



Keeping up the good practice: Continuing and enhancing the role of the NGO sector in implementation of the social inclusion strategy

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Summary

Bosnia and Herzegovina is faced with an increasing problem of social exclusion and poverty that affects almost a half of the BiH population. With the aim of tackling this problem the Social Inclusion Strategy has been created. Due to its inclusive character, the creation and implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy requires a participatory approach and engagement of the wide range of relevant actors. One of the main actors in this process is the NGO sector, which possesses vast experience in working with socially-excluded and marginalized categories. The representatives of the NGO sector were indeed involved in the preparatory phase of the Social Inclusion Strategy, but there is a concern that their role might be reduced in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases, which could seriously affect the overall results of the Strategy. The role of the NGO sector in the Social Inclusion Strategy of BiH needs to be continued and even enhanced in the next phases of the implementation, which is the exact focus of this policy study. The policy study will first explain the phenomenon of social exclusion, which is relatively new, both in the context of the European Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It will provide an overview of the official recognition of the social exclusion phenomenon, the extent of social exclusion, and measures that have been taken to tackle this problem in the EU and Bosnia and

Herzegovina. A special emphasis will, understandably, be placed on the Social Inclusion Strategy of BiH, and the need for clearer definition of the role that the civil society i.e. the NGO sector will have in its implementation. The policy study will furthermore provide a detailed analysis of the capacities, size and structure of the NGO sector in BiH, and explain why it is this sector that needs to be the state's key partner through all the phases of the implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy. It will also analyze the roles that other sectors can assume in the implementation of the Strategy and the overall social services provision, either as the state's partners or as exclusive providers. It will propose a mixed model of social services provision, based on the close cooperation and partnership between the state and NGO sector, as the most suitable and comprehensive for the implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy and overall social services provision. The policy study will provide a set of recommendations that should be taken into consideration and based on which possible modifications of the Social Inclusion Strategy could be made. The recommendations aim to ensure that the Strategy produces effective, long-term and viable results and that it is implemented in the most proper and comprehensive way, and to the mutual satisfaction of the parties involved, and most importantly, the final beneficiaries.

1. Introduction

Although there have been many advancements in the development and recovery of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially in the last decade, numerous issues remain to be solved. The challenges ahead primarily include the establishment of democracy, rule of law and a properly functioning state apparatus, as well as laying down the foundations for an economic boost and prosperity. Poverty and social exclusion are among the most pressing issues that affect a vast majority of BiH citizens. Numerous measures have been taken in order to tackle these problems, but they have not produced substantial and long-term results. According to the latest data in Bosnia and Herzegovina, about half of the population is socially excluded on various grounds, while one fifth of the population is in the state of extreme social exclusion.¹ As a response to this alarming state, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina created a Social Inclusion Strategy², which is supposed to address the problem of social exclusion and poverty, and implement measures that would change the current situation of the marginalized and vulnerable categories in BiH society. The state of the most vulnerable groups of the BiH society has reached the extent where immediate, comprehensive and long-term action cannot be delayed any longer. Therefore, measures envisioned within the Social Inclusion Strategy need to respond to this highly demanding task, which will require the usage of all the disposable means, as well as coordinated and properly directed action of all the relevant actors. The relevant actors that have, alongside the state institutions, traditionally managed this field, primarily include the NGO sector, as the state's key partner, which has long-standing and vast experience in the work with socially marginalized categories. While the NGO sector did take part in the preparatory activities of the Strategy, there is a concern that its role might be of a formal or consultative nature in the phases of implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This concern is supported by the examples of previous strategies, such as Mid-term Development Strategy of BiH 2004-2007, in whose implementation NGO representatives took only a formal participation, and which was one of the reasons that this strategy did not give many substantial results. Needless to say, the same mistake cannot be repeated twice, and the Social Inclusion Strategy needs to be implemented with the utmost efficiency and accountability, meeting the stated goals. In order to achieve this, the role and participation of the NGO sector needs to be continued and even enhanced in the implementation process. The NGO sector is the state's key complementary partner in the process of combating marginalization and social exclusion that affects half of the BiH population, even though many of them are not even aware of the existence of this phenomenon, its meaning and consequences.

2. Definition of Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is a relatively new notion, even in the context of the European Union, and there are not many definitions of social exclusion. Generally speaking, being excluded means being left out of the main stream, and being deprived of the social, economic and political rights that others have.³ A broader definition of social exclusion explains this phenomenon in the following words: "Social exclusion is a process which pushes certain individuals and groups at the margin of society, preventing them from participating in society on the grounds of their ethnic

¹ United Nations Development Program. (2007). National Human Development Report (pp. 11). Sarajevo: Fetahagić, M., Hrbač, B., Memić, B., Ninković, R., Pašalić-Kreso, A., Somun-Krupalija, L., and Živanović, M.

² Council of Ministers and Directorate for Economic Planning (2009). Social Inclusion Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina (draft document). Sarajevo: BiH. Retrieved on October, 05, 2010 from http://www.dep.gov.ba/razvojni_dokumenti/socijalne_ukljucenosti/Archive.aspx?template_id=71&pageIndex=1

³ Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. (2007). Civil Society in Strengthening Social Inclusion (pp.8). Sarajevo: Papić, Ž.



origin, age or gender difference, disability, financial issues, lack of education or employment. That further prevents them from accessing health care and social services as well as social networks. The “excluded” almost have no access to power and decision making processes and are therefore unable to influence decisions of importance to their everyday lives.”⁴

As stated in the UNDP National Human Development Report,⁵ in the context of developing or transition economies, social exclusion causes the following:

- Poverty of specific population groups, which results in the increase of the poverty rate among the most excluded categories;
- A reduction of production capacities, and a decrease of the poverty rate in the society as a whole;
- The achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) becomes much harder;
- Insecurity and conflict.⁶

It is very difficult to draw a clear line between poverty and social exclusion. Poverty is related to unequal monetary distributions, while exclusion encompasses declining participation, solidarity and access. Exclusion is a broader term which includes poverty, while it can also be perceived as a consequence of poverty. The two phenomena are closely interlinked, and their causation runs in both directions. Social exclusion is a multi-dimensional process, which affects both collective and individual resources. It entails distance or isolation, rejection, humiliation, lack of a social support network and denial of participation.⁷ Defined and perceived in a broader way, it becomes clear that social exclusion is not just a problem of underdeveloped states, although it is much pronounced there, but is also a phenomenon that occurs in the modern well-fare states that can exclude some of their citizens upon various grounds.

3. Social Exclusion in the European Union

Even though it is very profound, the notion of social exclusion does not have a long history. Wider recognition of the notion of social exclusion started with the adoption of the social and political documents by the EU bodies on the social exclusion. The notion itself was mentioned for the first time in 1988 by the European Commission in one of its documents that arose from the Second Program for Combating Poverty. In 1989, the Council of Ministers adopted a Resolution on Combating Social Exclusion⁸, and a special body, the European Observatory on National Policies to Combat Social Exclusion⁹, was formed.

A significant step forward was the introduction of the term “social exclusion” into the preamble of the European Social Charter in 1989, and the introduction of a new right, “Right to Protection of Poverty and Social Exclusion,” which was integrated in the revised text of the European Social Charter in 1996.¹⁰ The latter was a turning point as, in this way, social exclusion was officially recognized as one of the major problems and obstacles for the respect of social rights. Since then, the concept of social inclusion has started to have an increasing importance, and has been placed as a foundation of the social policies in the European Union. Social inclusion has gradually become a focal point of the strategic actions aimed at improving the position of vulnerable, marginalized and excluded groups and strengthening both their economic and social status. Understandably, all the present and potential Member States need to revise and adopt their social policies in accordance with this concept, which has social inclusion at its core.

⁴ Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Analysis of NGO Sector from the Perspective of Social Inclusion (pp.11). Sarajevo: Ibrahimagić, M.

⁵ United Nations Development Program. (2007). National Human Development Report (pp. 11). Sarajevo: Fetahagić, M., Hrbač, B., Memić, B., Ninković, R., Pašalić-Kreso, A., Somun-Krupalija, L., and Živanović, M.

⁶ Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. (2007). Civil Society in Strengthening Social Inclusion (pp.9). Sarajevo: Papić, Ž.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Council of Ministers, Resolution on Combating Social Exclusion (1989). Brussels: Belgium, Retrieved on September 25, 2010 from <http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31992H0441:EN:HTML>

⁹ Towards a Policy Relevant European Data Base on Forms of Social Exclusion, Pre-final report, Retrieved on November 10, 2010, from www.ucc.ie/social_policy/SQ_pro/EYBS%

¹⁰ Council of Europe, European Social Charter (1996.) Strasbourg: France. Retrieved on September 11, 2010 from <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/163.htm>
Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Strengthening of Professional Capacities of Nongovernmental Organisations (pp. 11). Sarajevo: Lepir, Lj.

¹¹ European Commission, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG (2010.) Social Agenda 23 - European Year 2010: Fighting Against Poverty and Social Exclusion, Brussels: Belgium. Retrieved on November, 22, 2010 from <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=750>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=815&langId=en>, Accessed on November 10, 2010

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ European Commission, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG (2010.) Social Agenda 23 - European Year 2010: Fighting Against Poverty and Social Exclusion, Brussels: Belgium. Retrieved on November, 22, 2010 from <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=750>

The main feature of EU social policies is their *integrative character*, which implies an improvement of living standards and working conditions, increase of employment opportunities, minimal social protection and equal chances for all citizens.¹¹

However, a decisive approach and strengthened measures implemented to solve this problem have been successful just to a certain extent. The problem of social exclusion is still very profound in the European Union, where about 84 million of citizens live at the risk of poverty.¹² Living in poverty or being at risk of it generates numerous problems, such as not being able to satisfy basic needs e.g. food, clothes and housing. Poverty is thus accompanied by limited lifestyle opportunities which often result in social exclusion.

Even though the European Union has established quite functioning and dependable systems of social protection¹³, they have not been able to respond to the growing needs of the population that faces the risk of social exclusion and poverty. The following figures illustrate the complexity and seriousness of the whole situation:

- 79 million people live below the poverty line, which represents 16% of the population in Europe;
- One European in ten lives in a family with no employed members;
- For 8% of Europeans, employment is not a guarantee that they will not be exposed to the risk of poverty, or rise above the poverty line;
- In most European states, children are most vulnerable and exposed to poverty and risk of poverty, more precisely, 19 million children are poverty-stricken and 19% are threatened by risk of poverty.¹⁴

Therefore, the concept of social inclusion has become dominant in the social policies of the European Union, and is a starting point based on which strategic directions of social and political actions towards excluded, marginalized and poor groups are being taken. The concept itself is based on the society's understanding that there are groups and individuals within the society that are, for different reasons, excluded from the social and economic processes, are being pushed to the margins of the society's interests, and are not able to realize their rights. In order to achieve the well-being of all the members of the society, it is necessary to provide resources and ways for their full participation in social, economic, political and cultural streams, and ensure respect of their rights.

With the aim of addressing this issue in a more effective manner, and following its fundamental principles of solidarity, the Member States declared the year 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The guiding principle of the Year is to enable the European citizens who live in poverty and suffer social exclusion to have their voice heard, and to raise awareness of other citizens and stakeholders on this problem, and make them more engaged in its solving.¹⁵

The main objectives of 2010 European Year are the following:

- **Recognition** - this objective aims to increase recognition and respect of the basic human right of the people who face social exclusion and poverty, to live decent life and actively participate in society;
- **Shared responsibility and participation** - this objective promotes and strengthens support for the public and private sector for social inclusion policies, stressing out both collective and individual participation and responsibility in tackling the problems of poverty and social exclusion;
- **Cohesion** - building societal cohesion and societies which believe that eradication of poverty is beneficial for all its members;



- **Commitment and practical action** - reestablish the commitment of the European Union and its Member States to employ all their capacities to combat social exclusion and poverty with active participation of authority levels in this process.¹⁶

¹⁶ Ibid.

The implementation of the Year 2010 objectives is based on decentralization and coordination of a great number of activities, in which a wide range of actors will take part. Particularly important is to note the importance which is assigned to the civil society in this process. Civil society is recognized as a key partner, and its full participation and active cooperation with other factors, is a requirement for all the Member States. This requirement is based on the contributions that civil society has already given in this field, and certainty that its participation, inputs and guidelines will have major influence on the overall results of the Year 2010 initiative.¹⁷

¹⁷ Ibid.

4. Issue of Social Exclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The problem of social exclusion is one of the most pressing issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and has especially worsened due to the post-war consequences, political and economical instability of the country, and lately, the effects of the global economic crisis. The first steps to address this problem were taken in 1998 within the first social development strategy, entitled the Strategy for Fighting Poverty¹⁸, which tried to tackle the main causes of the social and economic underdevelopment, including social exclusion. The implementation of the Strategy did not have significant effects on poverty reduction, and therefore another, more comprehensive strategy was created. The next development document, the Mid-term Development Strategy of BiH (PRSP, 2002)¹⁹ was not limited only to poverty since such an approach proved insufficient to encompass all the problems of the BiH society. However, not even this document could adequately respond to the needs and concerns of the vulnerable and marginalized categories.

¹⁸ Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Strengthening of Professional Capacities of Nongovernmental Organisations (pp. 12). Sarajevo: Lepir, Lj.

¹⁹ Ibid.

The issue of social exclusion was addressed in a comprehensive and in-depth manner only in 2007, when the analysis conducted within National Human Development Report²⁰ revealed the alarming extent of the social exclusion of BiH citizens. The analysis presented the percentage of social exclusion in BiH, measured by the following three indexes:

²⁰ United Nations Development Program. (2007). National Human Development Report (pp. 11). Sarajevo: Fetahagić, M., Hrbač, B., Memić, B., Ninković, R., Pašalić-Kreso, A., Somun-Krupalija, L., and Živanović, M.

The General Social Exclusion Index (HSEI) is based on seven main indicators, which include living standards, health, participation in society, education and access to services. This index shows that 50, 32% of the population in BiH is excluded in at least one of these categories.

The Extreme Social Exclusion Index (HSEI-1) shows that approximately 22% of the BiH population is extremely socially excluded from the basic human needs and processes.

The Long-Term Social Exclusion Index (HSEI-2) differs from the two other indexes as it measures the population with limited possibilities for improving their situation which leads to long-term exclusion. This index shows that 47% population is at risk of long-term exclusion.²¹

²¹ Ibid.

The data presented above certainly produced a shocking effect. After its publication, the problem of social exclusion has started to be discussed by the public and official authorities. As a response to this problem, the Council of Ministries decided to develop the Social Inclusion Strategy of BiH 2008-2013,²² whose preparation and coordination of the related activities was delegated to the Directorate for the Economic Planning. The preparation of the Social Inclusion Strategy, actors involved, target groups, goals and objectives as well as possible modifications, will be analyzed more closely in the next chapter.

²² Council of Ministers and Directorate for Economic Planning (2009). Social Inclusion Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina (draft document). Sarajevo: BiH. Retrieved on October, 05, 2010 from http://www.dep.gov.ba/razvojni_dokumenti/socijalne_ukljucenosti/Archive.aspx?template_id=71&pageIndex=1

5. Social Inclusion Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina

²³ United Nations Development Program. (2007). National Human Development Report (pp. 11). Sarajevo: Fetahagić, M., Hrbač, B., Memić, B., Ninković, R., Pašalić-Kreso, A., Somun-Krupalija, L., and Živanović, M.

According to the data of the NHDR report in 2007²³, the social exclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina reached an alarming level. Almost half of the BiH population was identified as socially excluded, ranging from general to extreme degrees of exclusion. As much as one fifth of the population was identified as being extremely socially excluded. The following were the main causes of such a high percent of social exclusion:

- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Poor education
- Denied access to rights and services

While the most affected and marginalized social groups included:

- Families with several children
- Uneducated persons
- Elderly and pensioners
- Children
- Disabled persons²⁴

²⁴ Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Strengthening of Professional Capacities of Nongovernmental Organisations (pp. 12). Sarajevo: Lepir, Lj.

²⁵ Council of Ministers and Directorate for Economic Planning (2009). Social Inclusion Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina (draft document). Sarajevo: BiH. Retrieved on October, 05, 2010 from http://www.dep.gov.ba/razvojni_dokumenti/socijalne_ukljucenosti/Archive.aspx?template_id=71&pageIndex=1
Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). What is to be Done? Social Inclusion and Civil Society- Practical Steps (pp. 11-14). Sarajevo: Vuković, A.

Such a situation clearly reflected the inevitable need for taking action and introducing changes in the field of social services provision, which resulted in the creation of the Social Inclusion Strategy of BiH. The Strategy focuses on the most vulnerable social groups and aims at improving their position in the field of employment, health, the education and pension system.²⁵ The Strategy primarily needs to ensure that all the citizens are afforded the same rights, access to necessary services and equal participation in the relevant social processes. Furthermore, its goals and objectives need to correspond to the overall goals and requirements of the EU social policies that Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a potential Member State, has to fulfill on its way towards the EU membership.

In order to achieve the goals related to both BiH and EU context, the Social Inclusion Strategy foresees the following:

- Facilitating access to good-quality jobs, social services, other goods and resources;
- Preventing risk of social exclusion and poverty;
- Helping the most vulnerable population categories;
- Engaging all relevant social actors and stakeholders;
- Ensuring adequate preparation of all the documents in this field, necessary for fulfilling the obligations of the EU membership.

²⁶ Council of Europe, European Social Charter (1996.) Strasbourg: France. Retrieved on September 11, 2010 from <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/163.htm>
Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). What is to be Done? Social Inclusion and Civil Society- Practical Steps (pp. 12). Sarajevo: Vuković, A.

The priority areas and target groups included in the Social Inclusion Strategy were therefore, for the great part, determined in accordance with the EU Social Inclusion Strategy²⁶, so that the creation and implementation of this strategy in Bosnia and Herzegovina would enhance improvement of the social protection system in BiH, which is also necessary for the successful EU integration process.



6. Preparatory Phase of the Social Inclusion Strategy

The goals and objectives of the EU Social Inclusion Strategy include promoting employment, enabling access to all goods, resources, services and rights, combating poverty and social exclusion, support and assistance to vulnerable groups and engagement of all the relevant bodies.²⁷ In line with the stated goals, the process of creating and implementing the Social Inclusion Strategy of BiH should be based on the following principles:

- Participation
- Coordination
- Active involvement of the state authorities
- Accountable institutions
- Active involvement of the social partners and civil society organizations
- Social dialogue
- Partnership
- Shared social responsibility²⁸

Based on the preparations of the earlier development documents, their successful creation and implementation greatly depends on the participation of a wide range of relevant actors and participative planning. Participative planning implies a decision-making and problem-solving process, which engages individuals, groups, experts, government officials and others who are concerned with a particular process, and subsequent decisions and outcomes. Active participation of a wider community ensures that the problem in question is approached from different perspectives and offered multiple solutions. The practice shows that plans and strategies for development, created through participative planning, tend to be more successful and bring better results.

Taking into consideration the inclusive character of the social inclusion process, the preparation of the Social Inclusion Strategy required a participative approach and active engagement of all the relevant social actors and groups. This approach was taken during the preparatory phase of the Social Inclusion Strategy, in which the following actors took part:

- Competent government institutions at all the state levels;
- Social service providers from the public sector;
- Civil society organizations;
- Representatives of the marginalized and vulnerable groups.²⁹

Due to their long-standing work and vast experience with vulnerable and socially-excluded groups, civil society organizations i.e. non-governmental organizations* were to have one of the key roles in the preparatory activities. They indeed participated in this process, and attention was paid to engagement of the relevant representatives of the public and civil sector. Through the NGO Council, which is the oldest network of NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as through the Network for the Issues of Elderly Persons, NGOs could nominate their representatives to various working groups that were in charge of defining particular priorities, measures and activities.³⁰ Nevertheless, it is not certain whether the NGOs will equally participate and be engaged in the next phases of the implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy, which is going to be analyzed in the next chapter.

²⁷ HTSPE Ltd. UK and Kronauer Consulting. (2009.) Civil Society, Contributions to the Development of the Strategy on Establishment of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina (pp. 58-60). Sarajevo: Jones, G. Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). What is to be Done? Social Inclusion and Civil Society- Practical Steps (pp. 12). Sarajevo: Vuković, A.

²⁸ Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Strengthening of Professional Capacities of Nongovernmental Organizations (pp.13). Sarajevo: Lepir, Lj.

²⁹ Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). What is to be Done? Social Inclusion and Civil Society- Practical Steps (pp. 13). Sarajevo: Vuković, A.

* It should be clarified that the terms "civil society" and "non-governmental organizations" are very often used interchangeably. However, non-governmental organizations are just a part of the civil society which also includes foundations, professional associations, religious organizations, labor unions, charities, the media and others.

³⁰ Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Analysis of NGO Sector from the Perspective of Social Inclusion (pp.36-37). Sarajevo: Ibrahimagić, M.

7. Role of the NGO Sector in the Preparation and Implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy

The analyses of the methodology of creating Social Inclusion Strategy described in the Strategy itself, and reports on this process indicate that the representatives of the non-governmental sector did take part in the meetings and workshops organized as a part of the preparatory phase. Therefore, involvement of the NGO representatives in the preparation of the Social Inclusion Strategy is not an issue, although their role in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases might seem uncertain.

Analysis of the draft text of the Social Inclusion Strategy shows that, out of 127 pages of the document, the role of the NGO sector in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases is mentioned within only one page. In a very general framework, it is stated that due to their experience and capacity, it is presumed that NGOs will take part in the implementation and monitoring of the Social Inclusion Strategy.³¹ Such a brief and insufficient articulation of the role that the NGO sector will play in the implementation and monitoring phase creates a grounded concern that this sector might be left out from these phases, or have a reduced role and influence.

This concern is underpinned by the case of the BiH Medium Development Strategy 2004-2007 (PRSP), during whose preparation and implementation civil society and especially non-governmental organizations were promoted as a partner that can reach the poorest and most marginalized categories. However, the real role and contribution of the civil society in the whole process was sporadic and connected to its engagement in the advisory process, and much less in the process of monitoring and implementation.³²

In January 2005, the NGO ICVA produced the Monitoring Report of the Medium Development Strategy,³³ clearly stating the problems and shortages NGOs encountered during the implementation and monitoring phases, due to imprecisely defined mechanisms of their participation in the whole process. The report states that, on several occasions, the NGO representatives tried to draw the attention of the relevant government bodies and ministers to the existing problems, through letters and other means of communication, which usually went unanswered. Another research revealed that even though a strong media campaign was conducted, more than 80% of different groups (mostly elderly people, primary and secondary children and university students) that should have been primarily concerned with the PRSP did not even know that it existed.³⁴

The situation was not much different with participation of NGOs in the development of the Roma Strategy i.e. the Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina,³⁵ advisory groups for social policy and others. In all these cases, the working groups composed of the NGO representatives were formed only as temporary advisory bodies that took part in the initial drafting of policies and strategies, but were dismissed after fulfilling this task. The implementation stage was carried out without them, or with only their formal participation. The initial participation did not continue, and grew into a partnership between the civil sector and government. In the majority of cases, the cooperation between the two sectors was called a "mechanical or physical cooperation", which means that it consisted of ensuring the presence of the NGO members or their financial contribution to the projects in question.³⁶ The cooperation was very often a formal condition that had to be fulfilled, and it seemed as if

³¹ Council of Ministers and Directorate for Economic Planning (2009). Social Inclusion Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina (draft document). Sarajevo: BiH. Retrieved on October, 05, 2010 from http://www.dep.gov.ba/razvojni_dokumenti/socijalne_ukljucenosti/Archive.aspx?template_id=71&pageIndex=1

³² Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). What is to be Done? Social Inclusion and Civil Society- Practical Steps (pp. 38). Sarajevo: Papić, Ž.

³³ ICVA (2005.) Izveštaj o monitoringu nevladinih organizacija. Sarajevo: BiH. Retrieved on November 11, 2010 from <http://www.icva-bh.org/bos/docs/nvofin.doc>

³⁴ Open Society Fund, Bosnia and Herzegovina. (2006). Democracy Assessment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo: Dizdarević, S., Sali-Terzić, S., Huremagić.R., Ademović, N. and others.

³⁵ Council of Ministers of BiH, Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues in BiH. Retrieved on October 27, 2010. from <http://www.mladi.gov.ba/index.php?lang=en> Council of Ministers of BiH (2005). Strategija Bosne i Hercegovine za rješavanje problema Roma. Sarajevo. Retrieved on October 27, 2010. from <http://www.ombudsmen.gov.ba/odjeli/Strategija%20BiH%20za%20rjesavanje%20problema%20Roma%20Sl.%20glasnik%20BiH%2067-05.pdf>

³⁶ Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Strengthening of Professional Capacities of Nongovernmental Organizations (pp.24). Sarajevo: Lepir, Lj.



the two parties were forced to work together, rather than really trying to achieve their common goals. In this process, they would sometimes even perceive each other not as partners, but as opposite sides, and cooperation would only last as long as project activities and results were short-term, instead of long-term systematic improvements.

The situation has not been much different with the Cooperation Agreement between the Council of Ministers and Nongovernmental Sector³⁷, signed between the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and representatives of the NGO sector in April 2007. The Agreement was expected to change and improve the relationship between the government and NGOs. The Agreement highlighted an evident and urgent need for NGOs and the state government to establish a viable and efficient institutional framework for cooperation, along with constructive and productive dialogue.³⁸ In spite of the encouraging rhetoric, up to the present, not much has been done in regard to the implementation of the Agreement. More specifically, the Council of Ministers has not done much in terms of fulfilling its obligations foreseen by the Agreement.³⁹ The Office for Cooperation with the Nongovernmental Sector, whose establishment was foreseen by the Cooperation Agreement between the Council of Ministers and Nongovernmental Sector,⁴⁰ has not still been established. Like in many other countries in CEE/SEE (Poland, Croatia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Montenegro), a government office was supposed to be an initial key mechanism for the establishment of an NGO-government partnership. The office was supposed to function as an organizational unit of the government, and to be a focal point for cooperation of the government and civil society with a broadly defined mandate. The office should serve to promote the quality and scope of cooperation between NGOs and government. Until now, the Office for Cooperation with the Nongovernmental Sector in BiH has not been established, and it is not known when it is going to be established.

All of this illustrates that actually very often there was no genuine intent to create conditions and start a new era of cooperation between the government and NGOs, and most of the efforts and measures undertaken in this direction has been mostly of formal nature.

In order to avoid that previous mistakes are repeated, active participation of the NGO sector needs to be continued in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of the Social Inclusion Strategy. The Strategy should define the role of the NGO sector in the following phases of the implementation in a precise and detailed manner. The Social Inclusion Strategy should contain precisely stated and determined functions of NGOs, channels of communication, models of action and mechanisms through which they will exercise their function, and through which their advice and complaints will be responded to and considered.

The continuation of this participative planning and cooperation is among the key factors determining further quality development of the Social Inclusion Strategy. This approach and good practice should be continued in order to ensure valid implementation of the proposed measures and activities.

The importance and necessity of having NGOs as the state's key partner in the social services provision and implementation of Social Inclusion Strategy will be explained in detail in the following section.

³⁷ Council of Ministers of BiH (2007). Sporazum o saradnji između Vijeća ministara BiH i nevladinog sektora u BiH. Sarajevo. Retrieved on October 22, 2010. from www.civilnodrustvo.ba/files/docs/SPORAZUM_-_bos.2.doc

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ HTSPE Ltd. UK and Kronauer Consulting. (2009.) Civil Society, Contributions to the Development of the Strategy on Establishment of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina (pp. 134-140). Sarajevo: Žeravčić, G. and Bišćević, E.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

8. Current and Possible Social Services Provision

There are several possibilities of social services provision that include different providers. These different providers include the state, NGO sector and private sector. These providers may provide the social services alone, or in cooperation with other sectors. These options are presented in Table 1, where the advantages and disadvantages of each sector are estimated based on the criteria of financial sustainability, experience in the field, familiarity and closeness to the targeted population, flexibility and adaptability and non-profit orientation.

The advantages and disadvantages of each sector for social services provision will then be analyzed in detail in the following sub-sections. The mixed model, where social services are provided by both state and NGO sector, will be given special attention as it is considered that it is most suitable for social services provision.

Table 1

Options for Social Services Provision	Financial sustainability	Experience in the field	Familiarity and closeness to the targeted population	Flexibility and adaptability	Non-profit orientation	Overall estimation
Social services provided only by the state	+++	++++	++	+	++++	+14
Social services provided only by the NGO sector	+	++++	+++++	++++	+++++	+19
Social services provided by both the state and the NGO sector	+++++	+++++	+++++	++++	++++	+23
Social services provided by the private sector	+++++	+	+	++++	+	+12
Social services provided by the state, NGO sector and private sector	+++++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+17

8.1. State as Exclusive Provider of Social Services

⁴¹ www.bh-hchr.org/.../Primjena_evropske_socijalne_povelje.pdf, Accessed on November 5, 2010.

The current model of social protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina is one where the state is the main social services provider and it is based on the monetary contributions.⁴¹ The chronic deficit in the state budgets and inability of the public institutions to allocate the disposable funds to where and whom they are most needed, have resulted in the situation that the state cannot provide even basic services of social protection. Due to insufficient monetary contributions, the system fails to respond to the needs of the increasing number of vulnerable persons and social services beneficiaries. Furthermore, the state structures are burdened with numerous administrative procedures; they tend to be inflexible and not easily accessible to the beneficiaries. They also lack a sufficient number of staff that can provide services, especially out of the urban centers and areas.⁴²

⁴² Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Strengthening of Professional Capacities of Nongovernmental Organisations (pp.14). Sarajevo: Lepir, Lj.



Therefore, the state can no longer be the exclusive social services provider, although this field has traditionally belonged to the state; nor can it be the main provider, but needs to be supplemented by another sector i.e. NGO sector as the most suitable, complementary and experienced one.

8.2. NGOs as Exclusive Providers of Social Services

There are two main deficiencies that characterize the NGO sector which are simultaneously the main obstacles for not delegating social services provision solely to NGOs. They are:

- Dependence on the financial resources provided mainly by international donors
- Short-term projects that NGOs mostly implement

Non-governmental organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina have come into existence and still mostly operate due to the financial support of international donors. Even though this support was crucial for the inception or reestablishment of the civil society in BiH, it created insecurity and a dependency syndrome because donors have usually financed individual projects or only one phase of a project which conditioned the continuation of the activities of NGOs. It also conditioned the type of projects and activities implemented, target population and geographical areas. Most of the international aid was directed towards projects and often depended on the donors' temporary interests. The common and biggest problem of NGOs is therefore to ensure relatively stable and long-term funding.⁴³

⁴³ Open Society Fund, Bosnia and Herzegovina. (2001.) *International Aid Politics to SEE Countries - lessons (not) learned in BiH.* (pp.177-193). Sarajevo: Sevima Sali-Terzić

Many NGOs also lack planning of long-term projects which often results in implementing activities of low quality and efficiency which do not manage to respond to the needs of their beneficiaries. Evidently, provision of the social services can not be delegated exclusively to the NGO sector, as it requires stable funding and continuity. NGOs also need to be supplemented with another sector i.e. the state sector.

8.3. Social Services Provided by the Private Sector

Commercialization of public services might be a result of state politics especially in economically underdeveloped countries. In that case, the private sector takes an active part in the services market and competes for the clients i.e. beneficiaries. A key problematic element of this approach is participation of beneficiaries in paying social services. The vulnerable groups need to be assisted and provided with social services for which they lack financial means, which is self-explanatory for excluding the possibility of paying for and purchasing these services.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). *Strengthening of Professional Capacities of Nongovernmental Organisations* (pp.31). Sarajevo: Lepir, Lj.

8.4. Social Services Provided by the State, NGO Sector and Private Sector

One of the biggest problems in social services provision is the lack of financial resources for both the state and NGO sector. Therefore, the private sector could be of special importance for ensuring financial support to the other two sectors.

However, introducing a third social services provider would burden this field with too many actors which would be difficult to coordinate and supervise. It would create too many interests and requirements whose harmonization could negatively reflect on social services beneficiaries

⁴⁵ Ibid.

and have them neglected. Above all, the primary aim of the private sector is gaining profit, which is completely opposite to the NGOs and state that base their work on nonprofit activities, humanitarian missions and voluntarism.⁴⁵

8.5. NGO Sector as the Key Government Partner in Social Services Provision

Non-governmental organizations have played a very important role in a vast spectrum of activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina both during the war and in the post-war recovery phases. The field of social inclusion is one where the NGO sector has given the greatest contribution in, primarily, a practical manner. NGOs were the implementers of a large number of different projects in the field of social inclusion, ranging from humanitarian aid distribution during the war period, enhancing the processes of return, reconstruction of destroyed houses, reconciliation to non-discrimination, integration of minority groups, gender equality, care for children, elderly, disabled persons and many others. The implemented projects have resulted in many positive changes especially in local communities.

However, such an important role and visible contributions of the NGO sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina are still very often neglected and reduced.

⁴⁶ Department for International Development, Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues and Bricks Sinclair & Associates. (2005). Qualitative Study 3-Employment, Social Service Provision and the Non-governmental Sector: Status and Prospects for BiH, Analysis and Policy Implications. Sarajevo: BiH.

The importance, capacities and impacts of the NGO sector are very clearly numerically illustrated by the data on NGOs and persons who are involved in their activities. The total number of registered NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2005 was 9095, out of which less than a half is actually active, i.e. about 4629 NGOs.⁴⁶ This in practice means that there is one NGO per 820 citizens, which is an important indicator of the development and outreach of the NGO sector, especially when compared to the countries that have a much longer tradition of civil society such as Great Britain where there is one NGO per 426 citizens or Hungary where there is one NGO per 250 citizens.

Furthermore, NGOs in BiH provide services for 29% of the citizens. 60% of the NGOs work in the local communities, which gives additional value to their work since they have direct contact with the final beneficiaries of their services and insight to their real needs and problems. In this regard, Bosnia and Herzegovina is very close to Great Britain again where 70% of NGOs have local communities as their immediate field of action.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Generally speaking, non-governmental organizations are quite flexible and can adapt to new circumstances and localities, which is not a characteristic of large state structures. They establish direct contacts with their beneficiaries, they openly accept cooperation with other organizations and institutions and they embrace changes and innovations more readily.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Strengthening of Professional Capacities of Nongovernmental Organisations (pp.24). Sarajevo: Lepir, Lj.

All of this demonstrates the importance, potentials and to date achievements of the NGO sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As such, they all form a very strong image of the NGO and leave no space to exclude, neglect or reduce its role and function in the political, social, economic or any other process.

Contributions and role of the NGOs in the overall social service provision and implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Promoting the procedure of social inclusion processes and raising public awareness on the importance of the process for vulnerable and excluded groups;



- Informing the public, primarily targeted groups, on the possibilities for social inclusion;
- Contributing to faster, more economical and accessible social service provision;
- Providing inputs for creating new services based on the feedback received from the beneficiaries;
- Providing a better choice of services to the beneficiaries;
- Engaging all disposable means, especially in the local communities;
- Enhancing the role civil society and non-governmental organizations.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Analysis of NGO Sector from the Perspective of Social Inclusion (pp.23). Sarajevo: Ibrahimagić, M.

For all the above stated reasons the NGO sector can and should assume the role of the state's key and equal partner in the *implementation* of the Social Inclusion Strategy and perform it in the most efficient and comprehensive manner.

8.6 Mixed Model of Social Services Provision - Partnership between the Government and NGO Sector

Taking into consideration what has previously been said, it becomes clear that neither the state nor NGO sector are able and have sufficient technical, human and financial resources to be the exclusive providers of the social services. The only way to establish a functioning social protection system with proper coverage, that will generate necessary results and respond to the beneficiaries needs, is to join their capacities and direct them towards the target population. The reasons that speak for and support such a cooperation and joint work are related both to the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as to a wider context of the European integration.

First of all, civil society organizations have been traditionally present in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and although they have been changing their character and form their basic purpose has remained the same. In the socialist period of the country, citizens' organizations were trying to supplement the one-party system with other forms of organizing and many of them corresponded, at least partially, to NGOs as known today, and most of them were integrated in the system of social services provision (such as Red Cross).⁵⁰ Therefore, civil society organizations and their participation in the social services provision is not a new phenomenon nor was it introduced for the first time during the war and post-war phase by the international community. It is a practice that existed before, proved to be necessary and that certainly needs to be continued in present circumstances.

⁵⁰ Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. (2007). Civil Society in Strengthening Social Inclusion (pp.105.109). Sarajevo: Trbić.Dž.

Furthermore, the lack of state capacities, especially in crisis situations, requires the engagement of the NGO sector that helps satisfying the beneficiaries' growing needs, while developing new and innovative ways of delivering services. This is a very important aspect and it is widely applicable to the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The analysis of the capacities of BiH state institutions shows that there is a certain crisis of the state system, which is greatly due to the complicated and divided state structure and its economic underdevelopment. The inability of the state to provide the services prescribed by law calls for the greater involvement of the NGO sector, in order to fulfill the gaps that exist in the present system.⁵¹

⁵¹ Ibid.

The necessity of having NGOs as a key state partner in providing social services and implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy lies primarily in their vast experience with the vulnerable and marginalized categories, direct contacts and access to citizens and field work throughout

the country due to which they possess broad insight in their problems and needs. Using this knowledge and practice NGOs could partially take over the provision of certain social services that have traditionally been in the exclusive domain of the state, but for which the state does not have sufficient capacities and human resources. This would significantly unburden the state apparatus and create conditions for more efficient and better targeted satisfaction of the beneficiaries' real needs.

All of this illustrates the need for joining capacities, establishing partnerships and introducing a new system of social services provision – the mixed system. The mixed system is based on equal access to organizing, providing and financing of the social services by both the state and NGO sector.⁵² As already mentioned, the introduction of the mixed system is necessary since the available capacities of the public sector are insufficient to properly respond to the growing and diversified needs of the social protection beneficiaries. It is not just the lack of financial means that indicates the need for such a system, but also the lack of qualified human resources and new models of work. The mixed system uses advantages of non-governmental organizations that are compatible with deficiencies of the state institutions and vice versa.⁵³ The reform processes in the field of social protection, which have taken place in EU member states and their surrounding, foresee strengthening cooperation between these two sectors. All the recommendations and guidelines of the European Union emphasize participation of civil society organizations as important partners in social inclusion processes.

A new approach to social policies implies placing beneficiaries' needs in the focus of creating the type and domain of measures and services they will use. The mixed system is based on engaging all relevant parties interested in implementing social protection measures. The most interested party is the beneficiary population and therefore the mixed system emphasizes active cooperation of the creators of the strategic guidelines with the final beneficiaries. Very often this is not possible because the system does not foresee intersectoral cooperation and there is a lack of insight in the beneficiaries' needs. Therefore, intersectoral cooperation (primarily between NGOs and state) is the key element for the comprehensive estimation of needs and introducing measures and services that would effectively respond to the state of social exclusion of the beneficiaries.

Weaknesses of the state social protection system open room for the engagement of civil society organizations i.e. non-governmental organizations. Civil society organizations by the nature of their inception are able to articulate the attitudes and requirements of the beneficiary population and promote this new principle of social inclusion to the beneficiaries. They can raise community awareness on active participation in combating social exclusion. On the other hand, the state institutions will ensure the continuity of the services provision which is not something that NGOs can guarantee.

The advantages of the mixed system can be summarized in the following way:

- Improving the role and results of both state and NGO sector in social protection and social inclusion;
- Strengthening financial capacities and sustainability of the NGO sector and supplementing the state allocated budget for the social protection and inclusion through joining and matching NGO and public funds, which results in the provision of better quality services and wider coverage of the beneficiaries;
- Better and synchronized targeting of the beneficiaries' real needs;

⁵² Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Strengthening of Professional Capacities of Nongovernmental Organizations (pp.25). Sarajevo: Lepir, Lj

⁵³ Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. (2009). Strengthening of Professional Capacities of Nongovernmental Organizations (pp.13-17). Sarajevo: Lepir, Lj.



- More efficient and prompter problem-solving;
- Coordinated and harmonized use of the financial resources donated to NGOs and domestic resources;
- Strengthening of the innovative approach that is in accordance with the EU standards in the field of social policies.

The new model of social protection system must be based on previous positive experiences and good practices that have been achieved through cooperation between the government and non-governmental sector. Deficiencies that arise from the system and conditions in which state institutions and NGOs operate need to be mitigated without effecting the availability and quality of the services. The beneficiaries need to be consulted and their needs have to be taken into consideration and responded to with the use of all disposable means and resources regardless of whether they belong the state institutions or NGOs.

The need for the introduction and institutionalization of this model has been recognized in some of the previous joint projects and experiences and it became clear to both sectors that their cooperation results in success.

The mixed system of social protection, as described above, possess great potentials, possibilities and resources to substantially improve the social inclusion of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina through establishing partner relations between the government and NGOs.

9. Practical Recommendations

In order to have provision of social services improved and the Social Inclusion Strategy properly implemented and resulting in sustainable changes and long-term improvements the following set of recommendations should be considered and integrated to the Social Inclusion Strategy or accompanying documents. These recommendations aim to ensure the continuation of partnership with NGOs in the implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy, achievement of the stated goals and objectives, full accountability and transparency, advancement of the EU integration process and most importantly efficient solution and response to the needs of the targeted groups and final beneficiaries. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Clearly define the NGO sector as a key partner in the implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy.

The role of the NGO sector as the key partner in the implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy should be stated more precisely. It needs to be added to the text of the Strategy or the accompanying documents that NGO representatives will have the status of an equal partner with the rights and competences to actively take part in decision making, setting priorities, monitoring, evaluation, supervision of the budgetary allocations and all other processes related to the implementation of the Strategy.

2. Clearly assign the NGO sector the role of monitor

The NGO sector needs to assume the role of a monitor that will analyze and process information about the effects of the Strategy and its measures on the targeted groups of population. The members of the NGO sector appointed to the monitoring commissions and bodies, together with the state representatives, would thus supervise transparency, efficiency and

accountability of the state institutions in implementing the Social Inclusion Strategy and they would function as a mechanism of checks and balances vital for establishing democratic ambience. This role should also be clearly defined in the text of the Social Inclusion Strategy.

3. Establishment of the monitoring commissions and bodies for the budgetary spending and allocations

The monitoring process requires establishment of monitoring commissions and bodies whose task would be to control if the budgetary allocated resources are being spent in accordance with the stated purpose and if the resources invested in different programs and projects have achieved the expected results. The commissions need to be composed of state and non-governmental representatives that will have equal status and rights which also need to be clearly stated in the Strategy.

4. Establishment of the commissions and bodies for qualitative monitoring

Besides the financial aspect, monitoring needs to include the qualitative measurements in order to determine real and long-term impact of the programs on the final beneficiaries. In brief, the role of the monitoring bodies would be to test if the overall strategic goals are being fulfilled as initially planned. These commissions would also be composed of the state and non-governmental representatives that will have equal status and rights.

5. Define criteria for the selection of the NGO representatives that will take part in the implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy

It is very important to define the selection criteria of the NGO representatives that will take part in the implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy since NGOs have different orientations and are at different levels of experience in the field of social exclusion. The criteria should define the orientation and mission of an NGO, number of years of work and experience in the relevant field, professional, human and technical capacities, the number of projects implemented and results achieved through these projects and other related activities. This will ensure that the most competent NGOs take part in the implementation and will consequently ensure the best possible outcomes of the Strategy.

6. Define the role of the NGO sector as a resource of information

The function of the NGOs should not be just of a supervisory nature. In line with the functions of a partner, the NGO needs to constantly provide new inputs and information on potential new partners, recruiting volunteers and attracting additional financial resources.



10. Conclusion

As presented through this policy study, the system of social services provision has reached the point where change is necessary, inevitable and urgent. The Social Inclusion Strategy of BiH is the tool to introduce these changes and it needs to be properly implemented. The proper and comprehensive implementation will be possible if the NGO sector keeps an active role in the whole process of Strategy implementation, which is not going to be limited to its engagement in the preparatory phase, but continue during practical implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The examples of previous strategies and development documents, that did not achieve the stated goals and did not have substantial effects due to improper implementation and non-engagement of all the relevant actors, clearly illustrate the necessity of having all the concerned parties and stakeholders fully involved in the implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy. It cannot be allowed that another important strategy fails to achieve its objectives and purposes, since the number and state of the vulnerable and excluded population has reached an alarming extent. The stated goals will be achieved through joint work and cooperation of the government and NGO sector which is necessary for the Social Inclusion Strategy. The NGO sector is the best guarantee for representing the interests and needs of the socially marginalized and excluded groups and therefore its participation in the public system is of crucial importance. Creativity and flexibility of non-governmental originations are one of the main features of NGOs which will enable more effective, comprehensive and better targeted satisfaction of the beneficiaries' needs. The beneficiary population needs active and multi-perspective support in order to use the available resources, their guaranteed rights and mechanisms created for them. Such support can be completely provided to individuals in need only through the cooperation of the state and NGO sector i.e. the mixed system of social services provision. Therefore, the Social Inclusion Strategy needs to be implemented on the basis of the mixed system, partnership and equal participation of both sectors. Only in this way the image of social exclusion and poverty can be changed in a substantial and long-term way. The Social Inclusion Strategy needs to be a turning point for two things: genuine, continuous and long-term cooperation of the government and NGO sector as well as the beginning of a new period in which the present state of the population will improve in an in-depth and irreversible manner, thus ensuring progress and stability of the whole society.

ANNEX I - CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 1 - FOUNDATION OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY

Foundation of Local Democracy has been operating for 14 years with a focus on protection, promotion and improvement of human rights, especially victims of gender violence, creating conditions for networking and development of NGOs and others. Out of numerous implemented projects the following will be closely looked at:

a.) SAFE HOUSE - Shelter for women and children victims of domestic violence PROJECT: "YOU HAVE THE POWER"

The project has been running from 2000 and it represents a basic program of the Foundation that is focused on victims of family violence and promotion of the joint activities of NGOs and institutions against the family violence. Since 2000, the Foundation has been running the Safe House - Shelter for women and children victims of domestic violence, which has the capacity for 35 beneficiaries (15 women and 20 children). The project takes place in the community and it is based on the rights of women, girls and children who are the victims of family violence. It promotes the need for legal, medical and social changes aimed at reducing violence and creating new conditions in which a victim is taken care of and provided with necessary psychological and social aid.

Since the beginning, the project has been providing direct psychological and social support to extremely vulnerable categories of women, girls and children by accommodating them in the safe house.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ <http://www.fld.ba/>, (Accessed, February, 14, 2011.)

b.) Shelter for girls victims of violence PROJECT: "YOU CAN DO IT"

This project focuses on girls who are victims of violence and it has been implemented since 2002. The shelter has the capacity for 8 to 10 girls, victims of emotional, physical and sexual violence (trafficking, incest, prostitution, rape). The primary goal is providing direct protection to girls, victims of violence. The project is focused on BiH female citizens between the ages of 12 and 18. In the shelter, these girls are provided with psychological and social rehabilitation (group and individual therapies), as well as re-socialization (continuing education, re-integration in the social life and others). The shelter for girls is the only one in Bosnia and Herzegovina and there is no other institution that takes care of this population group.

c.) SOS Red Phone-line-Phone-line for the victims of violence

This project has been implemented since 2004. After a four-month training of 15 volunteers, the SOS red phone-line was opened and it enabled citizens to report any kind of violence and obtain information on how to solve the problem of violence i.e. whom to address for help. By 2010, 7541 citizens called SOS red phone.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Ibid.



CASE STUDY 2 - CENTER FOR YOUTH AND CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS "LOS ROSALES" MOSTAR

Los Rosales Center started being built in 1996 with the help of the Kingdom of Spain. In the first phase, the Special Primary School was built and it began work in 1997. At the time, the school had 16 employees and 42 students with different special needs (mild and moderate mental retardation, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, autism, hyperactivity, hearing impediments, combined impediments and others). However, it was evident that the school would not be able to meet the needs of all the children and youth with special needs in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton and the school was gradually transformed into a center. Facilities for a kindergarten, occupational-rehabilitation workshops and residential buildings were added. These facilities were equipped and a professional staff of 25 employees was formed in order to respond better to the needs of the protégés of the center.

Today the Los Rosales Center includes the following facilities:

- Kindergarten "Kolibri"
- Primary school
- Residential facilities "Liman" which provide permanent family accommodation for 12 persons together with a SOS mom and dad.
- Workshops (wood, ceramics, textile and weaving, flowers)⁵⁶

The Center has 150 beneficiaries aged from 3 to 49 years, but this number varies during the year. The beneficiaries are different religious and ethnic backgrounds, social origins, and have different places of residence as well as different impediments. The Center provides daily transportation for 42 beneficiaries, accompanied by their parents, whereas 15 of them use public transportation and are reimbursed for the fare. All the beneficiaries are provided with a meal in the Centre, protective clothes for work, working tools and materials. The Center employs 32 employees, 5 volunteers and 2 assistants.

Los Rosales Center organizes various trainings for its protégés, their parents, employees that have the following aims:

- To promote access to stable and high-quality employment for men and women with special needs;
- To increase integration and employment using the opportunities of social economy
- To contribute to poverty reduction through social inclusion;
- Training for manufacturing small articles (jewelry, ceramics, weaving, painting, flower arrangements etc.).

The Center also disposes with a playground, music equipment, psychology and pedagogy laboratories, classrooms, gym and residential area. Activities at the Center involve providing social services for individuals and groups, such as individual and group treatment, occupational therapy, social rehabilitation, professional orientation, protective employment, social integration and others.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. (2007). *Civil Society in Strengthening Social Inclusion* (pp.84-88). Sarajevo: Jasna Rebac

⁵⁷ Ibid.

CASE STUDY 3 - ASSOCIATION "YOUR RIGHTS"

Association „Your Rights“ in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the leading non-governmental organization that provides free legal aid at the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The main goals of the Association are:

- Protection and effective realization of individual rights of the beneficiaries through providing free legal aid which enables equal access to justice without any kind of discrimination;
- Providing information and education on legal regulations, rights and obligations of the beneficiaries;
- Contributing to strengthening legislation, the rule of law and civil society;
- Providing free legal aid and advice, representing beneficiaries at the court, state institutions and bodies in accordance with relevant laws and international instruments of human rights protection, providing other forms of legal aid with the aim of protecting rights and interests of the beneficiaries.

Free legal aid program of the association "Your Rights" includes providing legal aid and advice on labor law, property relations, family law, social rights, status rights, pensioner and disability insurance and rights of the refugees from the Republic of Croatia. The program covers different beneficiary categories, from the most vulnerable such as refugees, displaced persons, minority peoples, asylum seekers and human trafficking victims to local vulnerable population. Through the network of offices and mobile teams, the Association covers a great part of the BiH territory.

Since 1996, the association "Your Rights" has provided free legal aid to about 450,000 refugees, returnees, displaced persons, minority groups and groups of vulnerable domicile population in the legal matters such as: property return, realization of social, economic and cultural rights, discrimination in the employment access, different services, education, social protection, health care as well as other human rights guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and other international legal instruments.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ <http://www.vasaprava.org/>, (Accessed February, 14, 2011.)



CASE STUDY 4 - ASSOCIATION “WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL” BOSNIA AND HERZGOVINA

Association “Women for Women International” in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a part of global network of local NGOs that work in eight post-war and post-conflict countries. The association works with women who have survived war, who suffer from physical and emotional trauma and who are poor and socially excluded. The Association organizes one-year program where women receive education on their rights and how to achieve respect of their rights at home and in their local communities. They also receive job skills and receive business training so they can later find employment or start a small business and provide for their families. The program is organized into three stages as women increase their access to resources and knowledge:

1. **Creating Awareness:** Improving women’s access to knowledge on their significance and the importance of women’s rights and societal roles.
2. **Promoting Behavior Change:** Encouraging a woman’s willingness to actively make decisions in her family and community, apply knowledge to maintain physical and psychological wellness, to form or join women’s and community groups and take advantage of economic opportunities.
3. **Enabling Action:** Providing opportunities to develop personal and group plans for action to allow women to become active citizens individually and in solidarity with other women. In addition, women are provided with support and access to essential services such as microfinance loans, legal assistance, cooperative and employment opportunities and social networks.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ <http://www.womenforwomen.org/global-initiatives-helping-women/help-women-bosnia-herzegovina.php>. (Accessed February, 14, 2011.)

The key outcomes of the one year program are the following:

- Women are able to generate income;
- Women gain self-confidence and feel better both emotionally and physiologically;
- Women become decision-makers in their families and communities;
- Women build their social networks and safety nets.

Association “Women for Women International” started its work in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1994, as a local NGO, during the war and continued its activities after the war ended. Since this period, programs “Women for Women International” conduct have helped more than 29,000 women in 60 communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is reported that out of this number:

- 70% of program participants have improved their emotional well-being;
- 96% have left the program with knowledge of their legal rights;
- 95% are actively participating in key household decisions;
- More than half of graduates are currently saving income to invest in their future.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Ibid.

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A "Policy Development Fellowship Program" has been launched by the Open Society Fund BiH in early 2004 with the aim to improve BiH policy research and dialogue and to contribute to the development of a sound policy-making culture based on informative and empirically grounded policy options. The program provides an opportunity for selected fellows to collaborate with the Open Society Fund in conducting policy research and writing a policy study with the support of mentors and trainers during the whole process. Seventy three fellowships have been granted in three cycles since the starting of the Program.