) periodically and regularly performs situation analysis in the area of preschool upbringing and education, that is, determines the number of preschool children in its territory, determines what curricula children and parents are included, researches the needs of these children and their parents, and based on such analysis, it builds up the preschool upbringing and education policy.

Organizational Forms

From the standpoint of organizational forms, the design and program orientation of preschool upbringing and education in Bosnia and Herzegovina determines the forms of institutional organized preschool upbringing and education:

- nurseries – for continued full-day or semi-day care, protection and upbringing of children from 6 months to the completed third year of age;
- preschool institution (kindergarten) for continued, full-day and semi-day or shorter implementation of primary curricula enriched with special contents, integral development and specialized programs of alternative orientations, and full-day or semi-day curricula for children with special needs, for the age from three years until enrollment to school;
- playroom for implementation of shorter development oriented preschool curricula, implementing integral shorter curricula or specialized shorter curricula (musical playroom, sports playroom, and the like),
- non-institutional forms of working with preschool aged children – such as: summer vacations, winter vacations, kindergartens in the country, outings, visits, competitions, participation in occasional events with specially prepared programs, and the like.

In order to ensure security (safety) of children, they must be accompanied with an optimum number of adults (at least two adults per ten children), and this ratio may not be reduced for the sake of alleged reduction of costs, while at the expense of children safety.

The work with preschool aged children, from birth to enrollment to school, may also be organized through various mobile services, that is, expert teams for patronage, social and health care for children, and mobile pedagogic teams who would work in the field (traveling educators, caretakers, traveling kindergartens, playrooms, and the like).

Strengthening of parents' competencies and training of the local community representatives shall be acquired at:

- counseling centers,
- at schools and seminars,
- workshops,
- public debates,
- lectures,
- playrooms and workshops for children, parents and local community representatives,
- expert visits to families,
- expert visits to local community institutions and organizations.

Children and Media

Documents, declarations, conventions, constitutional and legal provisions cited on page 8 of this document mandate all media to protect preschool aged children from any influences damaging for development, upbringing and education.

State and entity level codes are to govern the relations with printed and electronic media so that they should determine with expert associates about the methods for selection of programs appropriate for children of the early age.

These media should turn the attention of parents and other adults working with children to such curricula contents not appropriate for children of the early age.

The media should be responsible for:

- programmatic orientation
- appropriateness in terms of children's age
- rules for family watching
- protection against disturbing of children with scenes of violence, torture, murder and other inappropriate scenes on the screen
- protection against programs showing deviant conduct by children and young and underage delinquents
- procedures and rules for interviewing of children that may not be conducted without presence of parents or educators
- rules and procedures pertaining to speech in media
- rules for advertising, particularly such involving children of the early age
- rules and regulations for programs and competition involving children and organized by media.

Media need to pass specific codes on protection of children of the early age against political misuse in media.

Expert Personnel

Implementation of various institutional and non-institutional preschool upbringing and education curricula, in the public and private sectors, shall include involvement of educators, specialized experts of various profiles (pedagogues, psychologists, medical doctors, specialized pedagogues, speech defectologist, social workers, medical nurses, and others), as well as assistants and volunteers, also of various profiles.

The preschool upbringing and education shall also include involvement of appropriate administrative, support and technical personnel.

Educators are expert persons working directly with children on implementation of various preschool upbringing and education curricula. The working tasks of educators are: planning, programming, preparation, organization, implementation and verification of the effects of the upbringing and education work. In addition, educators must ensure their professional development throughout their professional involvement. The tasks of educators are non-transferable to any other participant in preschool upbringing and education.

Due to the complexity of the activity they are involved in, particularly due to expert and scientific reasons, it is necessary to insist on the higher education–faculty level of education–for educators. The reasons for this are:

- complexity of the tasks associated with preschool upbringing designed in a modern manner, based on the most recent scientific theories,
- continuity in upbringing of children, from the first year of age until they enroll to school,
- following of accomplishments in expertise and science; permanent improvement and development of their own practical work,
- training for research in preschool upbringing and education.

It is necessary to harmonize the education curricula for graduate studies, as well as the curricula for post-graduate studies and permanent expert development with the aforementioned reasons and current reforms of preschool upbringing and education, and also with the modern paradigm for education of students and adults.

Educators and other expert associates in preschool upbringing and education must pass the trainee record programs as a requirement for acquisition of the license for autonomous work, and must pass the expert examination according to a separate rulebook of the competent ministry of education.

Post-graduate education and permanent expert development are the requirements for re-licensing and survival in the profession. Post-graduate education and permanent expert development shall be conducted through modern forms of work, provided that each expert worker is allowed to have an opportunity of choice.

Educators, assistants, pedagogues, psychologists, medical doctors, specialized pedagogues, speech defectologist, social workers and others in preschool upbringing may advance in the profession and acquire expert, academic or position titles in preschool upbringing and education.

Continued professional advancement shall also be mandatory for all other staff: assistants, volunteers, administrative, support and technical personnel employed in the preschool upbringing area.

Monitoring and evaluation of expert and other personnel shall be conducted in line with the work quality standards, and based on the results accomplished professional development, certification and advancement shall be conducted.

Licensing, accreditation and certification shall be conducted by certified institutions and individuals, in line with the prescribed criteria and procedures.

Financing

From the aspect of financing, strategic directions of development of preschool upbringing in Bosnia and Herzegovina stipulate that the financial funds necessary for implementation of preschool curricula must be secured by the founder. The founder may be a legal or a natural entity.

- In addition to the financial funds secured by the founder, the preschool upbringing and education curricula may also be supported using:

- Funds received from parents of the preschool aged children, depending on their social status,
- Funds supplied by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Protection, Ministry of Health
- Proceeds from sales of services and materials
- Donations.

The founder shall ensure:

- employee wages (gross), hot meal allowances, bonuses
- costs of materials
- procurement of basic equipment and learning accessories
- expendable materials for the upbringing and education work
- depreciation and current maintenance of facilities
- portion of the work and play materials (toys and other core didactic materials)

The parents shall provide for:

- costs of food
- portion of funds for implementation of specialized programs

Ministry of Education shall provide for financing of:

- part of didactical materials
- professional improvement of human resources in upbringing and education
- development of preschool curricula
- curricula for strengthening of parents' competencies
- evaluation of preschool curricula
- portion of funds for implementation of specialized curricula
- publication activities by institutions
- children's summer and winter vacations

Ministry of Social Policy shall provide for:

- co-financing for the portion of costs for children without parent care, children with special needs, children of disabled persons, children of civil victims of war, children of unemployed parents, children of self-supporting parents, children with foster parents, children of students.

Ministry of Health shall provide the funds for:

- preventive programs and programs for protection and advancement of children's health
- wages of medical doctors, special pedagogues, dental doctors, medical nurses
- portion of expendable materials for nurseries
- professional advancement of health workers
- sanitary inspections for all employees.

In addition, we propose that early age upbringing institutions be subsidized by the state in terms of heating, utilities, water, electrical power, postal services, RTV fees, and the like, and be classified into the category of households. They also need to be provided with tax and other benefits when purchasing equipment and didactic materials, in particular with procurement of food items for children.

Material Basis

From the aspect of securing the appropriate material basis for the upbringing and education work at the preschool level, the strategic directions for development of preschool upbringing and education in Bosnia and Herzegovina determine that preschool curricula may be conducted on the premises which are in line with the norms and standards of preschool upbringing as pertaining to the facilities, furniture, equipment, accessories and didactical materials.

Administration and Management

The administration body at preschool institutions shall be the administrative board.

The composition of the administrative board, its mandate and tasks shall be stipulated in the Framework Law on Preschool Upbringing at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Management in preschool upbringing and education may only be entrusted to adequately trained experts in the area of preschool upbringing and education. These persons also need to be involved in the process of permanent pedagogical advancement and advancement in the area of management.

The Framework Law on Preschool Upbringing and Education at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina shall govern the administration and management issues in the public and private sectors in more detail.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Legality, Curricula and Quality of Work

Monitoring and evaluation of work in preschool upbringing and education shall be an obligation arising from the law. The Framework Law on Preschool Upbringing in BiH shall regulate the issue of surveillance over the legality of work. The Law shall provide an obligation for permanent surveillance, which shall be planned and programmed. The Law shall determine the periods, methods and procedures for such surveillance.

The Framework Law shall govern the issues of internal and external evaluation, based on self-evaluation, standards, and the like. The Law shall stipulate the methods and procedures for such evaluation.

Laws and Other Regulations

The Framework Law on Preschool Upbringing and Education shall be passed at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Framework Law on Preschool Upbringing shall be the basis for derivation of legislative enactments and bylaws (norms, standards, rulebooks, and the like), in line with the competencies of the entities, cantons, and the Brcko District.

11. FURTHER STEPS IN APPLICATION OF THE DOCUMENT ON STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL UPBRINGING AND EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Working groups need to be formed to work on:

- drafting of the Framework Law for Preschool Upbringing and Education at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina;

- development of various core curricula for preschool upbringing and education;
- drafting of bylaws (standards, norms, and rulebooks);
- drafting of models for professional development of expert, management and other personnel, and development of the licensing, accreditation and certification system.

Pursuant to Pledge 2, it is needed to:

- develop a detailed analysis of the existing human development plan, particularly the development plans for the upbringing and education areas, and determine the scope of social investment into preschool upbringing and education in BiH;
- based on this analysis, draft mid-term and long-term development plans for preschool upbringing and education with the program of social, pedagogic and economic effects of investing in this area.

The mid-term and long-term development plan for preschool upbringing and education needs to envisage the annual increase in the coverage of children, which should not be less than 5% of the annual increase in the coverage of children.

In order to avoid partial solutions to specific issues in this area, it is necessary to form an interdisciplinary body to address preschool upbringing (education, health care, social and child protection, economy, urbanism ...)

The non-government sector also needs to be involved in all of the activities.

In order to secure the funds required for development of preschool upbringing and education, it is needed to do a redistribution of funds in budgets in the sphere of public expenditure (defense, social security, health insurance, traffic, commerce, housing, general administration at various levels, energy, employment, and the like).

Within the scope of ensuring scientific and expert development in the area of preschool upbringing and education, we propose to establish a research center or institute which, in addition to other issues relevant in the area of upbringing and education, would also work on current research in the area of preschool upbringing and education for the purpose of seeking specific answers on further development of this activity in BiH.

The deadline for implementation of the Strategy for Development of Preschool Upbringing and Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the end of 2010.

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13. ATTACHMENTS

TABLE 1 – Coverage of Children in Semi-Day and Full-Day Curricula in 1988

REGION	SEMI-DAY		FULL-DAY				TOTAL	
	Number of Groups	Number of Children	Nursery Age	Kindergarten Age	Number of Groups	Number of Children	Number of Groups	Number of Children
B. Luka	6	210	46	1145	151	5212	203	6567
Bihac	-	-	11	292	35	1333	46	1625
Doboj	-	-	16	412	55	1850	71	2262
Mostar	6	166	9	200	83	2686	98	3052
Sarajevo	2	40	81	2668	241	19741	324	13449
Tuzla	5	181	24	486	117	3841	146	4508
Zenica	2	64	58	933	95	3468	155	4465
TOTAL	21	661	245	6136	777	29131	1043	35928

TABLE 2 – Number of Institutions by Cantons and Municipalities

No.	CANTON-MUNICIPALITY	NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS	NUMBER OF FACILITIES
1	SARAJEVO CANTON	1	27
2	TUZLA CANTON	9	23
3	HERZEGOVINA-NERETVA CANTON	10	20
4	ZENICA-DOBOJ CANTON	9	24
5	CENTRAL BOSNIA CANTON	7	7
6	UNA-SANA CANTON	7	10
7	HERZEG-BOSNIA CANTON	6	6
8	WEST HERZEGOVINA CANTON	4	4
9	POSAVINA CANTON	2	2
10	BOSNIAN PODRINJE CANTON	1	1
11	BRCKO DISTRICT	1	2
12	BANJA LUKA MUNICIPALITY	1	16
13	BIJELJINA MUNICIPALITY	3	3
14	PRIJEDOR MUNICIPALITY	1	5
15	GRADISKA MUNICIPALITY	1	3
16	OTHER MUNICIPALITIES OF THE REPUBLIKA SRPSKA	36	36
TOTAL:		99	179

TABLE 3 – Number of Children Enrolled in the Work Year of 2002-2003

FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA			REPUBLIKA SRPSKA	BRCKO DISTRICT	
No.	CANTON	NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENROLLED	NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENROLLED	NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENROLLED	TOTAL
1	UNA-SANA	1391			
2	POSAVINA	118			
3	TUZLA	1375			
4	ZENICA-DOBOJ	1169			
5	BOSNIAN PODRINJE	95			
6	CENTRAL BOSNIA	548			
7	HERZEGOVINA-NERETVA	1692			
8	WEST HERZEGOVINA	510			
9	SARAJEVO	2261			
10	HERZEG-BOSNIA	617			
TOTAL		9776	6488	203	16467

TABLE 4 – STATISTICS ON CHILDREN BORN IN BIH

No.	YEAR	FEDERATION OF BIH	REPUBLIKA SRPSKA	TOTAL
1	1996	34333 children	12263 children	46596
2	1997	34304 children	13757 children	48061
3	1998	34333 children	13527 children	47860
4	1999	27964 children	14500 children	42464
5	2000	25018 children	14191 children	39209
6	2001	24018 children	13699 children	37717
7	2002	22854 children	12336 children	35190
TOTAL		202824 children	94273 children	297097

TABLE 5 – STRUCTURE AND NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

No.	EMPLOYEES	EXPERT	NON-EXPERT	TOTAL
1	Educators	506	88	594
2	Nurses	129	-	129
3	Other expert personnel	37	-	37
4	Administrative staff	64	-	64
5	Other employees	423	-	423
TOTAL		1159	88	1247

ⁱ Attachment: Tables 3, 4, 5, and graphs 1 and 2 – coverage of children in preschool upbringing, statistics on children born in BiH, and European comparative indicators

ⁱⁱ The references provide a list of laws on preschool upbringing.

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