



European
Union
Kosovo

NEEDS ANALYSIS

FOR CAPACITIES OF CENTERS OF SOCIAL WORK IN KOSOVO IN THE FIELD OF CHILD'S RIGHTS PROMOTION AND PROTECTION



SOS FSHATRAT E
FEMIJËVE
KOSOVË



HANDIKOS
SHOQATA E PARAPLEGJINËVE DHE E PARALIZËS SË FEMIJËVE TË KOSOVËS
ASSOCIATION OF PARAPLEGICS AND PARALYSED CHILDREN OF KOSOVO

October 2020

NEEDS ANALYSIS
FOR CAPACITIES OF CENTERS OF SOCIAL WORK IN KOSOVO
IN THE FIELD OF CHILD'S RIGHTS PROMOTION AND PROTECTION

Project: "Advancing capacities for child rights"

An EU funded project managed by European Union Office in Kosovo. Implemented by SOS Children's Villages Kosovo in partnership with HANDIKOS

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ACRONYMS

CBSS	Country-Based Support Schemes
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSW	Center for Social Work
DHSS	Directorates of Health and Social Welfare
DSW	Directorate for Social Welfare
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HANDIKOS	Association of Paraplegics and Paralyzed Children of Kosovo
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
KIPA	Kosovo Institute for Public Administration
KOMF	Coalition of NGOs for Child Protection in Kosovo
MES	Ministry of Education and Science
MLSW	Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare
MLGA	Ministry of Local Government Administration
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OFAP	Organization for children without parental care
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SC	Save the Children in Kosovo
SCVK	SOS Children's Villages Kosovo
SSO	Social Services Officer
TMR	Multidisciplinary Roundtables for Support in Case Management
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background of child's rights protection in Kosovo

As one of the actors recognized as frontline one responsible for the Law on Child Protection¹ implementation, Center for Social Work (hereinafter CSW) is mandated as the main body of municipal authorities to provide social care, social protection and counseling in circumstances where a child needs social and family services. There are 40 CSW in Kosovo, mandated as well to coordinate and organize the integrated child protection system within the municipality. The frontline position of CSW, as it is stated in Law on Child Protection², require strong professional and organizational capacities of CSW to undertake the position which has been given to them in protecting the best interest of children.

This analysis on the needs and capacities of the CSW for child's rights protection and promotion is part of the project *"Advancing capacity for child rights"*, funded by European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights - Country-Based Support Schemes - CBSS and implemented by SOS Children's Villages Kosovo in partnership with HANDIKOS - Association of Paraplegics and Paralyzed Children of Kosovo. The overall objective of this project is to contribute toward strengthening, promoting and protection of the child's rights in social services and Civil Society Organizations providing services for children.

The **overall objective** of the research was to gather relevant information and data, good practices and challenges that will "contribute to strengthening, promoting and protecting the rights of children in social services and civil society organizations providing services to children".

Methodology

The methodology applied for this analysis incorporates a combined approach of the methods to including the instruments developed. The research was divided into three interrelated research methods: (a) desk study analysis, (b) quantitative data collection, based on the Questionnaire designed for this purpose, and (c) qualitative data analysis, including focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with service providers, representatives of Municipal Directorates and with service users (children and their families).

The legal basis that will support this research will be in accordance with the Law on Child Protection 06 / L-084, the Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2019-2023, as well as the Action Plan, the Program for the implementation of the Law on Child Protection and also referring to other laws that define the competences of CSW as the Law on Social and Family Services, Law on Family, Law on Protection from Domestic Violence and the Code of Juvenile Justice.

¹ LAW NO. 06/L-084 On child protection. OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF KOSOVO / No. 14 / 17 JULY 2019, PRISTINA. Available at: <https://gzkrks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=20844>

² Ibid. Article 15.

Limitations

The situation of the COVID 19 pandemic influenced the consideration of other alternative possibilities of contact with CSW and other respondents.

As it was estimated as possible, in rare cases, there were CSW that are operating without directors due to staff changes, with acting directors, or newly appointed directors. In this situation it was difficult to obtain all the required data. Alternatively, it will be attempted to obtain information from the Deputy Directors (where applicable), from the head of social services in the CSW or from the relevant municipal directorate.

Need Analyses main results

Desk review analysis has shown that there is satisfactory legislative infrastructure, including Law on Child Protection, Law on Social and Family Services, Law on Protection from Domestic Violence etc. for CSW services in child protection. But still, there is a need for future improvement of some secondary legislation, especially by-laws. Also, there are indications that implementation of laws has stagnated in different levels of implementation that are usually conditioned by: lack of staff, professional profiles of service providers, adequate and inconsistent services, poor and inappropriate funding, planning and coordination fragmented and unsteady.

Responsibility for provision of child protection measures are mainly mandated to CSW. However, central level institutions are responsible for designing and implementing standard policies and establishing mechanisms to protect children. On the other hand, municipalities have specific role and responsibility as well designated within legislative framework related to social welfare and specific actions toward child protection (mainly implemented through CSW). Also, licensed NGOs have a role in safety network for child protection. This creates an inter-related circle that share responsibilities' and are supposed to support each other in reaching the minimum standards of care for vulnerable groups and child protection.

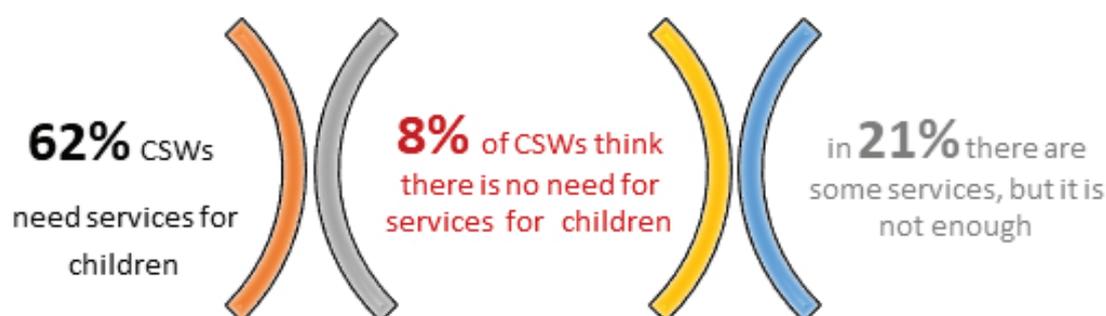
Responsibilities of *municipalities* and their role in the protection of children is defined in the Law on Child Protection³ as well as the Law on Social and Family Services. In both laws note that each municipality is responsible for providing services and preventive measures, protection and re-integration of child protection within its territory, according to the standards and policies of the Government or relevant ministries. In this case, the municipalities are obliged to take steps to identify the nature and extent of the need for child protection within their territory, to prepare annual plans and appropriate funding for the development and maintenance of child protection services and also the municipalities are obliged through relevant directorates, to appoint at least one child protection officer, who is obliged to cooperate, exchange information and data with the relevant Office for Good Governance.

Although competencies have been decentralized from the central to the municipal level, unsustainable funding of social and family services hinders the completion of the decentralization process. It is very important to underline that CSW indicates that so far, the field of social and family services has not been treated as a priority by the municipal authorities. Certainly, such a challenging situation requires the coordination and cooperation of many parties and service providers to take over care based on individual needs and to provide solutions in an integrated and coordinated way for children and families in social need. Networking, coordination and integration between key actors and partners is seen as the key to raising the quality of social services. However, new developments are expected to occur this year and beyond as the concept paper for drafting/amending the *Law on Social and Family Services* was approved by the Government of Kosovo.

³ Ibid. Article 14.

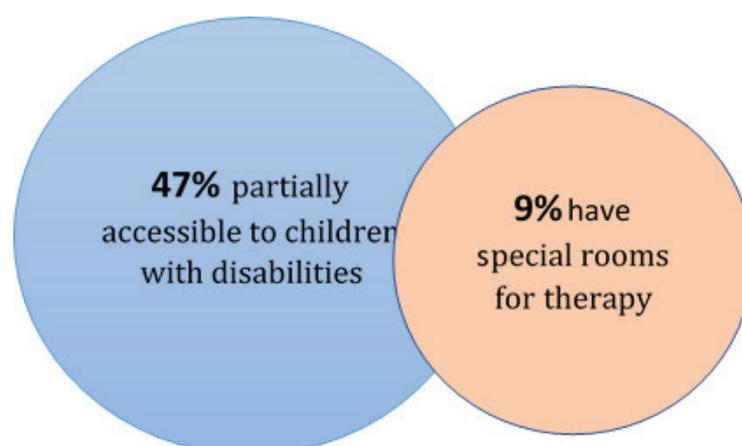
Results gained by the data collection and analyses in 36 CSW gave an overview of the social services for children, which the CSW possess and which the CSW need.

Regarding the existing **services addressing children in need and the need for different social care services for children and their families**, data shows that in 62% local communities in which CSW operates (21 out of 34 CSW who answered in this question through the Questionnaire) the specific services for children does not exist, but there is a need for different type of services such as: counseling services for children with behavioral problems and their parents, home care, day care services as well as supported housing for children with disabilities or children without parental care. In 21% (7 out of 34 CSW who answered in this question through the Questionnaire) there are services for children, but it is not enough according to the need. Also, it is very important to underline that there is 8% (3 out of 34) of CSW who think that there is no need for some services, including those that think there is no need for any services but also those thinking there is no need for other than already existing services. In both cases it is the opinion which need to be taken into consideration when developing capacities for better childcare, since their opinion might be very important in influencing development of services in the local communities.



Technical and material equipment needed for professional work in CSW is not sufficient, since data shows that from 34 CSW, 21 CSW (58.3%) reported that the building where they operate is partially technically equipped; 9 CSW (25.0%) work in buildings that are fully technically equipped; and 2 CSW (5.5%) operate in buildings which are without technical conditions, such as good, clean offices equipped for work with children and their families, without computer and internet connection, with no vehicle needed for a field visits.

The accessibility of CSW for work with children and their families is different in different municipalities. As data shows, 17 out of 34 CSW (around 47%) are partially accessible to children with disabilities – usually they explained that there are adequate space to work with deaf and visually impaired children, as well as with children with mental disabilities, but do not have space to work with children who use orthopedic aids or wheelchairs. Also, discussions shows that there is a great need to change the attitudes of employees regarding the understanding of accessibility in order to make them aware that accessibility and recognition of the inherent dignity of every child are among basic child rights, according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. When speaking about protection of the most vulnerable groups of children such as children with disability, accessibility is the main precondition for their protection.



The structure of CSW employees by education, gender and age seems quite positive, especially due to the age of Social Services Officers. Namely, out of total of 190 of them employed in 34 CSW in Kosovo, 63 of them are in age group of 30 – 40, with very balanced gender as well. Regarding academic background, dominant profession is with law faculty – 62 out of 190 of all service officers in 36 centers for social work; 46 of them are with academic training as social workers; 18 of them have academic background in psychology; 24 of them have academic background in Pedagogy ; 36 of them have academic background in Sociology and 7 of them are of other related profiles –such as economics, education, political science and biology

The **number of cases reviewed by CSW during 2019** was a total of 34986 cases. Of these, 8456 were issues related to children, out of which 1669 cases related to children with disabilities, 1408 cases related to children with behavioral problems and 2863 cases of children coming from difunctional families.

The situation related to **building professional capacities of the social services officers** need to be future explored, because out of 34 CSW who answered on Questionnaire, 26 CSW reported that during last three years there were organized 152 trainings and seminars, with the total number of 109 trained employees. With missing information from the rest 4 CSW who did not answer at all on questionnaire, it should be underline that there is a huge need for much more specialized/academic trainings and much more employees involved in professional development for social services officers. CSW have reported on their **need for other forms of professional development** in the field of children's rights and the interest in different types of support is equally divided among supervision, mentoring and need for technical support (specific knowledge and skills such as research, reporting, monitoring etc.). It is very important to underline that 14 out of 34 CSW (38,9%) who reported need a support in measuring specific trainings needs. Also 12 out of 34 CSW (33.3%) reported a need for something else and most of them involve material support or assistance in technical equipment.



Reporting on the **frequency and the quality of cooperation on child protection on the local level**, CSW reported that the best cooperation is among social care system, with other social institutions, including NGO dealing with children. Only 12 CSW out of 34 CSW (33.3%) reported cooperation with local government as very successful. It should be taken into consideration that there are 4 out of 34 CSW (11,1%) | who have not successful cooperation with their local municipal administrations. Regarding Article 15 of the Law on Child Protection, when asked **if they have appointed the official responsible for child protection**, 3 CSW out of 34 (8.3%) reported positively that they have initiated procedures for appointment of the official, 12 CSW out of 34 (33.3%) reported that have not yet appointed but have

planned and 19 CSW out of 34 (52.8%) have reported that they have not appointed the official. As for the reason why, they have not yet appointed the official responsible for child protection, 19 out of 34 CSW (52.7%) gave as a reason the fact that they do not have sufficient number of employees. Finally, **the opinions of CSW directors on what needs to be done to further improve the CSW in protecting the rights of children** have been analyzed., a total of 26 out of 34 CSW (72,2%) reported that the number of employees in the CSW for work with children and young people should be increased.

What is very important to underline is that the majority of them recognize the need for greater number of trainings for employees in the field of child protection as a basis for future childcare development. Also 25 out of 34 CSW (69.4%) recognize the importance of cooperation between all social actors in the community for the benefit of children and see the campaigns focused on children and their rights as one of the tools which can contribute to general opinions by raising understanding of child protection and child rights among general population, especially by raising awareness related to children from the most disadvantage groups.

The interviews with municipal directors underlined the general perception that the existing knowledge, skills and attitudes of professionals in the municipality, for the promotion and protection of children's rights, is categorized as poor to medium level. It is considered that there are very few municipality professionals, trained enough to promote and protect children's rights. There is limitation in number of staff, old age and unmotivated due to small salaries – mostly not ready to learn and incorporate modern social theories in their practical work, with no clear understanding of importance of international documents related to some specific groups of beneficiaries, such as Convention on Child Rights. Mainly administrative profile of job description. No proper planning and outdated methodology of organizational structures and functioning. Limited allocated budget for larger projects and purchase of services. Still unclear division of tasks between MLSW, Municipality and CSW. All of this reflects on rather limited readiness and capabilities for work in promotion but also in protection of child rights. Throughout **three focus group discussions** participants indicated that there are over 25 different child categories with over 80 type of services that are provided to children by CSW. Most of the services are well regulated and structured with clear legislative guidance. Services are mainly counseling and referral to other service providers. Also, protective measures actions take place in cooperation with family, school, police, courts and other state and civil society partners. Main complains of Social Services Officer for CSW offices consist on: Usually offices are shared between two or more CSW, with no privacy when admitting clients and talking to them delicate and sensitive matters. There are no adequate rooms for meetings and interviews with children. There are no specialized rooms for meeting children with parents that are going through divorce procedures. In many CSW there is also lack of waiting room and/or single chair to sit and wait. Large amount of services and assistance is still managed from central level (MLSW). There is perquisition for better coordination between central and local level. *All professional services are decentralized at local level, while there is no professional capacity and financed structures to deal with all the requirements. Professional profile and work experience of social work officers are not always adequate and well prepared for complex cases of children in need.*

Conclusions

1. From the analysis of all relevant laws related to child protection in Kosovo, we can conclude that there is in place satisfactory legislative framework for Centers for Social Work, as well as other relevant stakeholders, regulating mechanisms and services in child protection. There are ongoing processes of legislative reviews in several segments of legislation that will enable better child protection provisions.
2. Further to legislative analysis and indicated in several interviews with CSW and municipal directorates for Social Welfare, there are some gaps related to child protection in secondary legislation and by-laws that should: regulate and provide clear guidance on role and responsibility of actions between stakeholders (in particular between central and local administration, as well as within municipal level), type and frequency of social protection services, financing modalities, reporting and monitoring (quality insurance).
3. CSW as service providers raised concerns regarding Minimum Standards for care and service provision procedures developed by MLSW. They specifically argued about insufficient and unclear guidance provided in some Minimum Standard documents and other support forms for child protection measures for at risk categories of children.
4. Despite international trends on increase of social work workforce, in contrary, number of social workers in Kosovo have decreased since many vacant positions in CSW (due to retirement, death or resignation) in many CSW have not been replaced with new staff. Also there has been reported by CSW that there is lack of professional profiles of staff such as Social Workers, Psychologists and Special Pedagogue or counseling specialists to work with complex cases. There are also complains about shortage of support staff as well (administrative clerks in larger CSW, cleaning and security staff in premises). Only in few CSW it has been reported on periodic external engagement/hiring of staff and professional services for specific cases.
5. In all analysis throughout the process of the research there are no indications for initiatives like engagement of volunteers that can support to lower the burden of some administrative tasks within CSW or perform some preventive work with children in community. There is no evidence neither of initiatives nor cooperation with social enterprises (even though there are very few active in Kosovo). Also, there are very few incentives to approach, encourage and engage private sector and community workers in support to vulnerable categories and families of children at risk.
6. Outdated methodologies of organizational approach in supervision, workload sharing and case management within CSW needs improvement. New cases are shared to social workers with rotation system (in some cases regardless of specific professional profile, year of experience and workload of social worker); social workers are not specialized in one or cluster category i.e. children and youth, elderly, family and health etc. Social Workers can be engaged in different category of cases at the same time. There are no established practices of interdisciplinary professional collegiums for management of complex cases within CSW. There are no indication of internal support or debriefing sessions within CSW.
7. It was impossible to identify all trainings provided to all CSW. There was no clear, comprehensive training records and no proper training needs assessment conducted in the past or recent reports for all CSW in Kosovo. There was scattered evidence that CSW staff received specialized trainings targeting most at risk categories of children (CSW randomly named staff that has been provided with various 1-2-day trainings and or workshops, but not with specialized academic modules that can certify them with expertise in particular topic); e.g. work with children and youth, children with disability, children that abuse with substances, children from dysfunctional families etc.
8. Social needs analysis and any other planning of services like: preventive measures for categories at risk, budgetary planning, coordination, partnership and lobbying initiatives at municipal level do not take place in regular (yearly) basis, neither in CSW nor in DSW. There are no consistent and proper monitoring mechanisms in place in CSW for supporting planning and need analysis for at risk categories, also monitoring frequency and quality of service provision to children. In that context there is no specific budget planning for children in need neither at CSW nor in DSW.
9. CSW partnering with other organizations-institutions in child protection efforts are not al-

- ways well coordinated and efficient (especially for preventive measures and referral) between CSW and Police, Schools, Courts, other service providers incl NGOs. There are not always clear channels of communication and information sharing.
10. In most of the CSW building infrastructure reported to be in poor condition: lack adequate space and offices, old and or nonfunctional IT and other communication equipment, old furniture and very few child friendly premises. This hinders directly in quality and timely provision of amenities for children in need for CSW services.
 11. Lack of transportation and communication means in CSW: social workers transport for field visits is another serious negligence from municipalities as direct supervision and managing body to CSW. There are reports from CSW that they have difficulties in meeting legal requirement for field visits of the families in need. In particular cases of children at risk that require much frequent visits and sometimes with urgencies.
 12. All financial transactions are centralized in ministries and municipal level. CSW do not possess their own bank account therefore cannot allocate funds for emergency costs in cases of children in urgent need for food, clothes and or hygienic items. CSW cannot collect even the taxes and fees paid by citizens for administrative services of provision of different documentation in relation to their family status and dependency, services offered by CSW. Also, impossible to apply for funds and projects from external donors apart from legal status as public institution.
 13. In CSW there are exclusively counseling, and referral services provided. CSW has no capacities (staff and budget) for other direct services for children and adult/families in need. In case of need for e.g. shelter, food and other emergency support for clients, CSW has no capacities and no financial incentives to provide.
 14. In several occasion and illustrated with concrete cases CSW indicated on very low alternatives of sheltering capacities for children in need. There is only one Shelter NGO for children at risk with very limited capacities. Very few foster families in municipalities and almost inexistent foster families for children with disabilities. Shelters for domestic violence victims admit mothers and their children (boys only until age 12). Situation is much severe for sheltering any case of boys age older than 12. There are no temporary shelter facilities for short term accommodation of children in difficult situation.
 15. In several results derived from the analysis, there has been indicated that social assistance schemes for families in economic difficulties as well as financial assistance for disability and other financial assistance schemes are very low and do not cover basic needs for food and non-food items required for daily use.
 16. Social schemes are mainly managed from central level MLSW. However, CSW consider that there is also quite low budgeting at local level for covering running costs of the CSW, staff and other emergency needs for clients that make services available for children in need and other categories as well.
 17. In all research instruments, questionnaires and interviews there has been minimum indication of preventive actions on child protection, neither from CSW nor from other stakeholders. Preventive measures are also not possible due to workload of Social Service Officers and static approach and office-based methodology of work within CSW.
 18. CSW and Social Service Officers consider themselves as being neglected and underestimated by authorities at central and mainly at municipal level for the work they do. Situation of CSW and in particular status of Social Service Officers it has been required to be reviewed and upgraded in many aspects: as position in the catalogue of professions and salary scale. Also, regulate payment of overtime and night shifts for Social Service Officers. There is confusion if these changes have to be initiated from central or municipal level. SW syndicate is unrepresented in this regard.
 19. There is little evidence that CSW has experience and strategy to communicate with local media and use them for dissemination of information for preventive measures and or information on services offered and referral mechanisms for all services and in particular for child protection.
 20. Feeble monitoring and quality insurance mechanisms at central and municipal level with supportive/advice and recommendation approach to CSW. There is no evidence of much needed mechanisms that will provide on job support and supervision to CSW. Also, no evidence of

self-monitoring mechanisms within CSW and quality insurance check lists. All beneficiaries suffer from such approach but children at most.

21. In most of the cases CSW did not report in questionnaires clear numbers of children under the jurisdiction of the municipality where CSW operate. Also, no indication on numbers of children at risk within their area of responsibility.
22. There is in general huge gap in availability of segregated and easily accessible data in relation to cases and assistance provided. Also, very few information's and reports about CSW employee's data at central level.
23. In most of the CSW there are no complain box and/or clear mechanisms in place to direct clients for eventual complain and procedures.

Recommendations

- a) Since the number of Social Service Officers is much lower than recommended per number of inhabitants, it is recommended to increase number of Social Service Officers in municipalities. Ensure hiring new staff with diverse professional profiles with diverse academic background as foreseen by the law- (5 academic backgrounds), as well as provide specialized accredited trainings for Social Service Officers enabling provision of services for specific categories in need within CSW in particular in child protection (alternatively hire/engage external specialized staff on need basis).
- b) Office infrastructure needs major upgrade. Build or rent more space for new offices and or rehabilitate existing offices of CSW: ensuring full accessibility for all clients (including people with paraplegic disability) and enable sufficient/adequate space for staff and clients to interact and provide/receive services. Designate and equip child friendly interview rooms and family reunion and counseling premises. This will enable more sustainable and quality services ensuring needs of each child is met, provide safe and comfortable facilities and respecting integrity and confidentiality.
- c) In cooperation with state university, Faculty of Philosophy - Department for Social Work, in coordination of MLSW and other stakeholders including donor agencies, establish comprehensive academic training program for on the job training for Social Workers. Programs should anticipate increase of the quality and variety of services; on the job training to increase existing capacities of Social Service Officers already employed in CSW; also, Social Service Officers engaged in civil society; as well as students willing to further specialize in specific topic. Modular training program with certified and accredited curricula in various specialization of work with specific categories such as: Children with special needs, children abusing with substances, children victims of sexual violence, children victims of domestic violence, abused and neglected children, children in conflict with law, children in street situation, refugee children and other specific counseling skills like: case management, interagency cooperation for coordination child protection actions, preventive measures for children at risk, Identification and referral mechanisms, legal counseling etc.
- d) Since Social Service Officers are often overloaded with work and not always professionally specialized for complex interventions, it is recommended to consider reorganization of CSW staff managing structure and case management methodology. Also, for better professional team work, establish professional cluster teams for children, family and elderly also other subcategories. Change complex case management through multidisciplinary approach and collegium of expert service providers within CSW, as well as within municipality 'Multidisciplinary Roundtables for Support in Case Management' as required with new law on Child Protection – *article 21*).
- e) Coordinated effort of MLSW and municipalities should plan increasing shelter capacities and day care centers for different categories of children in need. Larger municipalities should coordinate and enable sheltering for children from smaller neighboring municipalities (regional shelter and day care or counseling services by NGO providers should be encouraged and financially supported by different municipalities regardless where the shelter is located). This will enable CSW in expanding shelter services for children and provide adequate protection for most at risk categories of children.
- f) Provide planning model formats and trainings for 'Social Needs Analysis Survey Report' at

- municipal authorities and ensure strategic planning and yearly workplans – identifying and targeting at need categories and services needed. In particular identification of at-risk categories of children and resources needed for CSW in undertaking required actions and ensuring timely preventive measures for t risk categories of children.
- g) Consider increase of budgeting for children welfare in general and for children in need for social services. Implement new proposed budgeting formula for social welfare at municipalities. Provide guidance and training for budgeting based on social need analysis and services required for children. Ensure costs for CSW actions related to child protection measures are included in new budget planning.
 - h) Establish and maintain functional various municipal mechanisms that will ensure more intense inter-agency cooperation of institutions and civil society organizations responsible in child protection actions. CSW should take more proactive role in coordinating child protection actions at municipal level. In most of the cases CSW should have leading role in calling for coordination meetings, municipal planning initiatives, NGO services supervision, communicate with media in different matters related to child protection actions and ensure involvement and timely actions of other relevant stakeholders. CSW is legally mandated for such actions but should be supported by Municipality with concrete actions and staff.
 - i) Establish monitoring methodology and tools self-evaluation within CSW structures and municipal and or central mechanisms that will ensure quality insurance of child protection services rendered by CSW and other service providers. Supervision and support by MLSW and municipal directorate for social welfare in reaching minimum standards of care should be provided to CSW and Social Service Officers in complex cases.
 - j) Build capacities of CSW to communicate properly and timely with media and other public appearances ensuring that community understand and act in favor of early identification and referral of threats to children 's wellbeing, promote preventive measures in the community, act in protective manner for safe representation of children and their families.
 - k) Establish clear and easily accessible complain mechanisms for clients and other representatives of children and or individual/independent, in order to submit their complains and suggestions.
 - l) Reinforce existing and establish new mechanisms for comprehensive and segregated data gathering. Also, ensure use of data for different strategies and workplan of actions, as well as budgetary allocation and human resources needed.

2. INTRODUCTION

In Kosovo, children and young people up to 24 years of age account for around 47% of the population⁴ and therefore, it is of crucial importance to invest in the protection and promotion of their rights. Due to the newly Law on Child Protection, adopted by Kosovo Assembly at July 2019, the importance of the child wellbeing is recognized as vital one, so this law aims to define effective mechanisms, the functioning of mandatory institutions and take concrete measures for prevention, response and protection of the child.

There is a great expectation that the adoption and entry into force of this law will certainly bring innovation in many aspects, but that its implementation requires coordination with responsible institutions at both levels of government, central and local.

One of the actors recognized as frontline one responsible for the Law on Child Protection implementation is Center for Social Work (hereinafter CSW). There are 40 CSW in Kosovo, mandated to provide social and family services, as well as to coordinate and organize the integrated child protection system within the municipality.

The frontline position of CSW, as it is stated in Law on Child Protection, require strong professional and organizational capacities of CSW to undertake the position which has been given to them in protecting the best interest of children.

Being convinced that CSW have crucial role for the implementation of Law on Child Protection and Strategy on Child Rights 2019-2023 and the action plan, it was obvious that the first step in providing necessary preconditions for their functioning in this regard is need analysis on their capacities to take this role in child protection. That is way this analysis focused on the needs and capacities of the CSW the fields of child's rights protection and promotion is a part of the project "*Advancing capacity for child rights*", funded by European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights - Country-Based Support Schemes - CBSS and implemented by SOS Children's Villages Kosovo in partnership with HANDIKOS - Association of Paraplegics and Paralyzed Children of Kosovo. The overall objective of this project is to contribute toward strengthening, promoting and protection of the child's rights in social services and Civil Society Organizations providing services for children. Through specific objectives the project aims to: Increase skills and knowledge of CSW and CSOs to promote and protect child's rights; Provide social services for vulnerable children and their families through provision of psycho – social service, Individual and group counselling and rehabilitation services; Promote and initiate multidisciplinary approach on child rights and increase capacities of community-based rehabilitation centers.

The upcoming results, gained by desk and field research, give wide range of explanations of the existing practices as well as a clear recommendation what need to be done in future child protection development in Kosovo.

⁴ Source: Kosovo Agency on Statistics, Census 2011, available on page https://askdata.rks-gov.net/PXWeb/pxweb/en/askdata/askdata__09%20Population__Population%20Structure/Population%20by%20census%20year%20and%20age%201961-2011.px/?rxid=-6c75a9aa-627c-48c6-ae74-9e1b95a9c47d at 24/9/2020

3. METHODOLOGY

Sample and Data sources

The methodology proposed for this analysis incorporates a combined approach of the methods to including the instruments developed.

The legal basis that will support this research will be in accordance with the Law on Child Protection 06 / L-084, the Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2019-2023, as well as the Action Plan, the Program for the implementation of the Law on Child Protection and also referring to other laws that define the competences of CSW as the Law on Social and Family Services, Law on Protection from Domestic Violence and the Code of Juvenile Justice.

In order to achieve the objectives, the research was based on the following questions:

- What are the needs of CSW employees in providing social and family services in the respective municipalities regarding child's rights promotion and protection?
- What are the capacities of CSW in terms of human, professional, financial and technical resources to provide quality services in regards to child's rights promotion and protection?
- What are the challenges faced by CSW employees in implementing work protocols depending on their demographic characteristics?
- What makes the process of providing social and family services more effective?
- What are the opportunities for capacity building in providing efficient and quality services against the needs of vulnerable groups?
- Are there differences in the provision of social services based on their work experience, where they work and their gender?

The research was divided into three interrelated research methods:

- a) *desk study analysis* - review and analysis of existing documents and relevant materials focusing on children's rights, social protection system, institutional mechanisms in child protection, current reports and statistics. Analysis of reports and specific findings for child protection services enabled an initial overview of the applicability of social services provided by CSW, challenges, shortcomings and setbacks, as well as good practices and success stories.
- b) *quantitative data collection* - for this purpose a range of instruments was developed, including Questionnaire for CSW in order to measure the efficiency of existing CSW services as well as the needs for advancing these services in accordance with legal requirements and internationally accepted norms. The very important part of the Questionnaire addressed the need of CSW professionals for future professional development in child's rights related issues. Out of all 40 CSW in Kosovo, 34 answered on questionnaire.
- c) *qualitative data analysis* - verification of findings with interviews and focus groups discussions, both with experienced professionals from CSW as well as with professionals from local governments responsible for child protection.
 - Focus group discussions: In order to get full information from the whole territory, focus groups with service providers was organized in 3 different regions⁵, including focus group with experienced professionals from CSW representing Serb majority population municipalities (via online). Participants: Social workers, CSW directors; 6-8 participants per one focus group. Theme of the discussion was set on three key topics: a) Perception of child protection services provided by CSW; b) Challenges in child protection services provided by CSW and partnership coordination; and c) Recommendation for modification in child protection efforts in CSW (what needs to

⁵ Three focus groups: one with CSW from the region of Prishtina and one with CSW from the region of Prizren. Also, one focus group with CSW representing majority Serb municipalities (via online).

change and by whom). Time 60 minutes each group, held on 8 and 9 September 2020.

- Interviews with representatives of Municipal Directorates was done with representatives from 9 municipalities of different sizes.
- Also, three semi-structured interviews were conducted with children's families who are social service users

Limitations

The situation of the COVID 19 pandemic influenced the consideration of other alternative possibilities of contact with CSW and other respondents.

As it was estimated as possible, in rare cases, there were CSW that are operating without directors due to staff changes, with acting directors, or newly appointed directors. In this situation it was difficult to obtain all the required data. Alternatively, it will be attempted to obtain information from the Deputy. Directors (where applicable), from the head of social services in the CSW or from the relevant municipal directorate.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the process of analysis, all participants were adhering to the norms of confidentiality of identity and information received from interviewees / respondents. All staff engaged were apply high standards for the protection of children who are in compliance with local and international child protection norms.

As there are CSW acting in the communities with a majority of Serbian population, the instruments for data collecting, as well focus group discussion was organized in respectful manner, on Serbian. It was done in order to avoid the language barrier for the participants and they could express freely their opinion

4. LAWS AND INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS FOR CHILD PROTECTION IN KOSOVO

Social protection services in Kosovo are regulated with specific legislations and are divided between central and local/municipal level. They are managed by organizations and institutions that are designated by laws and by-laws specific for reaching people in need for social services. Sometimes some services are provided by NGOs and other Civil Society actors licensed for specific services and social categories at risk. At municipal level services are mainly offered through Centers for Social Work. For the purpose of analyzing the capacities of the Centers for Social Work (CSW), some key legislations, strategic documents, institutional mechanisms and procedures that ensure protection of children from various forms of discrimination and exploitation and guarantee the best interest of children in Kosovo were reviewed.

Legislative framework

Laws that are listed below⁶ represent the legal basis of CSW activities and determine their child protection actions:

- Law no. 06 / L-084 on child protection
- Law no. 2004/32 Law on the Family of Kosovo and Law no. 06 / L-077, On amending and supplementing Law no. 2004/32 for the Kosovo family
- Law no. 02 / L-17 on Social and Family Services and Law no. 04 / L-081 on Amending and Supplementing Law no. 02 / L-17 on Social and Family Services
- Law no. 2003/15 on the Social Assistance Scheme in Kosovo and Law no. 04 / L-096 on amending and supplementing the Law on social assistance scheme
- Code no. 06 / L -006 Juvenile Justice Code
- Law no. 04 / L-218 on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Protecting Victims of Trafficking
- Law Nr. 04 / L -032 on Pre- University Education
- Law on Local Government Finance⁷

From the analysis of the legal framework related to child protection in Kosovo, as well as questionnaires and interviews that were conducted with the Centers for Social Welfare (CSW) and the municipal directorates responsible for social welfare, it can be concluded that Kosovo has satisfactory base of legislation that regulates the field of child protection. In relation to these legislations there are also number of normative acts as secondary legislation (administrative, direction and guidelines, regulations, standards of services, etc.), that supports the implementation of laws. While discussing the laws and by-laws with stakeholders and services providers we were convinced that they are well aware and informed on child protection legislation and in general social welfare standards. Also understand clearly their role and responsibility in relation to laws and professional standards requirements. However, during the research, from collected information resulting from many sources, there are indications that implementation of laws has stagnated in different levels of implementation that are usually conditioned by: lack of staff, professional profiles of service providers, adequate and inconsistent services, poor and inadequate funding, planning and coordination fragmented and unsteady. In several interviews with municipal directorates it was indicated that social welfare is underprivileged, there is no firm political will and lack of prioritizing and advancing

⁶ Ligji nr. 06/L-084 për mbrojtjen e fëmijës, <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=20844>

Ligji nr. 2004/32 Ligji për familjen i Kosovës dhe Ligji nr. 06/L-077, Për ndryshimin dhe plotësimin e Ligjit nr. 2004/32 për familjen i Kosovës, <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2410>

Ligji nr. 02/L-17 për Shërbimet Sociale dhe Familjare dhe Ligji nr. 04/L-081 për Ndryshimin dhe Plotësimin e Ligjit nr. 02/L-17 për Shërbimet Sociale dhe Familjare, <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2447>

Ligji Nr. 2003/15 për Skemën e Ndhmës Sociale në Kosovë dhe Ligji Nr. 04/L-096 për ndryshimin dhe plotësimin e Ligjit për skemën e ndihmës sociale, <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2460>

Kodi Nr. 06/L -006 Kodi i Drejtësisë për të mitur, <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=18019>

Ligji Nr. 04/L-218 për Parandalimin dhe Luftimin e Trafikimit me Njerëz dhe Mbrojtjen e Viktimave të Trafikimit, <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8875>

⁷ Law on Local Government Finance: <https://mapl.rks-gov.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Law-On-Local-Government-Finance.pdf>

of social welfare programs that consequently influences in creating gaps in child protection efforts. After a very long process of consolidation and debate among stakeholders, finally Kosovo approved *Law on Child Protection* adopted by the Kosovo Assembly in July 2019. Approval of this law creates new vision for child protection in Kosovo.

The primary purpose of this law is to protect children from all forms of physical and mental violence, abuse, misuse, exploitation, neglect or any other form that endangers the life, safety, health, education, training and development of the child, guarantee and ensure the responsibilities of parents, family, guardianship body, society and the state in the care, protection and development of the child based on the best interest of the child. Also, this law aims to define effective mechanisms, the functioning of mandatory institutions and take concrete measures for prevention, response and protection of the child.

To increase the efficiency and applicability of laws that correlate with child protection efforts, the Office of Good Governance within the Prime Minister's Office, as the central body that is mandated to coordinate this process, has compiled the Program for the implementation of the Law on Child Protection 2019 -2021.

The program is based on the Law on child protection, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Strategy and the National Action Plan for the Rights of the Child 2019-2023, which aims to protect all children from all forms of violence, to guarantee the well-being and improvement of the quality of life of every child⁸.

This program also envisages the strengthening of the child protection system guaranteed by the Law on Child Protection and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This law provides for the consolidation of concrete guidelines aimed at harmonizing the planning system, coordinating work at the institutional level, avoiding fragmentation and duplication between central policy level and financial planning processes. Consequently, with the start of the implementation of this law, it is expected to intensify the concrete actions of all key professional actors in the sectors of social services, health, justice and education to respond and advance the child protection system in the field of prevention, treatment and reaction.

Given that this law was approved last year and taking into account recent political developments and the Covid-19 pandemic, its future implementation remains to be seen; depending on the commitment of responsible institutions, the level of funding and the involvement of other relevant actors, civil society and other groups of interest.

Another important law for the protection of children and that is directly related to the work of the Centers for Social Work is the *Law on Family*, which is in the process of review and amendment and is expected to be submitted for approval by the Assembly of Kosovo. This Law defines and regulates the provision of social and family services for persons in need and families in need in Kosovo. Among other things, the Law defines the role of the main stakeholders at the central and municipal level for the provision of family and social services. In the framework of the current family law, one of the main principles defines the principles of family regulation with special emphasis on the protection of children's rights and education up to the age of 18 as the responsibility of both parents. Other articles also state that children should enjoy the right to protection from exploitation, including economic exploitation, exploitation, trafficking and sexual exploitation, and from any activity that may be detrimental to their health or education. This Law also states the termination of parental supervision or the circumstances when the right to parental care may be denied, such as: in cases where parents abuse their parental rights or neglect their parental obligations.

As the law is under review, it is expected that the new laws will be harmonized and complementary with legal provisions based on the Law on Child Protection and will also include in the new laws the recommendations proposed by key institutional actors in the field as well as from civil society representatives. Laws must be interactive and follow the principle complementarity among themselves.

It should also be noted that currently social services are at an important stage of development, where the emphasis is on meeting the current needs of vulnerable groups in society, improving the

⁸ Programin për zbatimin e Ligjit për Mbrojtjen e Fëmijës 2019-2021, Zyra për Qeverisje të Mirë/Zyrës së Kryeministrit

quality of services and accelerating the decentralization of financial and administrative management of social services at the level of municipal.

The other basic law on the work of the Centers for Social Work, the definition of their activity and the connection with the protection of children is the *Law on Social and Family Services*. This law defines and regulates the provision of social and family services for persons in need and families in need in Kosovo based on the best interests of the child which should be the first and most important consideration. The Law also defines the role of key stakeholders at the central and municipal level in the provision of family and social services. These services as defined by law⁹ should be in collaboration with families, the community, non-governmental organizations and other bodies, which provide social care, social counseling and, in exceptional circumstances, material assistance to children and their families who are in need and living in its territory, relying on the assessment of their needs for these services and the ability of the municipality to meet them reasonably. The main authority for ensuring social protection and well-being of their citizens is the Municipal Directorate for Health and Social Welfare through CSW. The inability of these directorates to ensure the necessary quality of services can directly affect the well-being of social service beneficiaries.

This law also mandates the Centers for Social Work as the main bodies of municipal authorities to provide social care, social protection and counseling in circumstances where a child needs social and family services. CSW are responsible for identifying and providing services to vulnerable groups, and in this regard from discussions with CSW representatives as well as in many reports published by local institutions and NGOs, many shortcomings in the capacity of the CSW have been highlighted to fulfill their mandate mainly due to the lack of necessary human and financial resources to assess the situation of all children and families in their municipalities and their services do not reach all families in need.¹⁰

Facing all these challenges certainly comes as a result of the decentralization of social and family services that was not successfully implemented, and this has led to misunderstandings in the division of competencies but also poor management of social and family services. It should be recalled that the process of decentralization of social services began in 2009, but despite efforts to finalize it, this process remains one of the main challenges in the social welfare sector.

Although competencies have been decentralized from the central to the municipal level, unsustainable funding of social and family services hinders the completion of the decentralization process, thus providing quality and sustainable social services to citizens in need of social protection. Certainly, such a challenging situation requires the coordination and cooperation of many parties and service providers to take over care based on individual needs and to provide solutions in an integrated and coordinated way for children and families in social need.¹¹ Networking, coordination and integration between key actors and partners is seen as the key to raising the quality of social services. However, new developments are expected to occur this year and beyond as the concept paper for drafting the *Law on Social and Family Services* was approved by the Government of Kosovo in February 2019.

Given that most children at risk come from difficult family economic circumstances and conditions, *Law no. 2003/15 on the Social Assistance Scheme in Kosovo* and *Law no. 04 / L-096 on amending and supplementing the Law on the social assistance scheme* that aims to provide a social security network within the social protection system in Kosovo and alleviate poverty by providing assistance to poor and vulnerable families. Respectively, this law defines the social assistance scheme of Kosovo in order to protect and care for families at risk in social terms. Regulates the provision of financial assistance to eligible families in accordance with the criteria set out in this law and within the resources allocated for this purpose.

The social assistance scheme operates through two categories: the first category is for dependent family members who are unable to work; while the second category is for families where at least one member is able to work and where either a child under the age of 5 and / or an orphan under the

9 Ligji nr. 02/L-17 për Shërbimet Sociale dhe Familjare dhe Ligji nr. 04/L-081 për Ndryshimin dhe Plotësimin e Ligjit nr. 02/L-17 për Shërbimet Sociale dhe Familjare, <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2447>

10 Koncept dokumenti për Shërbimet Sociale dhe Familjare, Ministria e Punës dhe Mirëqenies Sociale Departamenti për Politika Sociale dhe Familjare, <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/viewConsult.php?ConsultationID=40521>

11 Ibid.

age of 15 is under the permanent care of the family.¹² Families of both categories must be subject to an asset and income control in order to receive support as specified by law, that persons eligible to apply must be citizens of Kosovo, or non-citizens including citizens foreigner with a residence permit, asylum seekers, refugees or persons who have temporary or supplementary protection. In this regard, it is considered that the current scheme does not provide the necessary protection for the families of working children due to a number of reasons based on the age criterion seems unfair and that may be a driving factor for children working on the streets or looking for charity. Second, the current scheme does not adequately address all working families of children as if they are not citizens then they will not currently have access to the scheme. Third, the application process is very complicated and specific marginalized groups such as members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, people with disabilities or people who are illiterate may have difficulty accessing the scheme due to lack of registration or lack of necessary documents.¹³

Also *Code no. 06 / L-006 The Juvenile Justice Code* regulates the action against the juvenile as a perpetrator of the criminal offense, the children involved and the juvenile as a participant in the procedure, the bodies which conduct criminal proceedings and the execution of measures and punishments criminal offenses and the protection of minors and children who are victims and injured by the offense. Often when a juvenile is involved in a criminal offense it may result that the support system from family, society or institutions has failed to help them, and that despite the offense they have committed they should be respected as human beings and that the system responds in a timely and efficient manner. In order to respond to the situation through awareness and preventive actions in this aspect, it is necessary that our intervention as a society focuses on the realization of their basic rights to a dignified and equal life with all their peers, to create opportunities and chances of for re-integration into the family and society by including them in re-education and training programs that focus on their potential and skills to become useful and valuable members of society.

Purpose of *Law no. 04 / L-218 on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Protection of Victims of Trafficking* is the definition of legal provisions through which the competent local authorities are given rights, obligations and responsibilities to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings in all its forms; protection of trafficked victims, including the provision of rights, as legal aid; medical assistance; psycho-social support; providing compensation and other rights to all persons alleged to be or identified as trafficked, regardless of gender, age, marital status, language, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, nationality, political opinion or belief, religion or belief, race, ethnicity or social, property, birth or other status, through an approach based on human rights, in full compliance with international instruments of human rights and standards.

It is worth noting that social issues are interrelated and often affect the field of education, in this regard requires coordination of actions between sectors in the field of social and educational that can affect the prevention and elimination of different forms of risks for children, and yes as well as in educating and raising awareness of all within the education system about the negative factors that can influence in child protection efforts and endanger their wellbeing, development and health.

In this area we refer to *Law Nr. 04 / L -032 on Pre - University Education* - that regulates pre-university education and training from International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 0 to 4, including education and training of children and adults receiving qualifications at these levels. It is worth mentioning that pre-university education is based on the general principles that no person should be denied the right to education, that pre-university education is the joint responsibility of parents, educational and training institutions, municipalities and government, according to the respective functions and duties of defined in this law. These key actors are obliged to plan and provide efficient, effective, flexible, inclusive and professional services, designed to provide all children with equal rights to education, in accordance with their specific skills and needs, as well as for advanced their educational and social development. They are also obliged to take into account the internationally accepted norms for education for all, children's rights, protection of vulnerable groups in society and for the advancement of gender equality. It should be noted that according to the law on pre-university education, education is compulsory for all ages from 6 to 15 years, and that this law guarantees equal education to all communities in Kosovo, the continuation of compulsory education by

¹² Ligji nr. 04/L-096 për amendamentimin dhe plotësimin e Ligjit nr. 2003/15 për Skemën e Asistencës Sociale në Kosovë.

¹³ Avdiu, Natyra, 2014, Analizë e situatës së fëmijëve në lëvizje, TdH, Prishtinë, https://childhub.org/sq/system/tdf/library/attachments/2014_kosovo_situation_analysis_albanian.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=8159

students is a primary responsibility of the parent and otherwise violates the law. If the student for no reason does not register, does not attend school or interrupts compulsory schooling, his parents are punished for minor offenses if the absence is the result of premeditated action or negligence of the parents. In such cases, the municipality notifies the Ministry in writing.¹⁴

-Based on the above analysis of current laws but also the current situation of families or children in social need we can emphasize that supporting the most vulnerable groups in Kosovo is characterized by many challenges, primarily due to lack of political will to ensure a sustainable model of financing and management of social services, and further due to the non - functioning of a proper mechanism for planning, monitoring and inspection; lack of investment in improving the physical infrastructure of social service delivery and lack of investment in human capacity development. Situation is deterring particularly at local level with some varieties between municipalities.

The current legal framework does not fully guarantee the financing of social services, the division of responsibilities between the central and municipal level, the monitoring and inspection of the quality of social services, thus preventing the completion of the decentralization process of social and family services in Kosovo . There is currently no mechanism for the fair allocation of the budget for social services due to the lack of a funding formula for social services (although there is a newly drafted official document which is expected to be implemented¹⁵).

Although there is a high degree of social vulnerability in Kosovo, social welfare is not an issue considered a priority on the political agenda. This applies to both the central and municipal levels. The budget planning framework does not oblige the municipality to set a budget specifically allocated only to social services.¹⁶ In this aspect, the clarification of competencies for the responsible institutions is also needed; creation of specific grant for social and family services, costing of social services, strengthening of CSW, cooperation with NGOs, etc.

So far, the field of social and family services has not been treated as a priority by the municipal authorities. There have been insufficient funds allocated and planned to cover the cost of minimum standards for the provision of social services, although the Law on Local Government Finance regulates the issue of financing municipalities based on Chapter IV, Article 65, point 1, and Chapter X, Article 124, point 5 of the Constitution of Kosovo. In this context, there is a need to determine the financial resources that are available to municipalities in Kosovo, including municipal own source revenues, grants and other financial resources necessary for the exercise of municipal competencies.

The concept paper for local government finance provides for a specific grant for social services as a deduction from the general grant and the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare will be obliged to determine the criteria or formula for financing this specific grant , which will be of the open type, same as specific grant for education and specific grant for health. This financing of social services

will be done in accordance with the budget possibilities but ensuring the minimum standards of these services. Specific grant for social services - is foreseen to be an open system grant and will include financing of social, residential and daily services, based on the minimum standards for social services set by the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare.¹⁷

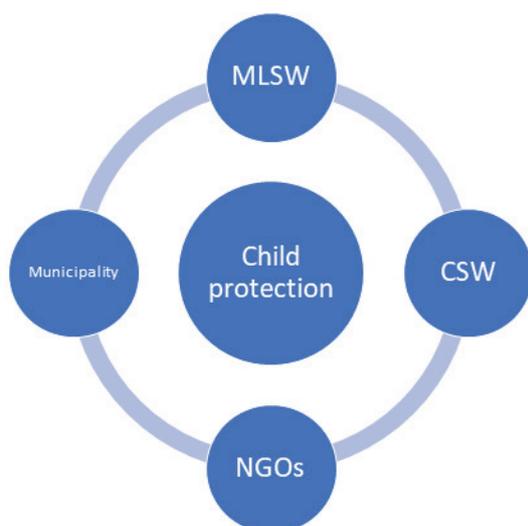
14 Law Nr. 04/L -032 Law on pre-University education

15 Concept document for finances on local administration, ministry of finance March – September 2018: <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/Storage/Consultations/15-52-14-23082018/Koncept%20Dokumenti%20për%20Financat%20e%20Pushtetit%20Lokal.docx>

16 CONCEPT DOCUMENT ON FINANCES OF LOCAL GOVERNANCED, prepared by the Ministry of Finance. <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/viewConsult.php?ConsultationID=40447>

17 Ibid.

The role and mandate of institutions at the central and local level



Guardian Body – shall mean the body responsible for child protection, which acts within the Centre for Social Work and also. The Centre for Social Work, in the capacity of the guardianship body, shall take the necessary measures to protect the child based on the child’s needs assessment. Responsibility for provision of child protection measures are mainly mandated to **CSW**. However, **central level institutions** are responsible for designing and implementing standard policies and establishing mechanisms to protect children. On the other hand, **municipalities** have specific role and responsibility as well designated within legislative framework related to social welfare and specific actions toward child protection (mainly implemented through CSW). Also, **licensed NGOs** have a role in safety network for child protection.

This creates an inter-related circle that share responsibilities’ and are supposed to support each other in reaching the minimum standards of care for vulnerable groups and child protection. Except legal responsibility of these institutions they are also required to ensure quality of programs that support children and their families, child protection, including prevention of threats to their lives, violence, neglect, abuse, maltreatment, abandonment and exploitation. Law on Social and Family Services¹⁸ adopted in 2005 defines the roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and the municipalities in relation to the provision of social services. According to the law, the overall responsibility for organizing and providing social and family services in Kosovo belongs to the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MLSW), while the Department of Social Policy and Family is the key body within the MLSW that is responsible for services social. Custodian role are also defined with legislation in the law on family¹⁹ and Law on child protection²⁰. Social and family services are defined by the Law on Social and Family Services, such as the direct provision of social care, counseling and / or in exceptional circumstances, material assistance for the benefit of people in need. MLSW is responsible for developing social policies and strategic plans ensuring that all citizens of Kosovo have equal access to social services.

On the other hand, responsibilities of *municipalities* and their role in the protection of children is defined in the Law on Child Protection as well as the Law on Social and Family Services. In both laws note that each municipality is responsible for providing services and preventive measures, protection and re-integration of child protection within its territory, according to the standards and policies of the Government or relevant ministries. In this case, the municipalities are obliged to take steps to identify the nature and extent of the need for child protection within their territory, to prepare annual plans and appropriate funding for the development and maintenance of child protection services and also the municipalities are obliged through relevant directorates, to appoint at least one child protection officer, who is obliged to cooperate, exchange information and data with the relevant Unit for Good Governance.

In accordance with the Law on Family, the Law on Social and Family Services, the Law on Local Self-Government and the memoranda of understanding signed between MLSW, the Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA) and the Ministry of Finance (MoF), in January 2009 by signing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the parties, transferred the management responsibilities of the Centers for Social Work (CSW) from MLSW to the municipalities.

The Municipal Directorate for Health and Social Welfare has a mandate from municipal governments to be responsible for municipal social welfare issues and manages the Centers for Social Work

¹⁸ Ligji nr. 02/L-17 për Shërbimet Sociale dhe Familjare dhe Ligji nr. 04/L-081 për Ndryshimin dhe Plotësimin e Ligjit nr. 02/L-17 për Shërbimet Sociale dhe Familjare, <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2447>

¹⁹ Family law of Kosovo, article 6. <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=2410>

²⁰ Law on child protection, article 27. <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=20844>

(CSW). Under this agreement, social services are under municipal responsibility under the management of the municipal Directorates of Health and Social Welfare (DHSS), while the extended social scheme remains centralized, residential services have remained under the central control of the DMS in the MLSW.

The legislative framework mandates the Centers for Social Work as the main bodies of municipal authorities to provide social care, social protection and counseling in circumstances where a child / adult needs social and family services. References to the competencies of the Centers for Social Work are found in several laws, including: The Law on Social and Family Services, the Law on Child Protection, the Law of Family, the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, and the Juvenile Justice Code.

CSW are responsible for identifying and providing services to vulnerable groups. Their mandate recommends that if the CSW "has grounds for suspecting that a child citizen, or found in their territory as abandoned, children without parental care, suffering or in danger of, any form of physical or mental violence, punishment or abuse, negligence or treatment negligent, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent or whomsoever else who cares for the child, the CSW should take any necessary steps for ensuring the welfare of a child, to report the matter to the relevant department and within 24 hours develop a professional assessment of the child's protection needs. An integral part of the child protection system is mandatory reporting and the obligation of professionals to cooperate with the CSW. At the same time, the CSW alone cannot and does not constitute the child protection system in Kosovo. In order to react and take steps to protect working children, other institutions are also required to take the lead, although there are cases when they are obliged to include the CSW.

Although these centers are mandated to provide services that may be considered necessary to ensure the well-being of individuals and families, in practice, however, they have difficulty in carrying out their mandate. These difficulties come mainly from the lack of necessary human and financial resources to assess the situation of all children and families in their municipalities and their services do not reach all families in need. In the absence of resources and support, CSW are overloaded with emergency response, leaving aside prevention services, follow-up services and achieving / maintaining high quality service delivery. This is due not only to the insufficient number of employees in the CSW in addition to cases in need, but also due to the lack of profiling within the CSW.²¹

Other relevant institutions for child protection

Beside CSW, Municipalities, MLSW and NGOs as part of the civil society, other relevant institutions that constitute child protection safety network are also:

- Ministry of Education with directorates of education in municipalities including schools and kindergartens.
- Law enforcement agencies and Judiciary: Police with different directorates (community police, Domestic violence, anti-human trafficking etc.). As well as courts and prosecution.
- Office for protection and support to victims (part of the state prosecutor's office).
- Labor inspectorates.
- Hospitals and health care centers in municipalities.
- Kosovo Probation Service²² (Ministry of Justice)
- Correctional Center for Women and Juveniles²³

Strategic documents and cross - cutting action mechanisms for child protection

Child protection strategic documents, action plans and laws are sponsored and compiled by central authorities and relevant key ministries, social aspects of child protection are led by MLSW. Office of Prime Minister with Office for Good Governance is higher body that develop strategic documents for all social categories including children. The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MLSW) has leading role in social protection of all categories and in particular children, reaching them with

²¹ Situation analysis: Konteksti ligjor dhe fiskal si dhe kapacitetet e ofruesve të shërbimeve sociale në Kosovë, Save the Children në Kosovë Qendra Evropiane për hulumtim dhe politika të mirëqenies sociale (2018). Availabile at: <https://kosovo.savethechildren.net/sites/kosovo.savethechildren.net/files/library/SHQ%20Analiza%20e%20Situates.pdf>

²² Kosovo Probation Service: <https://md.rks-gov.net/page.aspx?id=2,19>

²³ Correctional Center for Women and Juveniles : <https://shkk.rks-gov.net/en/institucionet-single/2224>

directly with centralized bodies and mechanisms or through municipal structures mainly Centers for Social Work. Actions are regulated with laws and other cross cutting working and coordination bodies and mechanisms. Child protection measures are also supported with actions and strategized also by Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice and other crosscutting institutions that actions correlate with children's rights and protection.

Key mechanisms²⁴:

The formation and establishment of all these mechanisms at the central level are certainly strong pillars to ensure a protective and functional system in child protection, but in practice it turns out that they are not always fully functional and that there is a lack of an effective coordination mechanism between the local and central level which enables them to jointly draft policies for relevant actions that would strengthen the operationalization of these mechanisms. The same situation is reflected at the local level with the existence of many coordinating bodies consisting of the same professionals, which have created overlap, burden and confusion regarding services. Therefore, it is needed better management of these bodies in a structured mechanism in order to ensure efficiency in the coordination of actions between central and local actors. Despite all actions and efforts to build a protection system for all children and in particular, children who are considered most at risk and whose basic rights continue to be violated, institutions at both central and local levels still face financial challenges and shortcomings in human resources, as well as significant technical and professional shortcomings. As a result, they fail to react through existing mechanisms to improve the situation and well-being of children for which they are mandated. This is due to the lack of determination and inconsistency to implement social strategies and the functioning of child protection mechanisms and in many cases the diversion of public funds committed for this purpose.

Governmental bodies that work in exercising of children's rights²⁵

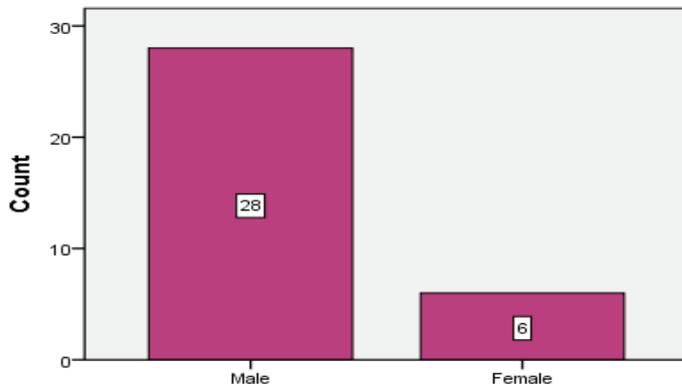
By "Governmental body" is meant the mechanism established by the Government to review or place the issues, which Government places under the competence of Governmental bodies. The Government also determines the composition and mandate of a Governmental body by decision to establish that body. In the aspect of establishment of Governmental Bodies, and which mainly have a mandate to work in exercising completely the children's rights, some very significant advancements have taken place, by making in this way possible the establishment of several such mechanisms, such as: (a) Inter-ministerial Committee for Children's Rights, (b) Committee for Prevention and Elimination of Hard and Dangerous Works of Children, (c) National Council for Persons for Disabled People, (d) Council for Protection and Justice for Children, (e) Kosovan Committee for Health of Mother and Child, (f) National Coordinator Against Trafficking with Human Beings, (g) Local Committees of Action for Monitoring of Child Labor, (h) Governmental Working Groups In institutions of Kosovo.

²⁴ See also in annex detailed description of key mechanisms.

²⁵ Summary of Laws that Protect Children's Rights in Kosovo. Author: Qëndresa Ibra-Zariqi January 2012 http://tdh-europe.org/upload/document/5123/1411_Summary_Of_Laws_That_Protect_Children_original.pdf

5. STATISTICS AND ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRES WITH CSW DIRECTORS

1. Demographic data of respondents (leaders) from the Centers for Social Work

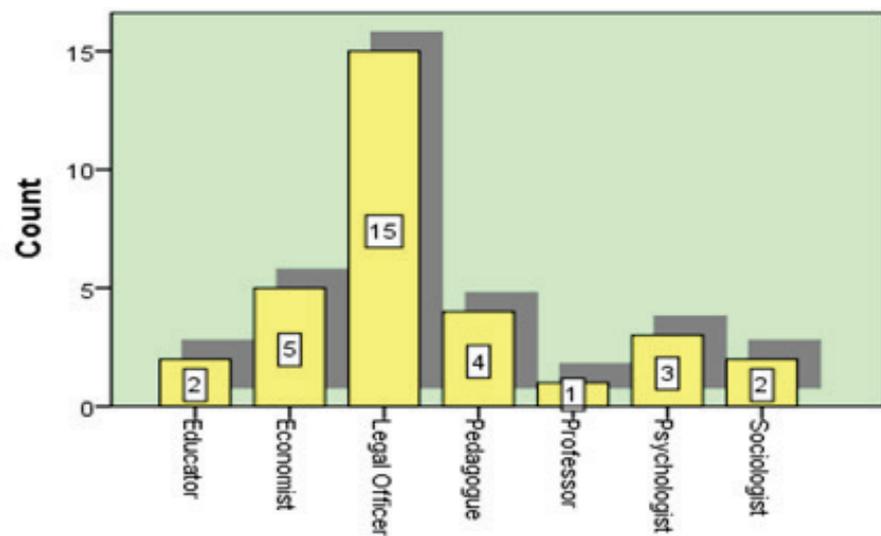


1.1. Gender

1.1. Almost all respondents have been in the position of director/leader of the Center for Social Work. Out of 34 respondents, 28 are men (83.3%) and 6 of them (16.7%) are women.

1.2. All of them (100%) have completed higher education.

1.3. Out of 32 respondents who answered this question, 15 of them (46.9%) have academic background in law, 5 of them (20%) have academic background in economy, 4 (12.5%) have academic background in pedagogue, 3 (9.4%) have academic background in psychology, 2 (6.3%) in sociology, while the rest belong to other professions, such as Biology, Political Science, Education and Pedagogy



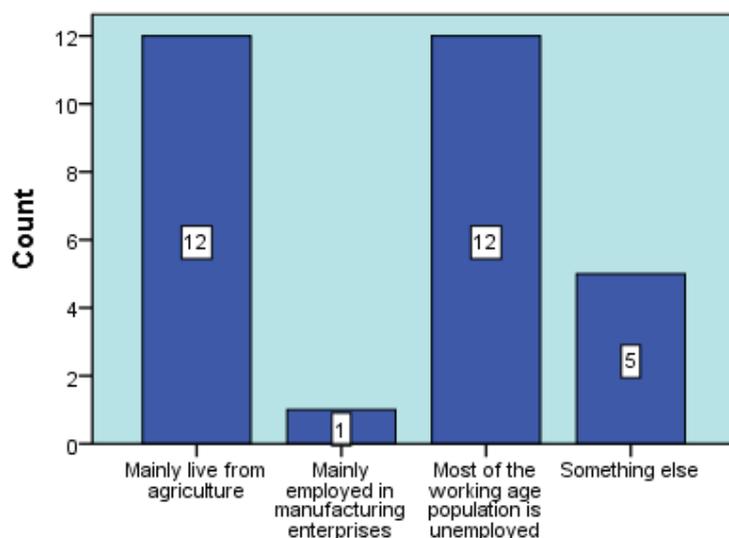
1.3. Profession

2. Social and geographical characteristics of local self-government (municipalities) covered by the CSW

2.1. Out of 40 Centers for Social Work that exist in 38 municipalities of Kosovo, 34 of these centers answered the questionnaire. The total number of inhabitants from these municipalities is 1,411,022 inhabitants, of which 83,186²⁶ children are under the jurisdiction of the respective centers. Meanwhile, the number of professional workers employed in the Centers for Social Work in relation to the number of inhabitants in the 36 participating municipalities, is 175 professional workers in total.

2.2. Number of inhabitants under the jurisdiction of the center for social work	2.3. Number of children under the jurisdiction of the center for social work	2.4. Number of professional employees employed in the CSW in relation to the number of inhabitants in the municipality
1411022	83186	175

2.2. In terms of economic characteristics, the results show that out of 34 CSW that answered in this question, 11 CSW (40.3%) are located in municipalities where the inhabitants live mainly from agriculture; 1 CSW (3.6%) is located in a municipality where residents are employed in manufacturing enterprises; 11 CSW (40.3%) are located in municipalities where the majority of the working age population is unemployed; while 5 CSW (17.9%) have emphasized that the inhabitants of their municipality are economically maintained in another form, mostly through private businesses.



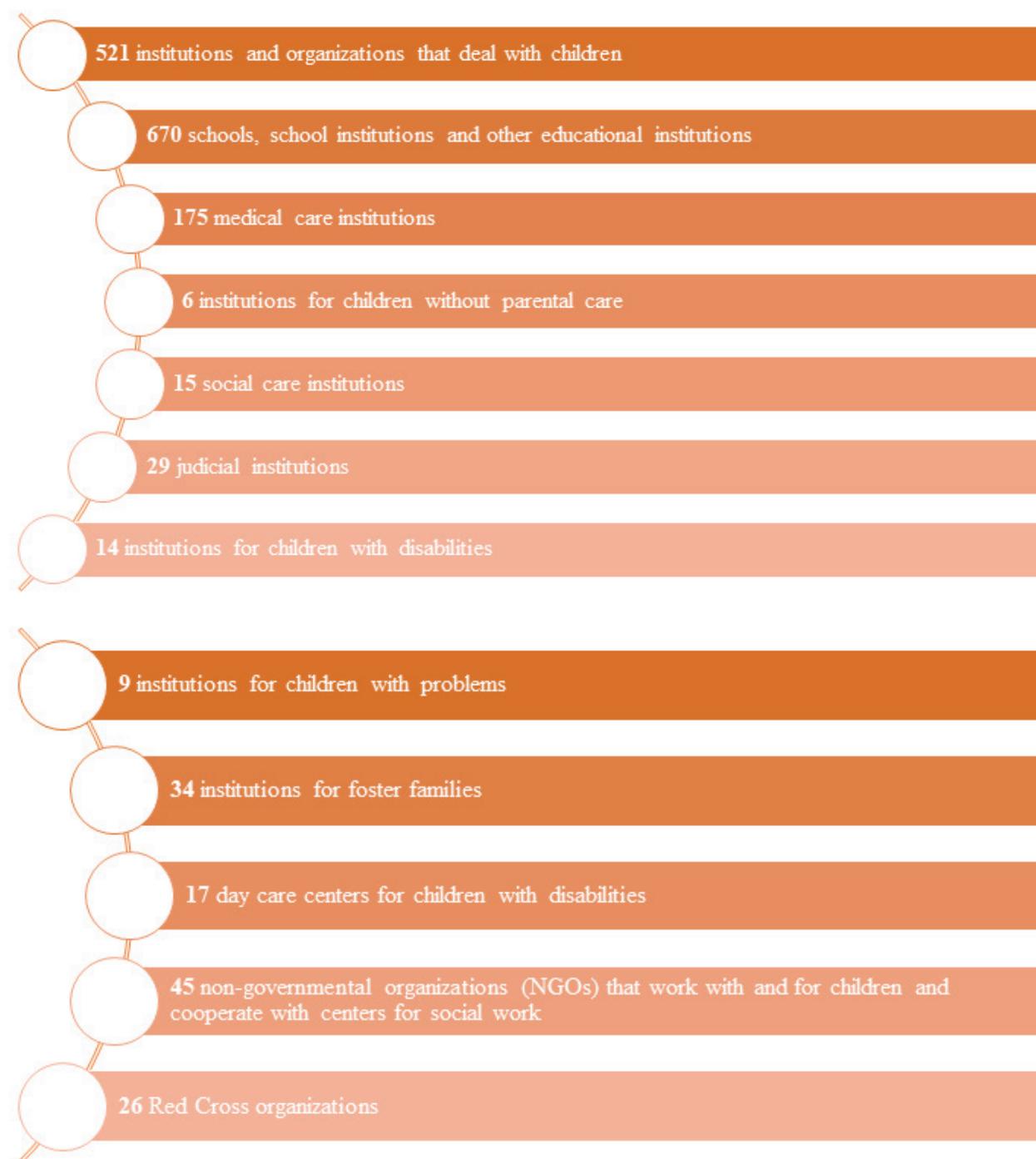
2.6. Economic characteristics

2.3. Meanwhile, the analysis of geographical characteristics shows that 8 CSW (28.6%) live in municipalities that are mainly mountainous; 6 CSW (21.4%) live in municipalities that are mainly plains; and 14 CSW (50%) live in municipalities that are mixed.

It is important to underline that the economic characteristics affects a lot capacities of the families to take care of children and need a stronger social and child protection services in order to support families with children. At the same time, not well economically developed communities have more difficulties in developing social services and any other ways of support families need.

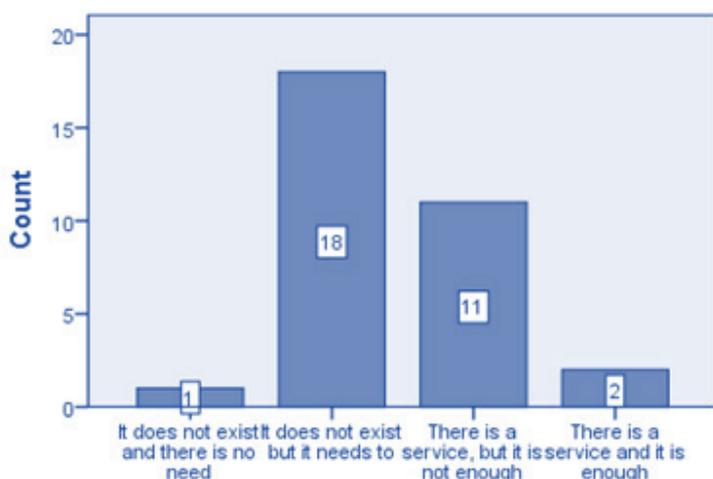
²⁶ This number is estimated as much higher than indicated from the questionnaire's received. However, this indicate that CSW do not have updated statistical data of number of children under their jurisdiction).

2.4. Statistical data show that in 18 municipalities²⁷ there are 521 institutions and organizations that deal with children. In 26 municipalities there are 670 schools, school institutions and other educational institutions. Furthermore, in 25 municipalities there are a total of 175 medical care institutions. A total of 29 judicial institutions are located in 23 municipalities, 15 social care institutions (17 municipalities), 6 institutions for children without parental care (17 municipalities), 14 institutions for children with disabilities (23 municipalities), 9 institutions for children with problems (19 municipalities), 34 institutions for foster families (24 municipalities), 17 day care centers for children with disabilities (23 municipalities), 45 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that work with and for children and cooperate with centers for social work (24 municipalities), and finally, 26 Red Cross organizations (27 municipalities).



²⁷ Statistical data show that the understanding of the professionals from CSWs regarding other institutions dealing with children is not consistent, so data collected is considered incomplete.

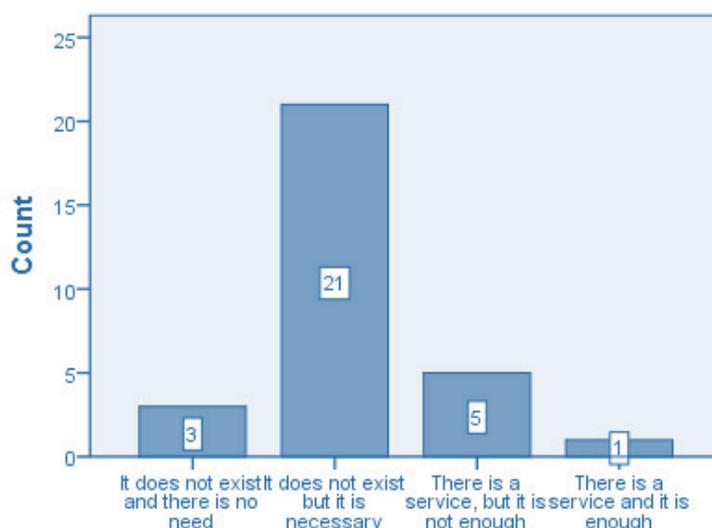
2.5. In the following, the results show an overview of the social services for children, which the centers possess and which the centers need.



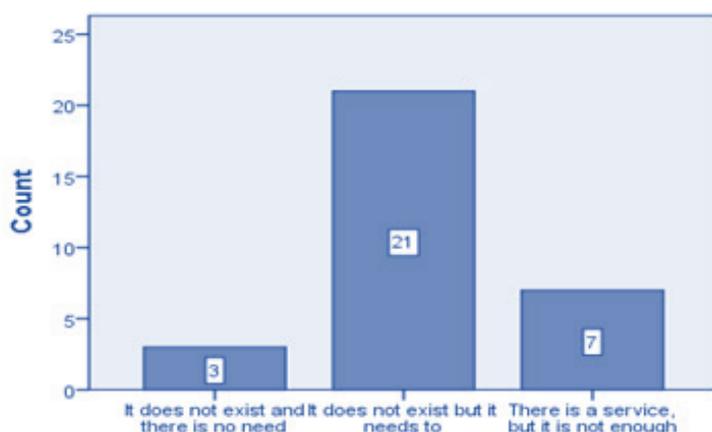
Regarding the need for counseling services for children with behavioral problems and their parents, from 34 CSW that responded, 18 CSW (50%) reported that there is no such service, but that there is a great need for it; 11 CSW (30.5%) reported that this advisory service such as advisory for families in need exists, but is not sufficient; 2 CSW (5.5%), report that the service exists and is sufficient; whereas only 1 CSW (2.7%) reported that this advisory service does not exist and is not needed.

2.10. 1. Counseling services for children with behavioral problems and their parents

Further, in home care services, from 34 CSW that respinded, 21 CSW (58.33%) reported that a service of this type does not exist, but is extremely necessary; 5 CSW (13.9%), report that the service exists but is not sufficient; for 3 CSW (8.3%), this service neither exists nor is needed; and only 1 CSW (2.7%) reported that home care service exists and is sufficient.



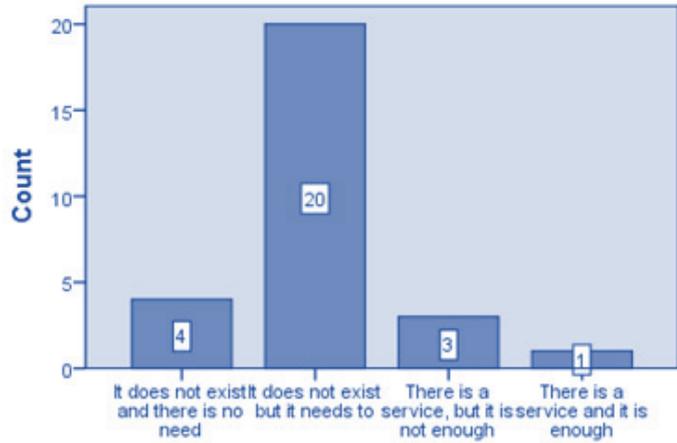
2.10. 2. Home care



2.10. 3. Care of daily stay for children in need

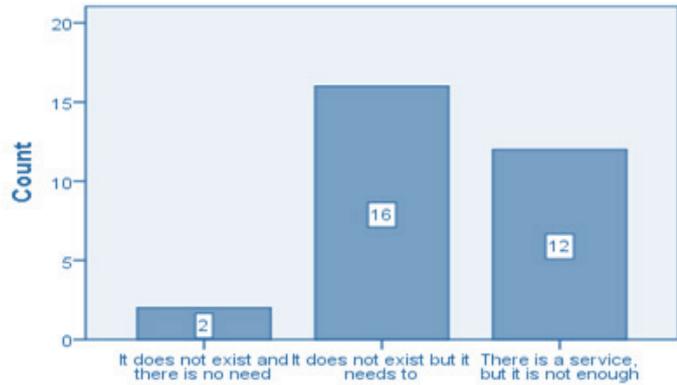
The third service that the directors of the respective centers were asked about is the day care services for children in need. Out of 31 CSW who answered on this question, 21 CSW (37.7%) answered that such service does not exist in their center, but is necessary; 7 CSW (21.6) have reported that the service exists but is not sufficient; while 3 CSW (9.1%) reported that the service does not exist and is not needed.

When asked about services that provide supported accommodation for children with disabilities or children without parental care, from 29 CSW who answered, 20 (68.9%) CSW reported that the service does not exist but is needed; 4 CSW (13.8%) reported that the service does not exist and is not needed; 3 CSW(10.3%) report that the service exists in their center but is not enough; and only 1 CSW (3.4%) reports that the service exists and is sufficient.



2.10. 4. Supported housing for children with disabilities or children without parental care (eg small communities such as dormitories)

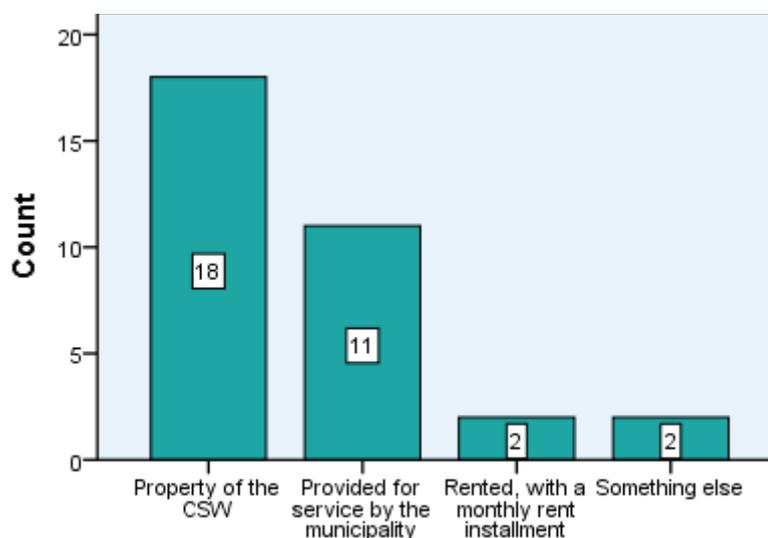
Finally, the additional educational services provided to children in need are analyzed. From 30 CSW that answered in this question, 16 CSW (53.3%) reported that the service does not exist and is needed; 12 CSW (40%) report that the service exists but is not sufficient; and only 2 CSW (6.7%) have indicated that the service does not exist and is not needed.



2.10. 5. Additional educational services for children in need

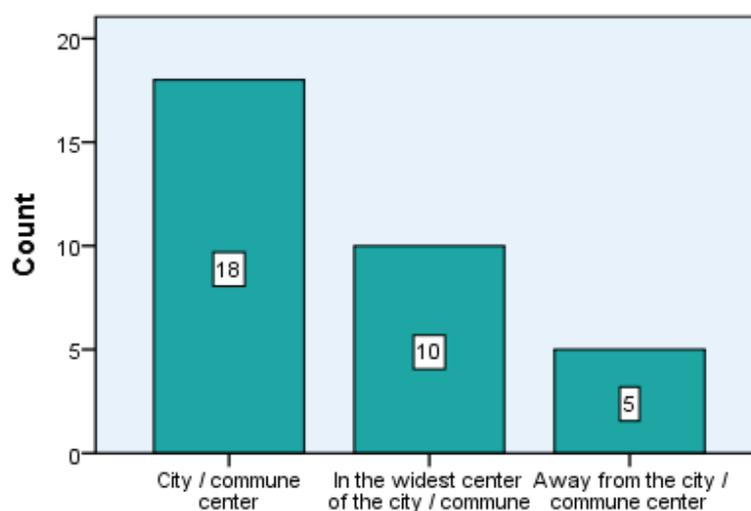
3. Infrastructure, technical and logistical equipment of the CSW

3.1. The third part of the questionnaire consisted of the analysis of the infrastructure, technical and logistical equipment of the CSW. From 31 CSW that answered in this question, 18 CSW (54.8%) operate in the building which is owned by the CSW; 11 CSW (35.5%) perform their activities in the building which is owned by the municipality; 2 CSW (6.1%) work in a rented building; meanwhile, 2 (3.2%) of them operate in a small office.



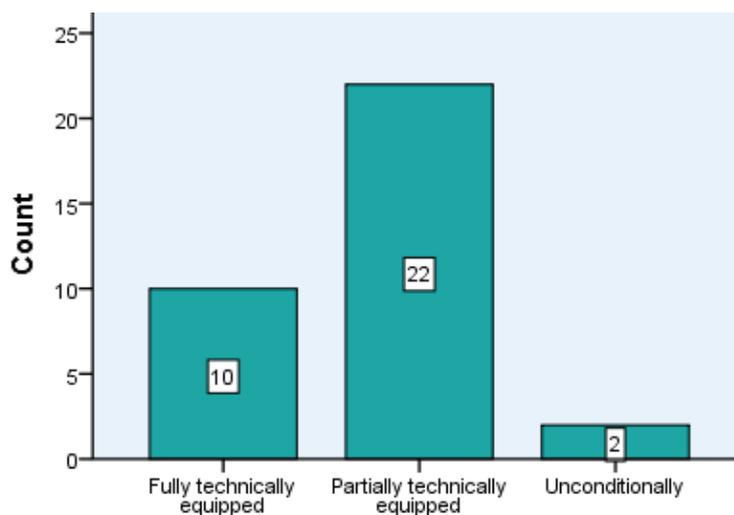
3.1. The building in which the CSW operates is:

3.2. The building of 18 out of 31 CSW (58.1%) is located in the center of the city / municipality; 10 CSW (29%) operate in buildings which are in the widest center of the city / municipality; and 5 CSW (12.9%) operate in buildings located far from the city / municipality center.



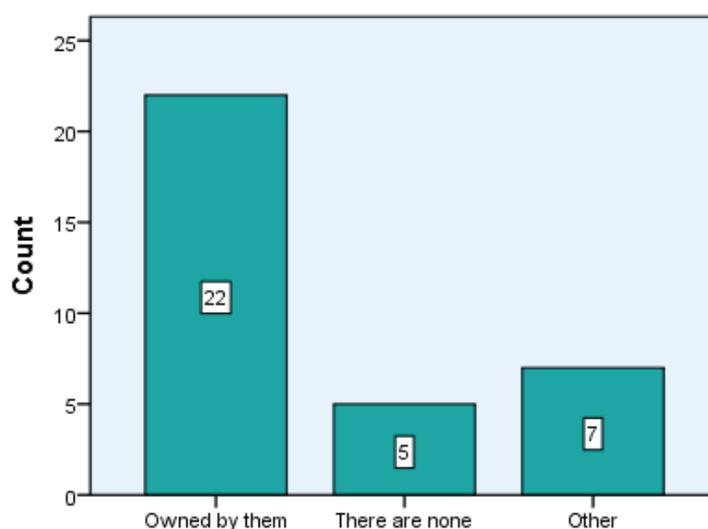
3.2. The building in which the CSW operates is located at:

3.3. Further, out of 32 CSW who answered this question, 22 CSW (65.6%) reported that the building where they operate is partially technically equipped (have offices and phones, but not computers and internet; 10 CSW (28.1%) work in buildings that are fully technically equipped; and 2 CSW (6.3%) operate in buildings which are without technical conditions.



3.3. The building in which the CSW operates is:

3.4. Meanwhile, when asked about the possession of vehicles to perform field work, out of 34 CSW that answered in this question, 22 CSW (68.8%) reported that they own their vehicles; 7 CSW (18.8%) reported finding other modes of transport, renting or using vehicles provided by the municipality; and 5 CSW (12.5%) report that they do not own any means of transport to go out on the field.



3.4. To perform field work CSW has vehicles:

3.5. The accessibility of CSW for work with children and their families is different in different municipalities, but there is a **huge need for improvement**, as data shows the following:

Level of accessibility	No. of CSW reported
1. Fully accessible to children and adults with disabilities	13
2. Partially accessible to children and adults with disabilities	16
3. Special rooms for psychological sessions with children	11
4. Special rooms for psychological sessions with couples / family therapy	3
5. Have space / rooms for activities with children	11
6. Equipped with sufficient space for professional training with staff	5

The accessible as well as special room equipped for work with children are main precondition for working with the most disadvantaged children, such as children with disabilities and their families.

4. Structure of CSW employees by education, gender and age

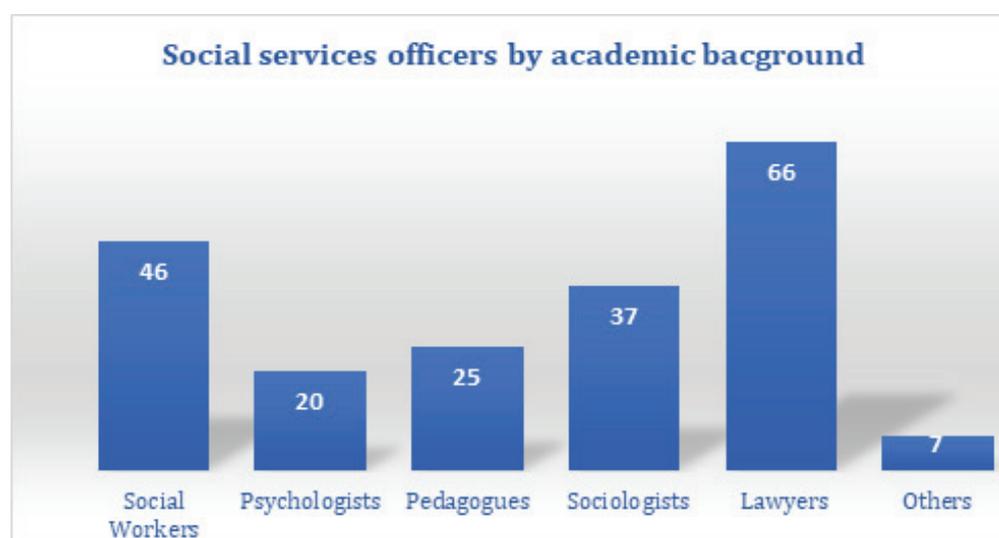
4.1. This section includes data on the structure of CSW employees in relation to their age and professional position in the CSW.

Out of 34 CSW and 372 employees, the positions of *Management Staff* include: 1 employee from 20-29 years old (woman), 15 employees from 30-40 years old (9 men and 6 women), 13 employees from 40-49 years old (9 men and 4 women), 26 employees aged 50-59 (19 men and 7 women), 14 employees aged 60-64 (13 men and 1 woman) and no employees over the age of 65.

The positions of *Social Services Officers* include: 15 employees aged 20-29 (5 men and 10 women), 63 employees aged 30-40 (23 men and 40 women), 37 employees aged 40-49 (11 men and 26 women), 45 employees aged 50-59 (20 men and 25 women), 31 employees aged 60-64 (19 men and 12 women), and no employees over the age of 65.

4.1. The structure of CSW employees in relation to their age and professional position in the CSW									
Age	Professional position in the CSW								Total
	Management Staff		Social services officer		Administration		Technical staff		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Up to the age of 29 years	0	1	5	10	0	0	1	1	18
30 – 40	9	6	23	40	4	11	3	4	99
40 – 49	9	4	11	26	11	4	6	5	76
50 – 59	19	7	20	25	9	14	2	9	105
60 – 64	13	1	19	12	17	7	2	3	74
65+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	50	19	78	112	41	36	14	22	372

4.2. Out of all Social service officers in 34 CSW, 46 of them are with academic background in social work, 18 of them in psychology, 24 in pedagogy, 36 in sociology, 62 in law and 7 are of other profiles such as Economics, Political Science and Biology. For stronger child protection, it is needed to have more professional with academic background in pedagogy, social work and psychology.



5. Number and total type of cases reviewed and services provided by the CSW each year

5.1. The **number of cases reviewed by CSW during 2019** was a total of 34986 cases. Of these, the majority – 23453 were cases related to social assistance - beneficiaries of social schemes, 8456 were issues related to children, out of which 1669 cases related to children with disabilities, 1408 cases related to children with behavioral problems and 2863 cases of children coming from dysfunctional families. When asked to clarify this data, social services officers explained that, in a way, more than half of all cases they were worked with during 2019 are connected with children (just those connected with elderly are not) but is not easy to classify in the documentation.

5.2. Regarding the provision of material benefits, 23 out of the 34 CSW have reported providing such assistance, and a total of this assistance for these 23 CSW amounts to 11,184 euros²⁸.

5.3. The results gained for the number of social services provided and the number of centers that provide these services cannot be taken as relevant due to not reliable information the CSW obtained

6. Professional capacities and professional development of employees in the CSW

6.1. The number of social services from social service officers and associates working with children and young people amounts to 938 services in total, for 26 CSW.

6.2. Monthly visits by Social Services Officers amount to an average of 4.14 visits per month, for 28 CSW which is much more than legally required once per month. However, this is different for specific cases e.g. not sufficient, especially not in case of domestic violence or neglect, but also in any other case of children in need for emergency protection.

6.3. The situation related to building professional capacities of the social services officers need to be future explored with detailed training needs analysis; out of 34 CSW who answered on Questionnaire, 26 CSW reported that during last three years there were organized 152 trainings and seminars, with the total number of 109 trained employees. Anyhow, there is a huge need for much more trainings and much more employees involved in professional development for social services officers. Some of the training programs that have been reported by the CSW are: "Children in street situation", "Child abuse", "Domestic violence", "Family housing", "Child protection", "Human Trafficking", "Minors in conflict with the law", "The role of centers for social work and other providers of social protection services in the implementation of educational messages", "Treatment of children with special needs", "Care and development of children in early childhood", "Empowerment of professional staff of the CSW for work with children and young people in violation of the law", "The actions of the centers for social work in the organization of assistance and support of the family in cases of risk of displacement of children", and many others.

As it was reported by responders, frequent implementers or trainers are: Terre des Hommes, GIZ, SOS Children's Villages Kosovo, KIPA, OFAP, Save the Children, HANDIKOS, Medica, KOMPF, OSCE, MLSW, MES, and other individual trainers.

Most trainings lasted from 3 days (50%), other trainings had a duration of 2 days (25%), and 25% of them belong to other durations (1 day, 5 days, etc.).

CSW have reported on their need for other forms of professional development in the field of children's rights as following:

²⁸ However, answers to this question are considered statistically non valuable therefore should not be taken in consideration.

Other forms of professional development in the field of children's rights	NO of CSW reported out of 34 CSW
Need for supervision	12
Need for mentoring	16
Need for technical support	11
Need for analysis / measurement of specific training needs	13
Need for something else and most of them involve material support or assistance	11

It is very important to underline that 17 CSW who reported the needs for other forms of professional development in the field of children's rights need a support in measuring specific trainings needs.

The centers also reported on trainings that need further development. Some of these trainings are:

- "Child protection",
- "Children and hard work",
- "Abandonment",
- "Communication with children"
- "Identification of child abuse"
- "Contact with separated parents",
- "Interviewing with children",
- "Emotional aspect of childhood",

7. Cooperation of the CSW with other actors in the community in the promotion and protection of children's rights

Reporting on the frequency and the quality of cooperation on child protection on the local level, CSW reported that the best cooperation is among social care system, with other social institutions, including NGO dealing with children. It should be taken into consideration that there is around 12% of CSW who have not successful cooperation with their local administrations

The following results testify to the level / quality of cooperation between CSW and other actors.

7.1. Cooperation with local government – Out of 34 CSW that answered in this question, 12 CSW (35.3%) reported cooperation with local government as very successful, 16 CSW (47.1%) of them reported cooperation as mostly successful, 2 CSW (5.9%) reported that they don't know the nature of this cooperation and 4 CSW (11.8) of them reported this collaboration as largely unsuccessful.

7.2. Cooperation with ministries - Out of 32 CSW that answered in this question, 8 CSW (23.5%) described the cooperation with ministries as very successful, 21 CSW (65.6%) described this cooperation as mainly successful, while 3 CSW (9.3%) described it as unsuccessful.

7.3. Cooperation with educational institutions - Out of 30 CSW that answered in this question, 14 CSW (46.7%) have considered this cooperation as very successful, 12 CSW (40.0%) as mostly successful, 2 CSW (6.7%) reported that they don't know the nature of this cooperation and 2 CSW (6.7%) as largely unsuccessful.

7.4. Cooperation with medical care institutions - Out of 29 CSW that answered in this question, 14 CSW (48.3%) considered this cooperation as very successful, 14 CSW (48.3%) considered it as mainly successful, and only 1 CSW (3.4%) considered it as mostly unsuccessful.

7.5. Cooperation with the judiciary - Out of 31 CSW that answered in this question, 8 CSW (25.8%) consider this cooperation as very successful, 21 CSW (67.7%) consider it as mainly successful, and 2 CSW (6.5%) have considered it as mostly unsuccessful.

7.6. Cooperation with social care institutions - Out of 18 CSW that answered in this question, 7 CSW (38.9%) consider the cooperation with these institutions as very successful, 7 CSW (38.9%) as mainly successful, 3 CSW (16.7%) don't know the nature of this collaboration and 1 CSW (5.6%) consider it as very unsuccessful.

7.6.1. Cooperation with institutions for children without parental care - Out of 30 CSW that answered in this question, 11 CSW (36.7%) describe the cooperation as very successful, 14 CSW (46.7%) as mostly successful, 4 CSW (13.3%) don't know the nature of the cooperation and 1 CSW (3.3%) as unsuccessful.

7.6.2. Cooperation with institutions for children with disabilities - Out of 30 CSW that answered in this question, 9 CSW (30%) consider it very successful, 12 CSW (40%) as mainly successful, 6 CSW (20%) reported that they do not know the quality of cooperation, 2 CSW (6.7%) consider it as mainly unsuccessful, and 1 CSW (3.3%) describes this cooperation as very unsuccessful.

7.6.3. Cooperation with institutions for children with behavioral problems - Out of 30 CSW that answered in this question, 6 CSW (23.1%) consider it very successful, 10 CSW (38.5%) as mainly successful, 7 CSW (26.9%) reported that they do not know the quality of cooperation, 1 CSW (3.8%) describes it as largely unsuccessful, and 2 CSW (7.7%) describe this collaboration as very unsuccessful.

7.6.4. Cooperation with foster families - Out of 31 CSW that answered in this question, 20 CSW (64.5%) consider it very successful, 8 CSW (25.8%) as mainly successful, 1 CSW (3.2%) reported that they do not know the quality of cooperation, 1 CSW (3.2%) describes it as largely unsuccessful, and 1 CSW (3.2%) describes this collaboration as very unsuccessful.

7.6.5. Cooperation with day care centers for children with disabilities - Out of 26 CSW that answered in this question, 8 CSW (30.8%) consider it very successful, 8 CSW (30.8%) as mainly successful, 6 CSW (23.1%) reported that they do not know the quality of cooperation, 2 CSW (7.7%) consider it as mainly unsuccessful, and 2 CSW (7.7%) consider this cooperation as very unsuccessful.

7.6.6. Cooperation with other CSW - Out of 32 CSW that answered in this question, 18 CSW (56.3%) consider it very successful, and 14 CSW (43.8%) as mainly successful.

7.7. Cooperation with prosecutors - Out of 26 CSW that answered in this question, 10 CSW (38.5%) consider it very successful, 11 CSW (42.3%) as mainly successful, 2 CSW (7.7%) reported that they do not know the quality of cooperation, and 3 CSW (11.5%) rate it as largely unsuccessful.

7.8. Cooperation with NGOs working with and for children - Out of 29 CSW that answered in this question, 8 CSW (27.6%) consider it very successful, 15 CSW (51.7%) as mainly successful, 4 CSW (13.8%) reported that they do not know the quality of cooperation, 1 CSW (3.4%) considers it mainly unsuccessful, and 1 CSW (3.4%) describes this cooperation as very unsuccessful.

7.9. Cooperation with the Red Cross - Out of 30 CSW that answered in this question, 11 CSW (34.4%) consider it very successful, 11 CSW (34.4%) as mainly successful, 6 CSW (18.8%) reported that they do not know the quality of cooperation, 1 CSW (3.1%) describes it as largely unsuccessful, and 3 CSW (9.4%) rate this collaboration as very unsuccessful.

7.10. Cooperation with the media - Out of 29 CSW that answered in this question, 2 CSW (6.9%) consider it very successful, 14 CSW (48.3%) as mainly successful, 11 CSW (37.9%) reported that they do not know the quality of cooperation, and 2 CSW (6.9%) rate it as largely unsuccessful.

7.11. Cooperation with other institutions (mainly with the police) - Out of 16 CSW that answered in this question, 10 CSW (62.5%) consider it very successful, 4 CSW (25%) as mainly successful and 2 CSW (12.5%) reported that they do not know the quality of cooperation.

8. Needs for further improvement of CSW in the protection of children's rights

8.1. Regarding Article 15 of the Law on Child Protection, when asked **if they have appointed the official responsible for child protection**, 3 CSW out of 34 (8.3%) reported positively that they have appointed this official, 12 CSW out of 34 (33.3%) reported that have not yet appointed but have planned and 19 CSW out of 34 (52.8%) have reported that they have not appointed the official. As for the reason why, they have not yet appointed the official responsible for child protection, 19 out of 34 CSW (52.7%) gave as a reason the fact that they do not have sufficient number of employees.

8.2. As for the reason why, they have not yet appointed the official responsible for child protection, 13 out of 34 CSW (51.9%) gave as a reason the fact that they do not have sufficient number of employees.

8.3. Finally, **the opinions of CSW directors on what needs to be done to further improve the CSW in protecting the rights of children** have been analyzed., a total of 26 out of 34 CSW (72,2%) reported that the number of employees in the CSW for work with children and young people should be increased. What is very important to underline is that the majority of them recognize the need for greater number of trainings for employees in the field of child protection as a basis for future childcare development. Also 25 out of 34 CSW (69.4%) recognize the importance of cooperation between all social actors in the community for the benefit of children and see the campaigns focused on children and their rights as one of the tools which can contribute to general opinions by raising understanding of child protection and child rights among general population, especially by raising awareness related to children from the most disadvantage groups.

6. INTERVIEWS WITH MUNICIPAL DIRECTORS FOR SOCIAL WELFARE²⁹

Current ways of promoting and protecting children's rights in the municipality

Interviews through semi structured questionnaires were conducted with nine municipal directorates for social welfare (DSW) and one municipal officer for human rights in (Pristina, Gjilan, Prizren, Lipjan, Podujeve, Ferizaj, Obiliq, Suhareke, Mitrovice). Interview was organized focusing on four key pillars consisting on:

1. *Organizational framework in the municipality for child protection*
2. *Professional competencies of employees in the municipality for the promotion and protection of children's rights*
3. *Cooperation in the local community in the promotion and protection of children's rights*
4. *Normative regulation of promotion and protection of children's rights at municipality*

Gender proportion of interviewed DSW: 6 man and 4 women. Education: 3 with bachelor's degree and 6 with Master degree. Profession: Lawyer (3 directors), Economists (3 directors) and Doctors (3 directors). With work experience ranging from 5 years there were 3 directors; 15 years of experience there were 2 directors and 20 years of experience there were 4 directors.

1. Organizational framework in the municipality of importance for child protection

There are significant differences among the interviewed directors in regard to perception of minimum preconditions that should be provided in the municipality in order to have enough capacities to be dedicated to the protection of children's rights.

In auxiliary questions DSW think that most important responsibilities of municipal departments in promoting and protecting children's rights are defined by legislation of local government and laws derived from MLSW, that define role and responsibility of municipality and CSW. They usually cite

²⁹ Content and the chronology of the Interviews were based also on the new law on child protection and specific role of the municipality as defined in article 14 of the law: <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=20844>
Also Law on Social and Family services article 6 of the law: <http://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/20200909133926Ligji%20per%20Urdherin%20e%20punonjesve%20social.pdf>

laws and that their actions conform to legislation. However, this was only in the administrative aspect of responsibility, when discussing more in-depth analysis of child protection responsibilities information received was not complete, details from implemented municipal strategies and implemented projects were missing, fragmented information on number and categories of children at risk and scattered knowledge on planning and budgetary allocation specific for child protection actions. There was no clear information on number of children reached with municipal projects in the past 3 years.

In most cases, including some larger municipalities (Prishtina, Prizren, Gjiilan), DSW consider that municipalities do not have an appropriate organizational structure and cannot always fulfil function with the existing number of professionals in their municipality. Reasons are mainly due to small number of staff, mainly with administrative tasks as defined in their job description. Limited budget for hiring more staff and implementations of projects. Nonspecialized staff in social welfare (usually law, economy and health background). As well as lack of political will to invest in social welfare (in municipal level).

DSW consider CSW as main institution that have obligation in the municipality to deal with promotion and protection of children's rights. Municipality and municipal staff in DSW consider as their tasks are mainly to support and monitoring in some cases, provision of guidelines and not involved in everyday challenges within CSW cases. DSW however consider that they are responsible for planning and implementation of larger projects such as: ensuring collective shelter programs and accommodation for families and individuals in socio-economic difficulties, identification and provision of funding to local NGOs that provide different social services purchased through municipal funded projects (if and when modest budget is available for such funding of the projects). Unfortunately, these projects are planned and implemented with very little or no coordination with CSW. Municipality is also involved in emergency situations as it was the case with Covid-19 pandemic with provision of emergency packages for most vulnerable groups (again with very little coordination with CSW).

DSW see their role mainly in coordination of social welfare actions at municipal level, seeing CSW as their main service delivery mechanism (mainly Multidisciplinary Roundtables for Support in Case Management (TMR)). In some cases, DSW are also involved with specific interventions related to education, health and law enforcement interventions and projects that are related to child protection measures at municipal level. In this regard, at municipalities different interagency coordination bodies and mechanisms have been established (in most of the cases represented by CSW), but in most municipalities they are rarely functional and in some smaller municipalities nonexistent. Lack of coordination regress in timely and comprehensive actions for child protection measures.

2. Professional competencies of employees in the municipality for the promotion and protection of children's rights

General perception of interviewed municipal directors for social welfare in assessing the existing knowledge, skills and attitudes of professionals in the municipality, for the promotion and protection of children's rights, is categorized as poor to medium level.

It is considered that there are very few municipality professionals, trained enough to promote and protect children's rights. This is the case in most of the municipalities that have one integrated directorate for health and social welfare, where usually priority is given to health component. There are limitation in number of staff specifically engaged for social welfare aspect and child protection. Also, staff is often in old age and unmotivated due to small salaries that are in general at municipal level in compare with other civil servants. Municipal staff has mainly administrative profile of job description. In some municipalities there were no clear evidence of periodic planning. Staff management use outdated methodology of organizational structures and functioning. Limited allocated budget for larger projects and purchase of services (inexistent specific budget for child protection measures). Still unclear division of tasks between MLSW, Municipality and CSW.

In order to change this situation directors of DSW, suggest for needs to take radical steps in reorganization and functionalization of the reforms to address above mentioned limitations. In particular

with increase and clearly designated social welfare budgeting (including child protection specific budgeting line). Increase number of professional staff and provide professional trainings for existing staff by MLSW and donors (complete human resources capacities and ensure qualitative and timely interventions in relation to child protection actions and needs of vulnerable groups of children).

Funding and functionalization of the Multidisciplinary Roundtables for Support in Case Management (TMR)

3. Cooperation in the local community in the promotion and protection of children's rights

Municipal directors for social welfare indicate that there is solid cooperation with all social actors in the community on the promotion and protection of children's rights mainly through Multidisciplinary Roundtables for Support in Case Management (TMR).

Again, in this context DSW see CSW as key responsible institution for child protection and organizing coordination and cooperation mechanisms among different stakeholders. There are several coordination structures organized in municipalities: Multidisciplinary Roundtables for Support in Case Management (TMR), Committee for children's rights, Working group on prevention of violence in school, working group on prevention and reintegration of children drop out from school, municipal working groups targeting people with disability, municipal 'round tables for case management' and other mechanisms differ from municipality to municipality. In most of these structures, DSW do not have a leading role. In most of the cases other institution or directorates have leading role. DSW is usually only as participant and or in many cases is represented only by CSW.

Many of these working groups have been initiated by internationally funded projects and donor agencies. Almost all established working groups in municipalities remain donor depended and functional only within the lifetime of projects. There are no sustainable funding and coordination after projects end and donors leave as there is no continuous funding allocated by the municipality and no proper takeover from municipal directorates. Education directorate into some extend is more active and established two mechanisms at local level: one '*against violence in school*' and the other one related to '*school dropout*'. These two working groups consist of multidisciplinary and multi-agency representatives including DSW and CSW (usually represented by CSW). These two working groups related to child protection in education sector are also legally mandated with administrative regulation from Ministry of Education.

Recent law on Child protection requires clearly creation of a municipal structure that will manage and coordinate actions for complex cases of children in need Multidisciplinary Roundtables for Support in Case Management (TMR). Also, among others in law is required that each municipality should hire and appoint one designated employee that will be responsible for all social welfare actions in municipality and focal point to CSW for all child related cases³⁰. In all municipalities that were visited none of the actions required by the law on child protection have not taken place and there is no clear indication of when will initiate this process.

30 Articles: 14, 15, 20, 21, 24, 31 and 35 of the Law on child protection: <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=20844>

4. Normative regulation of promotion and protection of children's rights

From the interviews with directors of DSW, there are indications that municipal structures that are involved directly in child protection are well structured but not always fully functional and do not provide comprehensive, diverse and consistent efforts to create safe environment for children in municipality.

There are satisfactory legislative incentives for structuring and provision of assistance and protection for children in need. However, implementation is often impeded with lack of staff, lack of professional approach and outdated methodologies in needs analysis, planning and service provision, as well as restricted budget allocated for social welfare.

Even though international reports on Social Work Workforce³¹ indicate trend that social work jobs will grow by 11.5% between 2014 and 2024, interviewed DSW do not share that perspective.

7. FOCUS GROUP KEY DISCUSSIONS ON CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES PROVIDED FROM CSW

Three separate focus groups were organized in different regions of Kosovo. One in Prizren, Prishtina and one with CSW representing Serb majority population municipalities (via online). In focus groups have participated: Social service officers and CSW directors with 6-8 participants per one focus group. Theme of the discussion was set on three key topics: a) Perception of child protection services provided by CSW; b) Challenges in child protection services provided by CSW and partnership coordination; and c) Recommendation for modification in child protection efforts in CSW (what needs to change and by whom). Time 60 minutes each group, held on 8 and 9 September 2020.

Participants indicated that there are over 25 different services that are provided to children by CSW³². Most of the services are well regulated and structured with clear legislative guidance and further clarification is offered with documents of minimum standards and other relevant administrative documentation. There is also clearly documented procedure for each action taken and filed in hard copy and electronically to central data base. Services are mainly counseling and referral to other service providers (public and NGOs). Also, custodian and guardianship actions are well coordinated and implemented in cooperation with family, school, police, courts and other state and civil society partners.

From legislative and administrative aspects of service provision everything seems to be in order and fully functional (procedures, filing and anamnesis of the case). However, while discussing specific cases and services and quality/outcome of actions taken than problems started to arise. Implementation of legislative and administrative requirements for child protection actions and measures are hindered by many factors. Real changes in the life of children and their families are slow and incomplete.

Although there are internationally set standards for number of social workers per number of inhabitants and number and type of cases per social worker - unfortunately, these standards were never followed and adopted for CSW in Kosovo, mainly due to lack of political will to undertake much needed reform of social welfare system provision, lack of funds and lack of professional capacities. Social workers, participants in the focus group, report of being overloaded with number of cases and that they do not have sufficient time to dedicate to cases that they are assigned to. They must deal with numerous cases and different type of cases at the same time. They are also assigned on weekly basis with rotation method as officer 'ongarde' (on call) 24/7; and have to respond at any time, even at late hours and/or during weekends (for what they are not financially compensated, neither with extra leave days). Issue of being underpaid and discriminated as state officers is mentioned in all questionnaires, interviews as well as in the focus group discussion. There will not be

31 "Profile of the SOCIAL WORK WORKFORCE: October 2017 A Report to Council on Social Work Education and National Workforce Initiative Steering Committee, From: The George Washington University Health Workforce Institute and School of Nursing. Available at link: <https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=wCttjrHq0gE%3D&portalid=0>

32 Services for: abandoned children; transit homes; foster family; adoptions; family reunification; custody; resocialization; rehabilitation with psycho-social programs; individual and family counseling etc.

discussions of these concerns in this section; however, this is an important aspect to be considered as element that hinder personal motivation, leads to professional burnout and consequently decline performance in work.

When asked on how they feel about services they provide, and if they could do a self-assessment on the level of satisfaction for the services rendered; clearly there was desire for more and different approach. As indicated above legal requirement for child protection actions are not being fulfilled to the full extend due to many factors as well as lack quality assurance and monitoring mechanisms. Social workers complain that offered services are often impeded by poor infrastructure of their offices. As well as lack of communication means and especially lack of transportation to reach clients and or partners in order to coordinate services.

Main complains of Social Service Officers for CSW offices consist on: Usually offices are shared between two or more Social service officers, with no privacy when receiving clients and talking to them delicate and sensitive matters. There are no adequate rooms for meetings and interviews with children. There are no specialized rooms for meeting children with parents that are going through divorce procedures. No small toys and/or amenities for children and in most cases no outdoor premises for alternative meeting settings. In many CSW there is also lack of waiting room and/or single chair to sit and wait. Inadequate working conditions lower the performance and quality of services to children. Many of CSW, reported during focus group discussion, but also seen when visited for interview with CSW directors, lack of access for children with disability, poor hygiene conditions and inappropriate of hydro-sanitary facilities in CSW.

Majority of the CSW and SSO have logistic challenges for transport. In some cases, transport must be required in advance from municipality (pool of drivers). Some CSW have one or in rare cases two vehicles, usually in poor condition. Only few CSW reported that transport does not represent difficulty in their work.

The logistical aspect of service provision, as well as staff shortages with no adequate professional profiles (very few Social Workers and sometimes not related to social science at all as per the law on Social and Family Services)³³, represent serious challenge and reduce chances for timely, diversified quality services and consequently inadequate child protection services. As for the preventive measures there was very little to discuss, there are very few preventive actions; CSW reacts only when cases are referred to them or self-referred, usually only at advanced stage of problem or risk for families and or child. There are no early warning and identification mechanisms in place. CSW and SSO confirm that CSW do not have any planning document for services and actions taken (except financial planning for running costs and salaries, delivered to the municipality DSW on yearly basis), there is no vision and or plan to organize staff and activities based on number of anticipated cases and type of cases. They perform on case by case bases, when new cases appear and require support in CSW. There is no indication that there is any staff planning in connection with activity planning on yearly basis or coordinated with municipal and or central level. There are no indication, in the data gathered from questionnaires and in discussion with CSW, that there is knowledge about the exact number of the category of children in need or for the different kinds of services which are anticipated for the children at risk. CSW complain that municipal directors DSW, are politically assigned, frequently changed, with no professional background on social problems/needs of the society and usually more focused on health sector (as most of the municipal directorates cover booth health and social welfare, except in municipality of Pristina, Prizren and Mitrovica). They consider having very little support from municipal authorities and even less support and understanding from central level and relevant ministries. CSW feel disrespected, neglected and abounded together with cases they deal with. In emergency cases if a mother and or child victim of abuse and neglect emerge in CSW, there are no financial means to offer a glass of water, warm tea or some basic food (in most cases SW provide in such cases from their own pocket). emergency budget is required to be available in each CSW.

³³ Law on Social And Family Services, General Provision, Article 1, i. Social Services Officer shall mean a qualified Social and Family Services professional, in the area of social work, psychology sociology, law, pedagogy or other discipline closely related to social and family services licensed and registered in the register of General Social and Family Services Council.

CSW cooperation and coordination with partners at local level are reported to be fair and professional (i.e. Schools, Police, Courts, Mental health institutions, Hospitals, Shelters, Youth centers etc.). Unfortunately, in some cases, CSW do not receive feedback information from partners they cooperate with, such as courts decisions; as they need to determine further actions for designated cases. Some of the partners do not have always adequate social-sensitive (do no harm) approach to clients and are not always aware of the role and responsibilities of CSW and social workers; that leads to minor misunderstanding and stagnation of the processes of cooperation and provision of needed assistance to children. Unclear roles and responsibilities between central and local authorities also impact to misunderstanding and regress of cooperation at local level. In this regard need for more clearer coordination is required also between central and local level. SCW representatives in the focus group discussions, recommended that some institution should hire within their permanent staff also social worker that can deal with rudimentary social welfare aspects of their clients and involve CSW only with complex cases

In addition, when municipalities determine budget and projects related to social welfare aspects, CSW requires to be included in planning and part of the selection panel for the identification and outsourcing of civil society – NGO service providers. Also, when services are purchased by central and or municipal level, should be coordinated with CSW. It is considered as crucial for ensuring quality of services and benefit of most vulnerable clients. In some cases, CSW are required to provide support and services to NGOs (number of beneficiaries, specific categories at risk, access to some families) and not the other way around.

Services provided by Civil Society and NGOs are limited and not always share relevant information and provide feedback to CSW. Services provided by licensed NGOs are well accepted but needs to be properly monitored and coordinated with state services and provide access to relevant information for case management. It was reported that parents of children with special needs, in some cases were required to pay for services rendered by at least one NGO that had public funding benefits.

Some specific categories are reported to be discriminated by the system of service provision:

Categorization of persons with disabilities is difficult and complex process that needs to be more sensitive and more flexible as some cases are discriminated by very rigid administrative procedures and categorization criteria guidelines applied by the categorization commission. In this regard is also considered discriminatory that children younger than 12 months are not eligible for assistance in disability schemes (only after they turn one year old). Also, current monetary provision is required to be increased for all families of children with chronic illness as it is considered insufficient to cover the costs for children and provide needed care.

Social assistance scheme for families only with children younger than 5 years old. Another discriminatory approach that require reflection as it has multiple effects in reach of children in need and family planning among service beneficiaries.

Poor and inadequate social assistance for children **substance abusers**. Lack of professional counseling services, lack of shelter and or day care centers, lack of material support and social programs of engagement in social enterprises, community work/support and other rehabilitation programs. Many cases are recidivists' cases.³⁴

Poor and inadequate social assistance for children victims of **sexual abuse**. Lack of professional counseling services, rehabilitation and psychological support, lack of specialized shelter (in particular if victim is a boy), lack of material support and social programs of engagement in social enterprises, community work/support and other rehabilitation programs. Some cases are recidivists' cases.

Poor and inadequate social assistance for children **engaged in hard/dangerous/hazardous work**. Lack of preventive actions like family professional counseling services, lack of material support and social programs of engagement in social enterprises, community work/support; school reintegration and other rehabilitation programs. Many cases are recidivists' cases.

Poor and inadequate social assistance for children in **street situation**. Lack of work with family, professional counseling services, lack of shelter, lack of material support and social programs of engagement in social enterprises, community work/support and other rehabilitation programs. Many cases are recidivists' cases.

Poor and inadequate social assistance for children in **conflict with law**. Lack of professional counseling services, lack of shelter, lack of material support and social programs of engagement in social enterprises, community work/support and other rehabilitation programs. Beside counseling services and referral, in CSW there are almost no other services available that can support child and family with activities that can support rehabilitation, resocialization, reintegration, and support in long run with multidisciplinary intervention and support. Many of the assisted cases are reported to be recidivists' cases.

Poor and inadequate social assistance for children victims of **domestic violence**. Lack of professional counseling services, lack of shelter (especially when boy), lack of material support and social programs of engagement in social enterprises, community work/support and other rehabilitation programs. Many cases are recidivists' cases.

"Case of 16-year-old boy that attempted to protect his mother from domestic violence situation caused by his father. We did not have where to shelter the boy after the situation deteriorated in the family. Also, mother had to return in abusive family since did not wanted to press charges and insisted to protect her abusive husband".³⁵

Abounded child with physical or mental disabilities have very little chance of being sheltered and find foster family and or adopted. There is no institutional structure to accommodate such cases. Many cases remain at hospital until solution is found.

Children of dysfunctional families that do not reach criteria for economic social assistance and or refuse to cooperate with CSW, law enforcement agencies and courts.

"Mother with 4 children, husband absent for known reason to the CSW. There were indications of her being sexually abused within family by husbands relative. There were no shelter alternatives found for her and her children, neither eligible for social assistance! Lately her children are most of the time alone as she is absent from home".³⁶

One of the most frequent challenge for SSO is finding adequate, even temporary shelter alternatives for children at risk and their family.

One SSO reports surprisingly about so called **"children in the dark"** – cases of children that never make to be identified and supported when at risk and when their rights are violated. They are usually isolated and protection system do not have knowledge for their whereabouts. *'We know, there are cases that we cannot reach'*. Some of those cases are presumed to be victims of violence in family, also cases of children involved in dangerous and hard forms of work within family or in the street. In this context it was discussed also about possibility of service provision discrimination between urban and remote rural areas, where cases do not have knowledge about available services and or do not have access to services due to remote geographical habitat and or traditional cultural mentality in their families. Information and preventive measures are very limited and general.

Large amount of services and assistance is still managed from central level (MLSW). On the other side and as required also in recent law on child protection; *All professional services are decentralized at local level, while there is no professional capacity and financed structures to deal with all the requirements. Professional profile and work experience of social work officers are not always adequate and well prepared for complex cases of children in need³⁷*. There is perquisition for better coordination between central and local level.

35 Social worker from Prizren region, participant at focus group discussion.

36 Social worker from Prishtina region, participant at focus group discussion.

37 CSW Director from Prizren region, participant at focus group discussion.

Also, cases of children of divorced parents or in the process of reconciliation, become 'hostages' of fight between couple upholding different approval and or consent of one of the parents. In such cases courts are required to take decision in best interest of child.

Multidisciplinary Roundtables for Support in Case Management (TMR) that have been functional in some municipalities for management of complex cases and where CSW had crucial role in them are barely functional in larger municipalities and gather rarely for some cases. Even though now is requirement requested by Law on Child Protection.³⁸

One CSW representative pointed to another aspect that was discussed as element of child abuse: some organizations and/or irresponsible individuals representing some charity programs and initiatives use difficult situation of children and their families for fundraising.

It was common agreement among focus group participants that children are frequently exposed in social media and other forms of public appearance that damage child's wellbeing and privacy. CSW has little power to monitor and to react in such cases. Statute and legal positioning of CSW and SSO is not well defined (usually marginalized) and frequently neglected and or misunderstood.

Suggested as priority changes in upgrading social services:

Situation of children with special needs is required to be reviewed and social assistance scheme for CSN and their family/custodian need a financial upgrade.

Professional services and rehabilitation and counseling centers for provision of long-term specialized support for children that abuse with substances is required.

More specialized services such as shelter alternatives, food distribution, counseling, family mentoring support programs and daily care centers are also required for Children in conflict with law and children in street situation.

Children victims of sexual violence require more complex and professional services especially of psychological counseling and support as well as shelter alternatives in foster families.

Legal/professional status of Social Service Officers needs to be reviewed and given adequate role as professional worker not as officer.

Financial stimulation, increase salaries for Social Service Officers, as are considered to be underpaid and underestimated as profession. This include also payment of overtime working hours.

More rigorous and consistent legal sanctions for parents and other persons that have children under their custody, and they neglect, abuse or do not provide adequate protection for children.

*"New law on child protection requires much engagement from CSW but do not provide empowerment for CSW and profession of SW"*³⁹. Even though with secondary legislation some more guidelines and clearance will be provided in overall child protection mechanisms related to the law, however aspect of legal status of CSW and Social worker as *professional occupation category* and not as an *administrative position* need to be addressed by other laws and implemented. Child protection, and CSW as most important institution in provision of child protection actions, need adequate legal status and social workers recognized as professional service providers for child protection.

³⁸ Law on Child Protection, Article 21 <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=20844>

³⁹ Social worker from Prizren region.

8. INTERVIEWS WITH FAMILIES OF CHILDREN RECEIVING SOCIAL SERVICES

In order to obtain also information on child protection mechanisms from beneficiary perspective, there were conducted interviews with three different families. In coordination with CSW and approval of directors of CSW three families were selected randomly: children of different categories of needs, different age of children, variation in location (urban and rural), as well as timespan of services rendered.

Even though three families do not consist representative sample, however, intention was to validate some of the findings from other instruments used throughout the survey analysis. All three cases were either referred or self-referred to CSW for services. This was one expected finding since CSW and SW have rather static work methodology where usually are clients that approach CSW for assistance and not the other way around. CSW as indicated have very little preventive actions and usually cases are either referred to CSW or self-referred by the clients. None of the cases did not have prior information's on CSW services and location of CSW. Another aspect and indication that CSW need more visibility and field visits to at risk communities and in particular to marginalized groups of children.

Interviewed families unanimously agree that they were well accepted from the CSW and designated Social Workers. Procedures for receiving services were clearly presented even though require in some cases many support documentations and usually are very lengthy (up to six months). Also indicated in other results that some administrative procedures for receiving services are complex and in some cases risk of keeping out some of the most overlooked cases of children in need.

In discussion with family members it was indicated that CSW has coordinated also with other institutions and service providers and referred them for receiving services and goods. Importance of coordination and cooperation of CSW with other partners in child protection efforts in referral as well as in service provision is crucial and requires advancing further with different coordination mechanisms in place.

Type of services offered by CSW differ from referral and enrollment to different monetary social assistance schemes for disability, economic empowerment, accommodation and shelter, food and non-food items as well in most cases counseling and need assessment and further referral to relevant institutions. This clearly indicates that CSW and social workers have more as a facilitating role rather than service providers. However CSW manages well this aspect of their legal role and responsibility, even though it was required from other discussions with CSW that more increase of capacities with human resources and budget allocation are needed to be able to expand, diversify and increase quality of services provided by CSW.

In two out of three cases it was interesting to know that they receive some significant number of services from Civil society NGO service providers. Not only that NGO played a role as referral mechanisms in these two cases but also provide services in close coordination with CSW. That was a very positive fact of interagency cooperation in reaching some most at risk categories and provision of coordinated services that enable CSW in reaching minimum standards of care for their beneficiaries.

Another important aspect that was mentioned is that they consider CSW and CW as their case manager that are doing maximum possible for meeting their needs and that they were very thankful for their commitment and professionalism.

Their main complain about services received is that they are short, insufficient and not consistent in meeting all their needs. Services from NGOs depend on funding and are not always available. Monetary assistance schemes are basic and barely cover some basic costs. Coordination and referral sometimes are long and not always successful.

Finally, we can conclude that despite quite some positive elements that were indicated from beneficiaries in relation to services received from CSW, we can also see that not all needs are covered and there are some significant gaps and shortages in some crucial services. This situation puts CSW in difficult situation and in some cases fail to provide adequate child protection services. Most of those children and their families remain within welfare system/assistance schemes for many years and not being able to get out of the vicious cycle of poverty and fully integrated into society.

9. CONCLUSIONS

01. From the analysis of all relevant laws related to child protection in Kosovo, we can conclude that there is in place satisfactory legislative framework for Centers for Social Work, as well as other relevant stakeholders, regulating mechanisms and services in child protection. There are ongoing processes of legislative reviews in several segments of legislation that will enable better child protection provisions.
02. Further to legislative analysis and indicated in several interviews with CSW and municipal directorates for Social Welfare, there are some gaps related to child protection in secondary legislation and by-laws that should: regulate and provide clear guidance on role and responsibility of actions between stakeholders (in particular between central and local administration, as well as within municipal level), type and frequency of social protection services, financing modalities, reporting and monitoring (quality insurance).
03. CSW as service providers raised concerns regarding Minimum Standards for care and service provision procedures developed by MLSW. They specifically argued about insufficient and unclear guidance provided in some Minimum Standard documents and other support forms for child protection measures for at risk categories of children.
04. Despite international trends on increase of social work workforce, in contrary, number of social workers in Kosovo have decreased since many vacant positions in CSW (due to retirement, death or resignation) in many CSW have not been replaced with new staff. Also there has been reported by CSW that there is lack of professional profiles of staff such as Social Workers, Psychologists and Special Pedagogue or counseling specialists to work with complex cases. There are also complains about shortage of support staff as well (administrative clerks in larger CSW, cleaning and security staff in premises). Only in few CSW it has been reported on periodic external engagement/hiring of staff and professional services for specific cases.
05. In all analysis throughout the process of the research there are no indications for initiatives like engagement of volunteers that can support to lower the burden of some administrative tasks within CSW or perform some preventive work with children in community. There is no evidence neither of initiatives nor cooperation with social enterprises (even though there are very few active in Kosovo). Also, there are very few incentives to approach, encourage and engage private sector and community workers in support to vulnerable categories and families of children at risk.
06. Outdated methodologies of organizational approach in supervision, workload sharing and case management within CSW needs improvement. New cases are shared to social workers with rotation system (in some cases regardless of specific professional profile, year of experience and workload of social worker); social workers are not specialized in one or cluster category i.e. children and youth, elderly, family and health etc. Social Workers can be engaged in different category of cases at the same time. There are no established practices of interdisciplinary professional collegiums for management of complex cases within CSW. There are no indication of internal support or debriefing sessions within CSW.
07. It was impossible to identify all trainings provided to all CSW. There was no clear, comprehensive training records and no proper training needs assessment conducted in the past or recent reports for all CSW in Kosovo. There was scattered evidence that CSW staff received specialized trainings targeting most at risk categories of children (CSW randomly named staff that has been provided with various 1-2-day trainings and or workshops, but not with specialized academic modules that can certify them with expertise in particular topic); e.g. work with children and youth, children with disability, children that abuse with substances, children from dysfunctional families etc.
08. Social needs analysis and any other planning of services like: preventive measures for categories at risk, budgetary planning, coordination, partnership and lobbying initiatives at municipal level do not take place in regular (yearly) basis, neither in CSW nor in DSW. There are no consistent and proper monitoring mechanisms in place in CSW for supporting planning and need analysis for at risk categories, also monitoring frequency and quality of service provision to children. In that context there is no specific budget planning for children in need neither at CSW nor in DSW.

09. CSW partnering with other organizations-institutions in child protection efforts are not always well coordinated and efficient (especially for preventive measures and referral) between CSW and Police, Schools, Courts, other service providers incl NGOs. There are not always clear channels of communication and information sharing.
10. In most of the CSW building infrastructure reported to be in poor condition: lack adequate space and offices, old and or nonfunctional IT and other communication equipment, old furniture and very few child friendly premises. This hinders directly in quality and timely provision of amenities for children in need for CSW services.
11. Lack of transportation and communication means in CSW: social workers transport for field visits is another serious negligence from municipalities as direct supervision and managing body to CSW. There are reports from CSW that they have difficulties in meeting legal requirement for field visits of the families in need. In particular cases of children at risk that require much frequent visits and sometimes with urgencies.
12. All financial transactions are centralized in ministries and municipal level. CSW do not possess their own bank account therefore cannot allocate funds for emergency costs in cases of children in urgent need for food, clothes and or hygienic items. CSW cannot collect even the taxes and fees paid by citizens for administrative services of provision of different documentation in relation to their family status and dependency, services offered by CSW. Also, impossible to apply for funds and projects from external donors apart from legal status as public institution.
13. In CSW there are exclusively counseling, and referral services provided. CSW has no capacities (staff and budget) for other direct services for children and adult/families in need. In case of need for e.g. shelter, food and other emergency support for clients, CSW has no capacities and no financial incentives to provide.
14. In several occasion and illustrated with concrete cases CSW indicated on very low alternatives of sheltering capacities for children in need. There is only one Shelter NGO for children at risk with very limited capacities. Very few foster families in municipalities and almost inexistent foster families for children with disabilities. Shelters for domestic violence victims admit mothers and their children (boys only until age 12). Situation is much severe for sheltering any case of boys age older than 12. There are no temporary shelter facilities for short term accommodation of children in difficult situation.
15. In several results derived from the analysis, there has been indicated that social assistance schemes for families in economic difficulties as well as financial assistance for disability and other financial assistance schemes are very low and do not cover basic needs for food and non-food items required for daily use.
16. Social schemes are mainly managed from central level MLSW. However, CSW consider that there is also quite low budgeting at local level for covering running costs of the CSW, staff and other emergency needs for clients that make services available for children in need and other categories as well.
17. In all research instruments, questionnaires and interviews there has been minimum indication of preventive actions on child protection, neither from CSW nor from other stakeholders. Preventive measures are also not possible due to workload of SSO and static approach and office-based methodology of work within CSW.
18. CSW and SSO consider themselves as being neglected and underestimated by authorities at central and mainly at municipal level for the work they do. Situation of CSW and in particular status of SSO it has been required to be reviewed and upgraded in many aspects: as position in the catalogue of professions and salary scale. Also, regulate payment of overtime and night shifts for SSO. There is confusion if these changes have to be initiated from central or municipal level. SSO syndicate is unrepresented in this regard.
19. There is little evidence that CSW has experience and strategy to communicate with local media and use them for dissemination of information for preventive measures and or information on services offered and referral mechanisms for all services and in particular for child protection.
20. Feeble monitoring and quality insurance mechanisms at central and municipal level with supportive/advice and recommendation approach to CSW. There is no evidence of much needed mechanisms that will provide on job support and supervision to CSW. Also, no evidence of self-monitoring mechanisms within CSW and quality insurance check lists. All beneficiaries suffer from such approach but children at most.

21. In most of the cases CSW did not report in questionnaires clear numbers of children under the jurisdiction of the municipality where CSW operate. Also, no indication on numbers of children at risk within their area of responsibility.
22. There is in general huge gap in availability of segregated and easily accessible data in relation to cases and assistance provided. Also, very few information's and reports about CSW employee's data at central level.
23. In most of the CSW there are no complain box and/or clear mechanisms in place to direct clients for eventual complain and procedures.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) Since the number of SSO is much lower than recommended per number of inhabitants, it is recommended to increase number of SSO in municipalities. Ensure hiring new staff with diverse professional profiles with diverse academic background as foreseen by the law- (5 academic backgrounds), as well as provide specialized accredited trainings for SSO enabling provision of services for specific categories in need within CSW in particular in child protection (alternatively hire/engage external specialized staff on need basis).
- b) Office infrastructure needs major upgrade. Build or rent more space for new offices and or rehabilitate existing offices of CSW: ensuring full accessibility for all clients (including people with paraplegic disability) and enable sufficient/adequate space for staff and clients to interact and provide/receive services. Designate and equip child friendly interview rooms and family reunion and counseling premises. This will enable more sustainable and quality services ensuring needs of each child is met, provide safe and comfortable facilities and respecting integrity and confidentiality.
- c) In cooperation with state university, Faculty of Philosophy - Department for Social Work, in coordination of MLSW and other stakeholders including donor agencies, establish comprehensive academic training program for on the job training for Social Workers. Programs should anticipate increase of the quality and variety of services; on the job training to increase existing capacities of SSO already employed in CSW; also, SSO engaged in civil society; as well as students willing to further specialize in specific topic. Modular training program with certified and accredited curricula in various specialization of work with specific categories such as: Children with special needs, children abusing with substances, children victims of sexual violence, children victims of domestic violence, abused and neglected children, children in conflict with law, children in street situation, refugee children and other specific counseling skills like: case management, interagency cooperation for coordination child protection actions, preventive measures for children at risk, Identification and referral mechanisms, legal counseling etc.
- d) Since SSO are often overloaded with work and not always professionally specialized for complex interventions, it is recommended to consider reorganization of CSW staff managing structure and case management methodology. Also, for better professional team work, establish professional cluster teams for children, family and elderly also other subcategories. Change complex case management through multidisciplinary approach and collegium of expert service providers within CSW, as well as within municipality 'Multidisciplinary Roundtables for Support in Case Management' as required with new law on Child Protection – *article 21*).
- e) Coordinated effort of MLSW and municipalities should plan increasing shelter capacities and day care centers for different categories of children in need. Larger municipalities should coordinate and enable sheltering for children from smaller neighboring municipalities (regional shelter and day care or counseling services by NGO providers should be encouraged and financially supported by different municipalities regardless where the shelter is located). This will enable CSW in expanding shelter services for children and provide adequate protection for most at risk categories of children.

- f) Provide planning model formats and trainings for 'Social Needs Analysis Survey Report' at municipal authorities and ensure strategic planning and yearly workplans – identifying and targeting at need categories and services needed. In particular identification of at-risk categories of children and resources needed for CSW in undertaking required actions and ensuring timely preventive measures for t risk categories of children.
- g) Consider increase of budgeting for children welfare in general and for children in need for social services. Implement new proposed budgeting formula for social welfare at municipalities. Provide guidance and training for budgeting based on social need analysis and services required for children. Ensure costs for CSW actions related to child protection measures are included in new budget planning.
- h) Establish and maintain functional various municipal mechanisms that will ensure more intense inter-agency cooperation of institutions and civil society organizations responsible in child protection actions. CSW should take more proactive role in coordinating child protection actions at municipal level. In most of the cases CSW should have leading role in calling for coordination meetings, municipal planning initiatives, NGO services supervision, communicate with media in different matters related to child protection actions and ensure involvement and timely actions of other relevant stakeholders. CSW is legally mandated for such actions but should be supported by Municipality with concrete actions and staff.
- i) Establish monitoring methodology and tools self-evaluation within CSW structures and municipal and or central mechanisms that will ensure quality insurance of child protection services rendered by CSW and other service providers. Supervision and support by MLSW and municipal directorate for social welfare in reaching minimum standards of care should be provided to CSW and SSO in complex cases.
- j) Build capacities of CSW to communicate properly and timely with media and other public appearances ensuring that community understand and act in favor of early identification and referral of threats to children 's wellbeing, promote preventive measures in the community, act in protective manner for safe representation of children and their families.
- k) Establish clear and easily accessible complain mechanisms for clients and other representatives of children and or individual/independent, in order to submit their complains and suggestions.
- l) Reinforce existing and establish new mechanisms for comprehensive and segregated data gathering. Also, ensure use of data for different strategies and workplan of actions, as well as budgetary allocation and human resources needed.

11. ANNEXES

LIST OF INTERVIEWED -CSW DIRECTORS

Nr.	CSW	Name	Role
1	DEÇAN	Islam Mustafaj	Director
2	KLINË	Ilir Bacaj	Director
3	ISTOG	Haki Ibrahimaj	Director
4	GJAKOVË	Dervish Tahiri	Director
5	RAHOVEC	Bilbil Oruçi	Director
6	PRIZREN	Kumrije Bytyqi	Acting Director
7	DRAGASH	Ibrahim Gashi	Director
8	SUHAREKË	Sami Rrakaqi	Director
9	PRISHTINË/QENDRA	Blerim Shabani	Acting Director
10	DRENASI	Ilmi Dobra	Director
11	FUSHË KOSOVA	Abaz Xhigoli	Director
12	OBILIÇI	Haki Mjeku	Director
13	PODUJEVA	Naim Potoku	Acting Director
14	FERIZAJ	Ruzhdi Latifi	Acting Director
15	LIPJAN	Makfirete Shamolli	Director
16	KAÇANIK	Xhelal Gashi	Director
17	HANI I ELEZIT	Amir Bushi	Director
18	SHTIME	Hasan Avdyli	Director
19	SHTERPCË	Jovica Markovic	Director
20	GJILANI	Mursel Zymeri	Director
21	KAMENICA	Rifat Hajdari	Director
22	VITI	Demush Mehmeti	Director
23	RANILLUG	Zoran Ristic	Director
24	MITROVICA J	Gani Mustafa	Director
25	MITROVICA V	Dejan Djinović	Director
26	VUSHTRI	Naime Krasniqi	Director
27	SKËNDERAJ	Halim Gecaj	Director
28	LEPOSAVIÇ	Goran Milicevic	Director
29	ZUBIN POTOK	Tatjana Kompirovic	Director
30	GRAÇANICË	Dragan Načić	Coordinator
31	MAMUSHË	Esat Morina	Coordinator
32	JUNIK	Behar Fetaj	Officer
33	Kodra e trimave PR	Valbona Makiqi	Director of Social Services
34	B.Diellit PR	Naim Gashi	Director of Social Services

Instrument 1.

SOS Children's Villages Kosovo

Analysis of needs and capacities of centers for social work in the field of promotion and protection of children's rights

Structured questionnaire for CSW directors

1. Personal data of the respondent/director (or another manager) from the center for social work

1.1. Gender _____

1.2. Education _____

1.3. Occupation _____

1.4. Working position in the CSW _____

2. Social and geographical characteristics of the local self-government (municipality) covered by the CSW

2.1. Municipality (name and region):
.....

2.2. Number of inhabitants under the jurisdiction of the center for social work
.....

2.3. Number of children under the jurisdiction of the center for social work
.....

2.4. Number of employed professional workers in CSW in relation to the number of inhabitants in municipality

2.5. The average age of the population of the municipality, among with:

a) children 0 to 18 years

b) adults up to 65 years

c) elderly over 65

2.6. Economic characteristics (*mark one of the answers*)

- a) mainly refrains from agriculture
- b) mainly employed in manufacturing activities
- c) mainly employed in services
- d) the largest part of the working age population is unemployed
- e) something else, what

2.7. Number of rural settlements within the municipality

.....

2.8. Geographical characteristics of the municipality:

- a) predominantly hilly
- b) predominantly flat
- c) mixed

2.9. Number of institutions and organizations dealing with children in the municipality:
(specify number) among which:

- a) schools and preschool and other educational institutions
- b) health care institutions
- c) judicial institutions
- d) social care institutions among which:
 - a) institutions for children without parental care
 - b) institutions for children with disabilities.....
 - c) institutions for children with behavioral problems
 - d) foster care families.....
 - e) day care centers for children with disabilities
- e) non-governmental organizations working with and for children and collaborates with the CSW
- f) Red Cross organization
- g) something else, what

2.10. Overview of social services for children for which there is a need and which exist in the municipality:

No.	Type of service	A Not exist and there is no need	B Not exist but there is a need for	C There is a service, but it is not enough	D There is a service and it is enough
1.	Advisory services for children with behavioral problems and their parents				
2.	Home care				
3.	Day care center				

4.	Supported housing for children with disabilities or for children without parental care (e.g. small dormitory communities)				
5.	Educative services				
6.	Something else, what				

3. Infrastructure, technical and logistical equipment of CSW

- 3.1. The building in which CSW operates is: *(mark one of the offered answers)*
- owned by CSW
 - obtained from municipality
 - rented, with a monthly rental installment in the amount of Euro / month
 - a facility with a temporary purpose
 - something else, what
- 3.2. The building in which CSW operates is settled in: *(mark one of the offered answers)*
- the center of the municipality
 - in the wider center of the municipality
 - away from the center of the municipality
- 3.3. The building in which CSW operates is: *(mark one of the offered answers)*
- fully technically equipped (excellent electrical and plumbing installations, cable, internet, computer and video equipment)
 - partially technically equipped - missing / to be repaired
 - unconditional, because
- 3.4. To carry out the fieldwork CSW has vehicles: *(mark one of the offered answers)*
- in its ownership
 - rents vehicles to go to the field
 - has no vehicle
 - something else, what
- 3.5. To work with children and families, SSW has: *(mark all relevant for your CSW)*
- CSW is fully accessible for children and adults with disabilities
 - CSW is partly accessible for children and adults with disabilities (aids such as an entry ramp are provided)
 - special rooms for psychological sessions with children
 - special rooms for psychological sessions with couples/family therapy
 - space/room for activities with children
 - enough space for professional trainings for staff
 - something else, what.....

4. Structure of CSW employees according to education, gender and age

4.1. Structure of CSW employees regarding their age and professional position in CSW

4.1. Structure of CSW employees according to their age and working position in CSW									
Age	Working position in CSW								Total
	Managing staff		Social Services Officials		Administration		Technical staff		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Up to 29 years									
30 – 39									
40 – 49									
50 – 59									
60 - 64									
65+									
TOTAL									

4.2. How many Social Services Officials CSW has regarding their academic background?

- a. Social Worker
- b. Psychologist
- c. Pedagogue
- d. Defectologist
- e. Sociologist
- f. Lawyer

5. The total number and type of cases considered and services provided by CSW annually

5.1. Number of cases considered in 2019, among which:

a) Number of cases related to children, among which:

- a. Number of cases related to children with disabilities
- b. Number of cases related to children with behavioral problems

b) Number of cases related to social assistance- beneficiaries of the social schemes

c) Number of cases related to elderly people

d) Number of custody cases

5.2. Material (financial) benefits provided

5.2.1. Permanent financial aid

5.2.2. Occasional cash benefits

5.2.3. Assistance in kind (soup kitchen, assistance for the purchase of firewood, assistance for electricity and water, etc.)

5.3. Social care services provided

5.3.1. Day care services

5.3.2. Institutional care services

5.3.3. Foster care

5.3.4. Adoption

5.3.5.

6. Professional capacities and professional development of employees in CSW

- 6.1. Number of Social service Official professionals and associates working with children and youth
- 6.2. How many times per month the Social services Official visits a family?
- 6.3. Number of trainings for Social service Official who work with children and youth during the last three years
- 6.4. The training of Social service Official which is in its content was mainly child care (the most important state in the past 3 years)
 - 6.4.1. Program (training title)
 - 6.4.2.
 - 6.4.3. Realizators
 - 6.4.4. Duration of the training
 - 6.4.5. Number of educated staff in CSW
- 6.5. The need for other forms of professional development in the field of child rights:
 - 6.5.1. supervision
 - 6.5.2. mentoring
 - 6.5.3. technical support
 - 6.5.4. analyzing/measuring the needs for the specific trainings (type of trainings needed)
 - 6.5.5. other

7. Cooperation of CSW with other actors in the community in the promotion and protection of children's rights

7.1. Is there a cooperation with institutions and organizations dealing with children in the municipality and in what aspect/manner you cooperate with these institutions?
(mark all relevant for your CSW and stated institution)

7.1. Cooperation with institutions and organizations dealing with children and aspect/manner of cooperations			Type (aspect/manner) of cooperation					
Institution/organization Policy development, including campaign raising			Need assessment, planning and realization of the activities for specific child or groups	Professional development, including trainings for the staff	Legal framework development and change	Humanitarian activities in the community, including humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable	Finances, including financial aid to beneficiaries	
1.	Local self-government							
2.	Competent ministry							
3.	Educational institutions							
4.	Health care institutions							
5.	Judiciary (competent courts)							
6.	Social care institutions							
	6.1.	institutions for children without parental care						
	6.2.	institutions for children with disabilities						
	6.3.	institutions for children with behavioral problems						
	6.4.	foster care families.						
	6.5.	day care centers for children with disabilities						
	6.6.	other CSW						
7.	Prosecution							

8.	NGO working with and for children						
9.	Red Cross						
10.	Media						
11.	Other						

7.2. If there is a cooperation with different social actors (institutions and organizations dealing with children), how you can rank the quality of this cooperation? (mark in relevant column for stated institution)

7.2. Cooperation with institutions/organizations and level of satisfaction with the quality of this cooperation							
Social actor (institution/organization) a) fully succesful b) mostly succesful		Level of satisfaction with cooperation					
		c) dont know	d) mostly unsuccessful	e) fully un-succesful			
1.	Local self-government						
2.	Competent ministry						
3.	Educational institutions						
4.	Health care institutions						
5.	Judiciary (competent courts)						
6.	Social care institutions						
6.1.	institutions for children without parental care						
6.2.	institutions for children with disabilities						
6.3.	institutions for children with behavioral problems						
6.4.	foster care families.						
6.5.	day care centers for children with disabilities						
6.6.	other CSW						
7.	Prosecution						
8.	NGO working with and for children						
9.	Red Cross						
10.	Media						
11.	Other						

5. Needs for further improvement of CSW in the protection of children's rights (circle all answers with which you agree)

5.1. In regards to the Article 15 of Law of child protection, did you appointed specific Official responsible for the child protection? (circle answer relevant to your CSW)

- a) Yes
- b) Not yet, but it's planned
- c) No

- 5.2. If the answer is „No“, what you consider as the main reason for not appointing official responsible for child protection? *(circle one answer you consider as the most prominent)*
- a) did not have time yet to work on it
 - b) do not have enough employees
 - b) do not have properly educated employee in CSW for this position
 - c) need to wait for the Board to decide about it
 - d) something else, what
- 5.3. What do you think need to be done for further improvement of CSW in the protection of child rights? *(circle all answers with which you agree)*
- a) increase the number of employees in CSW for work with children and youth
 - b) provide a larger number of trainings for employees in the field of child protection
 - c) improve the legislation governing child protection
 - d) promote cooperation among all social actors for the benefit of children
 - e) develop campaigns that focus on children and their rights
 - f) improve cooperation with the media
 - g) something else

Thank you

SOS Children's Villages Kosovo

Analysis of needs and capacities of centers for social work in the field of promotion and protection of children's rights

A GUIDE

for a semi-structured interview with professionals in centers for social work (CSW)

on the promotion and protection of children's rights

Semi-structured interview, which aims to deepen knowledge about the current ways of promoting and protecting the rights of children in centers for social work and to collect suggestions for better understanding and full respect for children's rights and for adequate protection of the children who are users of different kind of services the which center for social work is responsible for.

INTRODUCTION: achieving informed consent of respondents. Give the respondent a form to inform and sign the consent, or record his / her consent.

I. Personal data of the respondent / professional from the center for social work

1. Occupation and education

1.1. Gender _____

1.2. Education _____

1.3. Occupation _____

1.4. Working position in the CSW _____

2. Professional experience of importance for understanding the ways of organizing the promotion and protection of children's rights in general and the Center for Social Work

- a) up to 5 years
- b) 6 – 10 years
- c) 11 – 15 years
- d) 16 – 20 years
- e) more than 20 years

Date, time and place of interview _____

Interviewer _____

II. Current ways of promoting and protecting children's rights in the center for social work

1. Organizational framework in the center for social work of importance for child protection

What do you see as a minimum precondition that should be provided in the center for social work in order to have enough capacities to be dedicated to the protection of children's rights?

- *Auxiliary questions*
- What is your opinion related to the obligations imposed on the Center for Social Work by the Law on Local Self-Government, the Law on Social and Family Services and the Law for Child protection?
- Can the center for social work function with the existing number of skilled workers and with the existing social problems in your municipality? If yes, in what way? If not, what do you think would need to be improved?
- In regards to the legal framework, what do you think about requests stated there - are these requirements and rules being implemented properly?
- Does CSW has a specific strategy for child protection, relevant documents and other needed preconditions for protecting child rights and providing child protection?
- If the center does not have a sufficient number of skilled workers, who recognizes the need to promote and protect children's rights? Whose obligation is it in the center for social work to deal with these issues?
- Who is responsible for the promotion and protection of children's rights in your center, and who in the municipality? What should be the role of the center, what are the other actors in the local community, what is the role of the family, what is the role of the school, what is the role of the media? Should anyone else participate and how? Whether you and/or your employees had any study visit in another country in order to see the best practices regarding the child protection? What do you think about the opportunity to learn on the others' experiences and good practices? Could those experiences and practices be applicable in your community?

2. Professional competencies of employees in the CSW for the protection of children's right

How do you assess the existing knowledge, skills and attitudes of professionals in the center for social work for the promotion and protection of children's rights?

- *Auxiliary questions*
- How do you consider the role of CSW on child protection policies and measures, according to the Law on Child Protection?
- Are the CSW professionals, by your opinion, trained enough to promote and protect children's rights?
- If you estimate that there is a need to improve their competencies in the field of children's rights, what do you think would be best to organize?
- Whether you and your colleagues had specific trainings for child protection? If yes, was it in the country or abroad?
- Are there enough professional trainings for child protection? If no, what do you think who should organize professional education, trainings, seminars ...?
- Do you think there is sufficient understanding of the importance of children's rights among professional workers, and what are the attitudes of skilled workers on the rights of children and their respect?

Is there a need to work on changing the attitudes of the employees in the centers for social work on the topic of protection of children's rights and in what way it would be good to organize these activities?

3. Cooperation in the local community in the promotion and protection of children's rights

Does the center for social work cooperate with other social actors in the community in terms of promotion and protection of children's rights and in what way?

- *Auxiliary questions*
- *Who, by your opinion, is especially responsible in the municipality for the protection of children's rights?*
- *How does the Center for Social Work cooperate with other social actors in the community in the protection of children's rights (with the judiciary, with educational institutions, with health care institutions, with the police ...) and how do you assess this cooperation?*
- *With whom is it necessary to establish good cooperation on the promotion and protection of children's rights?
What else needs to be done for children's rights to be recognized as important and to pay more attention to the protection of children's rights?*

4. Normative regulation of promotion and protection of children's rights

What, by your opinion, is well regulated, and what is missing / not well regulated in the existing way of promoting and protecting children's rights?

- *Auxiliary questions*
- *What are the main problems / obstacles in the social welfare system for promoting and protecting children's rights?*
- *And what in other systems (education, judiciary, health, media ...)?*

What do you think would contribute to overcoming these problems?

III. Closing remarks

Is there anything you would like to underline? Did we miss to ask you anything you consider as a very important for children's rights promotion and protection? Do you have some question for us?

For concluding impression, let us imagine: if we will have the opportunity to ask families, users and different community members about the work of your center for social work in terms of promotion and protection of children's rights, what do you think they would praise and what they would resent? And what are you especially proud of, what are you especially happy with in relation with children's rights in your community?

Express gratitude for participation in the interview, take contact and offer further information if the respondent expresses interest in the further course and results of the research.

Instrument 3

SOS Children's Villages Kosovo

Analysis of needs and capacities of centers for social work in the field of promotion and protection of children's rights

Guidelines for a semi-structured interview with professionals in centers for social work (CSW)

on the promotion and protection of children's rights

Semi-structured interview, which aims to deepen knowledge about the current ways of promoting and protecting the rights of children in the municipality and to collect suggestions for better understanding and full respect for children's rights by all social actors in the municipality

INTRODUCTION: achieving informed consent of respondents. Give the respondent a form to inform and sign the consent, or record his / her consent.

1 Personal data of the respondent / professional from the municipality

1. Occupation and education

1.1. Gender _____

1.2. Education _____

1.3. Occupation _____

1.4. Working position in the municipality _____

2. Professional experience of importance for understanding the ways of organizing the promotion and protection of children's rights

- a) up to 5 years
- b) 6 – 10 years
- c) 11 – 15 years
- d) 16 – 20 years
- e) more than 20 years

Date, time and place of interview _____

Interviewer _____

II. Current ways of promoting and protecting children's rights in the municipality

1. Organizational framework in the municipality of importance for child protection

What do you see as a minimum precondition that should be provided in the municipality in order to have enough capacities to be dedicated to the protection of children's rights?

- *Auxiliary questions*
- What do you think are the most important responsibilities of municipal departments in promoting and protecting children's rights?
- Does the municipality have an appropriate organizational structure and can it function with the existing number of professionals in your municipality? If so, in what way? If not, what do you think would need to be improved?
- Whose obligation in the municipality is to deal with promotion and protection of children's rights?
- In regards to Article 14 in the Law of Child Protection, whether the municipality has started to undertake necessary steps on: identifying the needs on the field of child protection; preparation of the annual plan including funds for the development, sustainability and maintenance of child protection services?
How should the responsibility for the promotion and protection of children's rights be shared at the municipal level? What should be the role of the center for social work, what is the role of the families and all citizens, what is the role of the school, what is the role of the media? Should anyone else participate and how?

2. Professional competencies of employees in the municipality for the promotion and protection of children's rights

How do you assess the existing knowledge, skills and attitudes of professionals in the municipality for the promotion and protection of children's rights?

- *Auxiliary questions*
- Are the municipality professionals, by your opinion, trained enough to promote and protect children's rights?
- If you estimate that there is a need to improve their competencies in the field of children's rights, what do you think would be the best to organize?
- Who should organize professional education, trainings, seminars ...?
- Do you think there is sufficient understanding of the importance of children's rights among professional workers, and what are the attitudes of skilled workers on the rights of children and their respect?

Is there a need to work on changing the attitudes of the employees in the municipality on the topic of protection of children's rights and in what way it would be good to organize these activities?

3. Cooperation in the local community in the promotion and protection of children's rights

Whether and how the municipality cooperates with all social actors in the community on the promotion and protection of children's rights?

- *Auxiliary questions*
- *Who, by your opinion, is especially responsible in the municipality for the protection of children's rights?*
- *Does the municipality have any strategy/ plan for the child protection?*
- *How does the municipality cooperate with other social actors in the community in the protection of children's rights (with the judiciary, with educational institutions, with health care institutions, with the police ...) and how do you assess this cooperation?*
- *With whom is it necessary to establish good cooperation on the promotion and protection of children's rights?*
- *Did you and your colleagues in the municipality had any specific training in child protection field? If yes, from who? If not, have you ever requested for a training in a specific field?*

What else needs to be done for children's rights to be recognized as important in order to pay more attention to the protection of children's rights?

4. Normative regulation of promotion and protection of children's rights

What, by your opinion, is well regulated, and what is missing / not well regulated in the existing way of promoting and protecting children's rights?

- *Auxiliary questions*
- *What are the main problems / obstacles in the municipality in promoting and protecting children's rights?*
- *And what are the problems in different systems (education, judiciary, health, media ...?)*

What do you think would contribute to overcoming these problems?

III. Closing remarks

Is there anything you would like to underline? Did we miss to ask you anything you consider as a very important for children's rights promotion and protection? Do you have some question for us?

If we had the opportunity to ask citizens or some representatives of organizations and institutions about the activities of your municipality in terms of protection of children's rights, what do you think they would praise and what they would resent? And what are you especially proud of, what are you especially happy with in relation with children's rights in your community?

Express gratitude for participation in the interview, take contact and offer further information if the respondent expresses interest in the further course and results of the research

SOS Children's Villages Kosovo

Analysis of needs and capacities of centres for social work in the field of promotion and protection of children's rights

Informed Consent Form to Participate in the Research

Purpose of the project: The project "Advancing capacities for child rights"- is an EU funded project managed by European Union Office in Kosovo. Implemented by SOS Children's Villages Kosovo in partnership with Handikos. The purpose of the project is to conducting a needs analysis of capacities of Centres of Social Work in the field of child's rights promotion and protection and to draw conclusions, make recommendations, and state lessons learned for future strategy and improvements in child protection field.

Researcher: My name isand I am
 [insert two sentences for each researcher]

For any questions or concerns you can contact me and/or a member of my team at: SOS Children's Villages Kosovo.

Benefits of being a part of this project: What we will learn in this project from you and your peers will be used for mapping existing capacities for all social actors, but mostly for centers for social work in child protection field, for better understanding present position and for creating recommendations for future improvement of the child protection in Kosovo.

Procedure: Participation will include engaging in interview activities over one day.

All foreseeable risks and discomforts: Some questions may cause some discomfort if you by chance reflect upon an unpleasant memory. If you feel uncomfortable at any point in time you may choose not to answer a research question, and/or discontinue your participation temporarily or permanently. You can also choose to request that all your previous answers are not used in the project. If you are triggered and/or want, follow up support we will provide contact information for support services and follow up with you to find support.

Confidentiality: Your confidentiality will be maintained and your name will not be referred to in this research project if you do not want it to be. If you have any concerns after your participation, you can request to review the notes from our discussions. Your participation is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. If you share anything that puts yourself or others at harm, we will need to work together to follow up to find supports and report the situation.

Length of time involved: You are asked to contribute 0.5 day for the activities.

Recording and Transcription: Our discussion will be recorded and written out.

Agreement: Please sign this form for your consent.

.

Name of Participant *(please print)*

Signature of Participant

Date

Governmental bodies that work in exercising of children's rights⁴⁰

By "Governmental body" is meant the mechanism established by the Government to review or place the issues, which Government places under the competence of Governmental bodies. The Government also determines the composition and mandate of a Governmental body by decision to establish that body. In the aspect of establishment of Governmental Bodies, and which mainly have a mandate to work in exercising completely the children's rights, some very significant advancements have taken place, by making in this way possible the establishment of several such mechanisms, such as: (a) Inter-ministerial Committee for Children's Rights, (b) Committee for Prevention and Elimination of Hard and Dangerous Works of Children, (c) National Council for Persons for Disabled People, (d) Council for Protection and Justice for Children, (e) Kosovan Committee for Health of Mother and Child, (f) National Coordinator Against Trafficking with Human Beings, (g) Local Committees of Action for Monitoring of Child Labor, (h) Governmental Working Groups In institutions of Kosovo.

A. Inter-ministerial Committee for Children's Rights

In the light and with the purpose to protect and incite the children's rights in Kosovo, as well as to put the child in the focus of efforts of the Government, the Government of Kosovo in the meeting held on 03.12.2008 made the Decision no. 07/46 to establish Inter-ministerial Committee for Children's Rights. This committee is also the highest governmental body within the Government of Kosovo in relation to exercising of children's rights in Kosovo. Inter-ministerial Committee for Children's Rights is chaired by the Prime Minister of the Kosovo and in its composition is represented at the level of Ministers, from the most relevant ministries. Also, the Head of UNICEF Office in Kosovo and representatives of civil society are integral part of Committee. The Office of Prime Minister / The Office for Good Governance serves as Secretariat of Committee. Whilst, the Committee is foreseen to meet twice a year. Responsibilities of Inter-ministerial Committee for Children's Rights are: to analyze and keeps informed members of existing activities, regulations, laws, programs of ministries and other bodies in relation to the issue of children's rights in Kosovo; to share the data, reports and other relevant documents in the field of children's rights in Kosovo; maintains contacts and cooperates closely with organizations that represent children and with other relevant factors in the field of children's rights in Kosovo; analyzes regularly the issues that have to do with development of children and their rights; drafts annual report on situation of children's rights in Kosovo; defines priorities and necessary measures that need to be undertaken to improve the current situation in relation to children's rights in each Ministry; facilitates and monitors implementation of policies, programs and other approved measures that have to do with children's rights; establishes necessary working groups for the issue of children's rights; helps on development and implementation of public information campaigns and other efforts and promotional projects to increase the awareness on standards of children's rights. Also are responsible for communication and sharing of information within the ministries and to be provided that advices, recommendations and other measures stemming from Inter-ministerial Committee, have come to Ministry or respective office.

B. Committee for Prevention and Elimination of Hard and Dangerous Works of Children

To establish policies and program priorities for protection of children from dangerous forms of work, to monitor situation of children's labor in the country, as well as to coordinate all necessary agreements, the Government of Kosovo on 12 September 2005 by Decision no.5/166 has established Committee of Kosovo on Prevention and Elimination Child Labor. Whilst, by Decision 04/37, dated 15.09.2011 the Government of Kosovo determines, the scope, composition and functioning of the Committee. This Governmental Body is run by the Minister of MLSW and in its composition has representatives of the most relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions, which are represented at the level of Directors or Heads of Divisions. Whilst, the Labor Unit within ISP in MLSW, plays the role of Committee Secretariat. This decision-making body is foreseen to meet at least four times a year. Main functions of the Committee are: to give instructions on policies and programs that

⁴⁰ Summary of Laws that Protect Children's Rights in Kosovo. Author: Qëndresa Ibra-Zariqi January 2012 http://tdh-europe.org/upload/document/5123/1411_Summary_Of_Laws_That_Protect_Children_original.pdf

aim elimination of child labor and to determine the fields with highest priority for direct programs which aim the immediate withdrawal of children involved in the most dangerous forms of labor and prevention of involvement of children at risk; to monitor situation of child labor in the country and coordinates action against it; to make proposals to modify and complete the legislation on elimination of dangerous forms of child labor; to ask for necessary support from international institutions in Kosovo, particularly from International Program of ILO on Elimination of Child Labor and to provide integration of successful intervention in governmental engagements for combating of child labor; to support the Government of Kosovo and other institutions in charge for fulfilling the objectives and targets determined by standards and conventions of EU and ILO in the field of child labor.

C. National Council for Persons for Disabled People

In order to represent interests of disabled people and providing their space to be active part in the process of drafting the policies that impact on improvement and increasing of life quality of disabled people, the Government of Kosovo in the meeting held on 07.09.20011 issued a Decision nr. 04/36 for establishment of Council for Disabled People. This Governmental Body is run by Deputy Prime Minister of Kosovo and in its composition has Deputy Ministers of five most relevant ministries. An important role in Council composition have also eight representatives of civil society, who in active way work on exercising completely of disabled people rights. Whilst OGG/PMO serves as Secretariat of Council. This governmental body has a mandate to work on providing equal opportunities, full participation and social integration of disabled people. To assure that needs and interests of disabled people are taken always into consideration when the Government issues decisions on something that impacts situation of disabled people. Recommendations of National Council on Disability will be in compliance with Standard Rules of United Nations on Equalization of Opportunities for Disabled People and other international instruments on human rights.

D. Council for Protection and Justice for Children

The Government of Kosovo, in order to define priorities and necessary measures that should be undertaken for improvement of current situation in relation 60 Protect children on the move to Protection and Justice of Children, on 25 August 2011 made the Decision (no.09/34) to establish "Council for Protection and Justice of Children". The Council in compliance with the Decision on establishment is composed of · Chairman, two Vice Chairmen, eighteen (18) members; In the capacity of members Foreign Consultants are two members that come from UNICEF Office in Kosovo , while in the capacity of members as Observers are four members that represent independent institutions of Kosovo, as it is Ombudsperson and NGOs as coalition of NGOs for protection of Children and Terres des Homes. OGG/PMO serves as Council Secretariat, to coordinate, monitor, develop and maintain the necessary activities for the work of Council. Mandate and responsibilities of Council are as follows: Definition of priorities and necessary measures that should be undertaken to improve current situation in relation to protection and justice of children; Facilitation and monitoring of implementation of policies, programs and other measures approved that have to do with protection and justice of children at central and local level; Analyzing and Evaluation of implementation of developing policies and legislation that have to do with improvement of situation of protection and justice for children.

E. Kosovan Committee for Health of Mother and Child

Based on high indicators of mortality for mothers and children, as well as starting from many dissatisfactions in the field of health of mothers and children in Kosovo, the Minister of Health on 15.05.2003 issues Decision on establishment of Kosovan Committee for the Heal of Mother and Child. This governmental multidisciplinary body is composed of experts of relevant fields in the field of health. Also,

in its composition has representatives of WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA. The coordination of efforts and relevant, professional, and scientific resources in order to improve and decrease the mortality at that category of that population, as well as increase of health quality towards children and mothers.

F. National Coordinator Against Trafficking with Human Beings

Working Group Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs by Decision of Prime Minister (no 029) dated 10.04.2008 was appointed National Coordinator Against Trafficking with Human Beings. The mandate of Coordinator is to coordinate, monitor and report on implementation of policies against trafficking with human beings, as well as chair meetings with inter-ministerial working groups. Whilst, Working Group, is composed of representatives of most relevant institutions and mainly have mandate to coordinate implantation of policies, monitor and report on the achievements, in institutions that represent.

G. Local Committees of Action for Monitoring of Child Labor

In all municipalities of Kosovo are established Local Committee of Action. Committees are composed of senior officials of local authorities, representatives of Kosovo independent trade unions as well as local NGO representatives that work for protection of children. This institutional body is run by Director of Directorate for Health and Social Welfare in respective municipalities. The mandate of Committees is to implement directly policies and program priorities for 61 Protect children on the move protection of children from dangerous labor forms, to monitor situation of child labor, as well as to offer recommendations for improvement of policies that have to do with Elimination of Child Labor.

H. Governmental Working Groups In institutions of Kosovo

At central and local level are established other different "Working Groups" which deal with facilitation of exercising of children's rights, such as: Working Group on Monitoring the Implementation of the Strategy and National Plan of Action for Children's Rights; Working Group on drafting of State Report on Implementation of Convention for Children's Rights in Kosovo and fulfilling of obligations, which are addressed from the Committee for Children's Rights in UN; Working Group on treatment of School Dropout from Students; Working Group on reviewing the list on Dangerous Forms of Child Labor; Advisory Group on pre-school education; Working group on prevention of violence in pre-university education; Multidisciplinary Roundtables for Support in Case Management.

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