

**Summative Evaluation of Early Learning Opportunities**

**for Children in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**for**

**Dubai Cares**

**September 17, 2016**

**by**

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# **1. Executive Summary**

In May 2016, Dubai Cares contracted with Miske Witt & Associates Inc. (MWAI) of Shoreview, MN USA, to complete a Summative Evaluation of “Early Learning Opportunities for Children in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)” implemented by UNICEF BiH. The evaluation was conducted from June 1 to August 10, 2016. Dubai Cares is committed to an evidence-based approach to program development, where monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) are an integral part of every program. Therefore, the main purposes of this evaluation were: (1) to derive key learnings on specific areas of interest identified by Dubai Cares; (2) to provide an independent verification of the program outputs and achieved outcomes; and (3) to inform the proposed second phase of the program (in particular, to inform policy formation in the entities and cantons and to improve programming).

UNICEF’s “Increasing Learning Opportunities for Children in Bosnia and Herzegovina” program (commonly called the “300-hour program” because of its duration) focused on stimulating participation in early childhood development (ECD) programs for all children, but it specifically targeted children who were disadvantaged or had disabilities.

Currently, approximately 13% of girls and boys within the appropriate age cohort are enrolled in early childhood education (ECE) in BiH. According to the United Nations Development Program-World Bank (UNDP-WB) Roma Survey 2011, only 6.1% of Roma children of age-appropriate children were enrolled in early education programs in 2010*–*2011 (Roma Education Fund, 2012). Bosnia-Herzegovina’s overall participation rate is among the lowest in the Europe and Central Asia region (no data were available for the participation rate of children with disabilities). While providing high quality and equitable ECE programs for the most marginalized populations has been lauded as an effective strategy for building human capital, the idea of inclusive education within the BiH context is an emerging concept that has been met with mixed results (UNESCO, 2007).

The four main objectives of the study were to evaluate: (1) the relevance and design of the current program; (2) the efficiency of program implementation; (3) the success and effectiveness of the program; and (4) the sustainability of the program. To meet the aims of the evaluation, the team accessed two key sources of data. First, we examined existing reports, policies, and other publications (in English, Bosnian, and Serbian). Second, the MWAI team conducted a series of interviews and observations with stakeholders at the multi-national, national, cantonal, municipal, and kindergarten center levels to gather a broad understanding of the program and its impact. This modified “vertical case study” approach (see Vavrus and Bartlett, 2009) afforded the team a better understanding of how programs were implemented and supported by policy.

Evaluation results indicate that UNICEF recognized midway through the program that municipalities were under-enrolling Roma children and children with disabilities (Gheorghe and Faginović, 2014). To increase relevance, UNICEF contracted with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide additional supports for marginalized children in BiH. The program reached a wide audience. By the end of the program it had been implemented in 46 municipalities, which demonstrated an efficient use of program resources. According to the parents who were interviewed, the 300-hour program was successful because it allowed for a richer developmental experience for their children than the traditional government kindergarten program that typically runs for 150 hours.

Despite these positive outcomes, the program was not sustained in all 46 municipalities. Rather, at the completion of the program, UNICEF required co-sponsorship for continuation and lost 40 municipal partners in the process. UNICEF’s new model may be a workable approach to sustainability, but it will require a slower progression than the 300-hour, Dubai Cares-sponsored program since buy-in from cantons and municipalities may be slower without the financial incentives that were present during the Dubai Cares-sponsored program.

Aligning with the *Platform for the Development of Preschool Education and Care for the Period 2016–2021* that is currently under governmental review in BiH, the evaluators recommend five directions for future early childhood programming. Outlined in Table 1 below, the recommendations focus on assessment of children’s learning and learning environments, program duration, program reach (i.e., children’s age), cross-pollination among program partners, and parent education. The recommendations are listed according to evaluation report audience/stakeholder group(s) who would need to explore and implement the recommendation.

**Table 1: Recommendations**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Recommendations | Audience |
| * Integrate ongoing quality assessment of the early learning environment and of children’s learning outcomes. This may be facilitated through existing measures such as those developed by other organizations (see Save the Children’s IDELA[[1]](#footnote-1) tool), internal assessment tools (ECD quality assessment tools), or those developed by UNICEF partners.
 | * Dubai Cares
* UNICEF BiH and Partners
 |
| * Extend programs beyond 300 hours to a minimum of one full year (600 hours) before primary school, and beginning earlier than age five.
* Focus on identification and early intervention for children with developmental delays and physical disabilities (i.e., for children aged 0-3).
 | * Dubai Cares
* UNICEF BiH and Partners
* BiH policymakers
 |
| * Facilitate a “best practices” dialogue between organizations already working with Roma children and children with disabilities to learn programmatic approaches to facilitating inclusion. Specifically, existing programs for marginalized children (e.g., programs developed by Kali Sara and EDUS) for possible cross-pollination of ideas between programs; with particular regard for the assessment of Roma children and outreach to families of children with disabilities.
 | * UNICEF BiH and Partners
 |
| * Focus explicitly on parent education and on parents’ involvement in all-day programs that support children’s holistic, on-going development.
 | * Dubai Cares
* UNICEF BiH and Partners
* NGOs in BiH
 |
|

The evaluation revealed many important lessons. A key lesson was that UNICEF maintains a position of authority and trust to convene the diverse stakeholders within BiH’s complex governmental system. As an international agency that has the directive to work with governments and the mission to serve marginalized children, UNICEF has both the authority and the credibility to convene diverse stakeholders around important issues such as professional standards and inclusion of marginalized children.

Three important issues on the horizon for UNICEF BiH are (1) how to support early intervention efforts in all municipalities, (2) how to involve families in ECD and education efforts, and (3) how to expand programming to children of younger ages for longer, consistent periods of time. The current configuration of municipalities that work with UNICEF appears to be a good starting point for future programming since assurances for governmental buy-in and alignment with UNICEF’s inclusion goals are already in place.

# **Acknowledgements**

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# **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

BiH Bosnia and Herzegovina

CEE-CIS Central and Eastern Europe Commonwealth of Independent States

CP Cerebral Palsy

ECD Early Childhood Development

ECE Early Childhood Education

EDUS Education for All (Bosnia-Herzegovina), an NGO

KM Convertible Marks (currency)

MEL monitoring, evaluation, and learning

MWAI Miske Witt & Associates Inc.

NGO Non-governmental organization

REYN Romani Early Years Network

UNICEF United Nations Children's Emergency Fund

UNDP-WB United Nations Development Program-World Bank

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

# **2. Purpose of the Evaluation**

The purpose of this evaluation was to provide an external review and synthesis of the programmatic achievements of the Dubai Cares-UNICEF BiH Early Childhood program. The main aim was to provide insights into the results that appeared to be most effective in meeting programmatic goals as well as to guide future decision-making. As such, the evaluation team aimed to:

(a) provide a synthesis and analysis of the program outputs and achieved outcomes; and,

(b) elaborate on key learnings in specific areas of interest identified by Dubai Cares and other stakeholders, with the ultimate goal of informing the proposed second phase of the program.

Designed as a utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1978), the evaluation aligns with Dubai Cares’ evidence-based approach to program development. Specifically, the evaluation was designed in consultation with Dubai Cares and UNICEF with the aim of generating evidence that can be used for future programming decisions. This design allowed for better understanding of past events with an aim and lens of predicting future models of success.

# **3. Audience for and Use of the Evaluation**

Four stakeholder groups will use this evaluation. First, Dubai Cares is a United Arab Emirates-based global philanthropic organization that provides children living in developing economies with access to quality education through the design and funding of programs that aim to be integrated, impactful, sustainable and scalable (Terms of Reference, p.1). Dubai Cares has sponsored ECE programs in collaboration with UNICEF in Bosnia-Herzegovina for the past two years and underwrote this evaluation.

Second, UNICEF BiH and its partners will use the evaluation results to inform their subsequent ECD programming. UNICEF was the direct recipient of Dubai Cares support. They reported on project implementation throughout the sponsored program, and they convened a variety of NGOs and local early childhood educators to plan and deliver services to the children of BiH.

Third, the results of this evaluation will also be made available to BiH policymakers. Early Childhood policies are made and implemented in BiH at the federal, entity, cantonal, Brcko District, and municipality levels. It is important to address these multiple levels of policymakers, since there are federal policies in place; but each entity (Republika Srpska and Federation BiH), as well as Brcko District, also has its own policy-making capacity. Further, cantons within entities may interpret and implement policies differently, as may municipal governments. Since policymakers at these levels have had direct or indirect contact with UNICEF during the project period, they are likely to be interested in this evaluation of project-related early childhood policies and in recommendations related to providing a more effective, high-quality early childhood experience for all children, including those who are most marginalized and have a developmental delay or disability.

Finally, NGOs that interact and contract with UNICEF may also utilize these evaluation results for planning, responding to requests for proposals, and leveraging additional support for activities.

# **4. Objectives of the Evaluation**

Building on its core purposes, the evaluation has four main objectives: (1) to evaluate the relevance and design of the current program; (2) to evaluate the efficiency of program implementation; (3) to evaluate the success and effectiveness of the program; and (4) to evaluate the sustainability of the program.

Specifically, the evaluation team sought to answer the following questions:

To what extent . . .

1. was the program relevant for vulnerable children?
2. were budget policy options relevant for the BiH context?
3. were program inputs managed efficiently and effectively?
4. did program activities raise awareness of parents of vulnerable children?
5. were such vulnerable children included in programs?
6. did stakeholders take ownership of the program? and
7. did policy and financial resources support the program?

# **5. Evaluation Methodology**

To meet the aims of the evaluation, the MWAI evaluation team accessed two key sources of data. First, the team examined existing reports, policies, and other publications (in English, Bosnian, and Serbian; see Annex A for a complete list). Second, two MWAI team members conducted a series of interviews and observations with stakeholders at the multi-national, national, cantonal, municipal, and kindergarten center levels to gather a broad understanding of the program and its impact. This adapted “vertical case study” approach (see Vavrus and Bartlett, 2009) enabled the team to understand better how programs were implemented and supported by policy.

The evaluation was both retrospective and prospective; that is, it was intended both to understand and ascribe value to what took place in the past and to guide the future. The sampling approach was both national and representative. Interviews with policymakers, civil society, and existing national reports were national in scope, whereas the case studies focused on municipalities representative of those that participated in the program. In particular, this evaluation required visits to programs that have children of Roma ethnic background, and/or children with disabilities (sensory or physical) or developmental delays. In addition, the cases included programs with children from a range of socio-economic backgrounds and were located in municipalities of different rural levels. Finally, team members visited sites in both governmental entities, Republika Srpska and Federation BiH as well as Brcko District. A further description of the procedures is outlined below.

*Document Review*

The evaluation process began with an extensive review of relevant documents provided by Dubai Cares and UNICEF BiH, as well as those that were identified from the team’s independent research. These included early education plans, policies, and frameworks at various governmental levels; reports on the status and education of Roma in BiH; UNICEF-supported reports on early education in BiH; as well as reports on Dubai Cares program in BiH. (See Annex A for a comprehensive list of documents reviewed.)

*Fieldwork*

In addition to the literature and policy reviews, two MWAI consultants – an expert in early childhood policy and development and an expert in inclusive education – traveled to BiH for a total of 11 person days. They conducted interviews and/or observations with stakeholders ranging from policy-level stakeholders to teachers and parents. A complete list of interviews completed is available in Annex E. Table 1 (below) provides an overview of the nature of interviews and observations completed.

*Analysis*

For the broad evaluation project, all interviews were conducted or interpreted into English, and then organized into thematic units and coded. The evaluation team members then shared and examined the themes and used them to answer the evaluation questions. From this coding activity, questions about relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability were able to be addressed. The team then drew upon document analysis, extant data, and interviews with program officers, policymakers, and program implementers in order to draw its conclusions.

*Ethical Considerations*

Throughout the process, evaluators maintained a neutral stance. Although each team member in the field established rapport with stakeholders, the main purpose of the evaluation was to learn about the program in depth. So, all the questions asked related to programmatic considerations. Interviewers did not ask stakeholders any personal or sensitive questions, and the tone of interviews was to understand better the complexity of early childhood programming in BiH. The team only collected information that would identify participants (e.g., names and titles) for public figures such as NGO leaders or government officials. Such information was not collected from parents or other non-public stakeholders.

**Table 2: Interviews Completed**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Persons Interviewed** | **Organization** | **Title(s) within Organization(s)** | **Sphere of Influence** |
| Sanja Kabil, Amela Saskic, Anna Riati | UNICEF | Deputy Representative, Education Officer, Roma Focal Point | Multinational |
| Daria Dukovic | Ministry of Civil Affairs, BiH | Assistant Director of Education | National |
| Nirvana Pistoljevic | EDUS | Executive Director | National |
| Sanela [Bešić,](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&ved=0ahUKEwipvd7_5rLOAhVC6IMKHZxgD1UQFggtMAI&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.federalna.ba%2Fbhs%2Fvijest%2F162397%2F2-je-zaposlenih-roma-u-skolskim-klupama-nekolicina-djece&usg=AFQjCNGs3358OPPTUzXv8cKNwmpqiNIjmg&sig2=WkIwkNYUGHd9w29fKF0Rqg)  and Dervo [Sejdić](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwi1os6i57LOAhUsw4MKHaZ2B18QFggkMAE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FDervo_Sejdi%25C4%2587&usg=AFQjCNGmOZst6gPU_OM9Zvs3HbDG1f8DEg&sig2=3ybfvq-ylKtLVjTUGvUu6w&bvm=bv.129391328,d.amc) | Kali Sara | President and Vice President | National |
| Multiple | Ministry of Education, Zenica-Doboj | Director, Pedagogical Institute | Cantonal |
| Mulitple | Ministry of Education, Sarajevo | Director, Ministry of Education | Cantonal |
| Multiple | Kakanj Kindergarten and supporting organizations | Multiple | Municipal |
| Multiple | ECD Center Bihac and supporting organizations | Multiple | Municipal |
| Multiple | Bijelijna ECD Center and supporting organizations | Multiple | Municipal |

*Limitations*

Three limitations may impact the results of this evaluation. The most serious limitation was that the program ended in 2014 and 2015 (depending upon location) and is not currently being implemented. This created challenges because data collectors could not observe the program directly and stakeholders’ views may be dated. Another limitation was the time constraint placed on activities. Field-based data collection was compressed due to the need for evaluation data shortly after the request for proposals was circulated. Finally, the complex nature of governance in BiH also made it difficult to gain a complete picture of BiH policy and budget, which would have been preferable. However, the team accepted participants’ perspectives at face value and gathered the most relevant and valid data possible during the evaluation period.

To address these limitations, a strategy of triangulation was used to make the data as trustworthy and accurate as possible. Specifically, one participant’s claims were always checked against other participants’ claims, as well as against available policy and other documents.

# **6. Composition of the Evaluation Team**

Team Leader: Christopher Johnstone, Ph.D. led the evaluation team and focused on national-level concerns such as policy, inter-sectoral collaboration, and NGO engagement. He also specifically focused on inclusive education issues.

Team Co-Lead: Rhiannon D. Williams, Ph.D. focused on service provision, awareness of early childhood models at work in BiH, and analysis of global promising practices in early education in relation to emerging practice in BiH.

Jasmina Josić, Ph.D. conducted a substantive review of policies and other documents in Bosnian and Serbian languages. She further provided insights into the political and social context of BiH.

# **7. Project Description**

The current number of children in BiH who attend ECD, care, and education programming is difficult to measure, but experts interviewed for this evaluation estimate participation at 10% to 12% of the age cohort. It is difficult to find an exact figure because enrolment and participation vary greatly across locations and across different population groups. The enrolment for children aged 3 to 5 was 13.1% in 2011, with rural areas enrolling fewer than 8% of students this age (World Bank, 2015). In the same year, 16% of children attended some form of preschool program prior to entering primary school (aged 5 to 6).

The World Bank additionally found that 2011 enrolment in urban areas was as high as 25%, compared to 13% in rural areas (World Bank, 2015). Disadvantaged children or children with developmental delays enrolled at lower rates than the norm. According to United Nations Development Program-World Bank (UNDP-WB) Roma Survey 2011, only 6.1% of Roma children were enrolled in early education programs in program year 2010–2011 (Roma Education Fund, 2012). Children from middle-income and low-income families were enrolled at rates of 5.5% or lower (UNICEF, 2013). Data is limited on children with developmental delays, though recently BiH began implementing initial early detection of developmental delays in a systematic manner (UNICEF, 2014) and began counting enrolment at the cantonal level (Ministry of Education, 2013). Table 2 (below) provides a general outline of ECE enrolment in BiH.

**Table 3: ECE Participation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ECE enrolment of children aged 3 to 5** |  **13.1%** |
| *Urban areas* |  *23.0%* |
| *Rural areas* |  *8.0%* |
| *Poorest 20% of households (lowest quintile)* |  *1.6%* |
| *Middle 20% of households (middle quintile)* |  *5.1%* |
| *Richest 20% of households (highest quintile)* | *31.1%* |
| **Children in the 1st grade who had attended some preschool** | **16.0%** |
| *Urban areas* | *25.0%* |
| *Rural areas* | *13.0%* |
| **Roma children enrolled in any ECE program** |  **6.1%** |
| **Children with developmental delays** | **No data** |

In order to address the challenges of low enrolment in general, as well as the disproportionately low enrolment of marginalized children, UNICEF developed the program “Increasing Early Learning Opportunities for Children in Bosnia and Herzegovina.” This program was specifically developed to increase overall enrolment in ECD and education programs, to increase the participation of vulnerable children, to build capacity for professionals working with children, and to convene policymakers in an effort to develop supportive policies and practice for children’s early education.

The UNICEF program was operationalized through a 300-hour preschool program for children aged 5 and 6. This program represented a doubling of hours from previous programs across BiH, which were 150 hours in duration. The additional hours for the program were designed to accomplish the three main outcome goals of the program:

Goal 1. Increase preschool education enrolment rate in 46 municipalities for all children aged 4 to 6, including Roma children and children with developmental delays and disabilities.

Goal 2. Enhance the quality of ECE in BiH for children aged 4 to 6, including Roma children and children with developmental delays and disabilities.

Goal 3. The adoption of legislation, evidence-based advocacy, policy development, and budgetary support aimed at expanding ECE in BiH.

# **8. Evaluation Findings**

The evaluation findings are reported below, organized according to the evaluation criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference for this summative evaluation. Each finding is reported with relevant documentary and qualitative field-based evidence.

## **Relevance of Program for Roma Populations and Children with Developmental Delays**

UNICEF’s “Increasing Learning Opportunities for Children in Bosnia and Herzegovina” is commonly known as the “300-hour program” by stakeholders. The term will be used throughout this evaluation in relation to stakeholder comments. A goal of the municipality-based 300-hour program was to reach children who were most marginalized in BiH in order to provide them with ECE and development experiences through a targeted preschool (kindergarten) program that lasted 300 hours. Specifically, UNICEF aimed to increase the enrolment of Roma children and children with developmental delays or disabilities.

Stakeholders interviewed for this study indicated that societal factors were a major impediment to creating inclusive, relevant ECE. Kindergarten directors in two locations noted that familial stigma is associated with having a child with an identified physical or mental disability. The director of an ECD center noted, “parents do not want to acknowledge or accept that their child may have a disability or developmental delays because of the stigma associated with such labels.”

Stigma exists for Roma children as well. Professionals in some of the kindergartens evaluators visited stated that Roma families were different and difficult to understand. The kindergarten director in one municipality noted, “We have tried to establish relationships with the Roma associations, but we have different interests and both sides do not have confidence in the other.” She continued, “What has worked in the past with getting Roma children involved in ECD programs is to have a meal, or hygiene packet, or clothing attached to attendance.” The “social separation” (as characterized by a Roma NGO administrator) was exemplified by a non-Roma kindergarten administrator guessing why Roma children are under-enrolled: “There may be a feeling of embarrassment by not having the same level of hygiene or clothing or shoes as other children in the classroom.” Another kindergarten director suggested that “parents may not have the confidence in the fact that the schools are going to care adequately for the children.” It is unknown how the kindergarten director came to this conclusion, but a Roma assistant in another municipality similarly stated, “We hope that our children are not embarrassed and that they have everything they need before school. They usually feel embarrassed because they don’t have the equipment, clothing and everything else.” One Roma mother noted: “My son stopped with school in fifth grade. I wish that he would have finished, but it was difficult with our financial situation; and children are very difficult with offending and humiliating others. Overall, I believe it is important that the Roma children not feel like second-class citizens.” These comments speak to the stigma Roma children sometimes face, which is reinforced by non-Roma children and perhaps center staff.

Stigma, however, was not a core theme in every area. In another municipality**,** both the kindergarten director and the parents stated that relationships were positive between children of different backgrounds. The kindergarten director noted that she “has good cooperation with the Roma coordinator.” She added, “Each child is a child. I give equal attention to all children.” With respect to parent interactions, both Roma and non-Roma parents said the kindergarten director listened and did a good job of facilitating the meetings with all parents in attendance. Roma parents said, “[We] want the teacher to take care of our child like we would take care of our own. We don’t want our child to feel alienated from the other children in the group. It is important to have others from their communities in their group, and more Roma children so they know each other and feel more comfortable.”

Other parents and government officials concurred. One mother said,

All children were involved in the program. All of us saw Roma children, and we also saw children with special needs. There was a boy in a wheelchair with CP (cerebral palsy), I think. Individual cases with cleft palate and developmental delays were present. Teachers did an excellent job. First, the preschool teachers met with parents and asked parents to talk to children—that was preparation. We parents told our children that it was quite OK to keep company together and nobody should be stigmatized.

Another non-Roma parent said, “To my child, all that was quite normal to see other children. My child did not think it was strange. This is how my child was raised—to see vulnerable children, and my child wanted to help them. She doesn’t impose herself. Children do not see any differences among themselves, particularly socially vulnerable children. My child would tell me, ‘there is a child.’”

In another municipality, teachers related a story of a young girl with Down Syndrome in their 300-hour program. One teacher noted how teachers made a special effort to “encourage all the children to play together and sit at the table for meals with her. We didn’t want any child to feel different or excluded. . . At first it was a little different, but after a while the kids got used to having the little girl in our classroom and it was a very positive experience.” As the kindergarten pedagogue noted, “all the children played with her and did not look at her as a child with special needs.”

The paragraphs above demonstrate that there are differences in how children with disabilities and Roma children are accepted in kindergarten settings. In a 2014 evaluation of the program, Camelia Gheorghe and Nedžada Faginović noted that there were systemic barriers to the participation of Roma children and children with disabilities, despite the 300-hour program. To address the needs of children who were excluded from kindergartens and to respond to the 2014 evaluation, UNICEF undertook two initiatives to increase the relevance of ECE for Roma children and children with disabilities.

Emerging Model for Promoting Roma Inclusion

According to the UNICEF 2015 mid-term report, as well as interviews with UNICEF staff and the Kali Sara NGO, UNICEF was successful in improving the enrolment of Roma children only after a mid-course change was made in response to the mid-term evaluation. In 2015, UNICEF found that there was little change in the enrolment of Roma children after the inception of the 300-hour Dubai Cares sponsored program. Based on data from the evaluation, as well as their own desire to secure specialized support in this area, UNICEF then contracted with the non-governmental organization Kali Sara.

The President of a Roma NGO described the process. “[We] identified 10 municipalities with large Roma communities,” and then “talked to the local authorities, [and] asked them how much they were interested in joining such a project.” She then discussed this with Roma civil society. One of the requirements was for municipalities to co-fund the project. “We wanted municipalities to participate on an equal footing with us,” she noted. “Right in the beginning it was obvious which ones were interested.”

Emerging Model for Including Children with Delays or Disabilities.

As an organization, UNICEF has always expressed a commitment to the inclusion of children with developmental delays and disabilities in state schooling and preschool systems. This commitment, however, requires local implementers to initiate the processes of inclusion. The UNICEF early childhood program featured the involvement of a key partner in the process. The NGO Education for All (EDUS) provided a structured set of activities and materials to support the inclusion of children with developmental delays through ongoing assessment and intervention efforts. EDUS focuses on the assessment and documentation of children’s growth and development, and it provides materials and training for professionals. The core purpose is to monitor and intervene on the skill development of young children with developmental delays. The intention of the program is for local stakeholders to take responsibility for the work of including, monitoring, and supporting children with developmental delays and other disabilities through training and materials distribution.

Limitations of Support Models

At the time of implementation, not all early childhood teachers had the training necessary to create a relevant experience for marginalized children. For example, one teacher relayed a story of the first time she encountered a child with a disability: “It was a situation where we learned as we went along,” she recalled. Neither the teacher nor the pedagogue in the building had had any training related to supporting and working with children with Down Syndrome. Together they researched online resources, and tried different methods with the child. In the end, they felt that all in all the children, parents and teachers gained much from the experience. The teacher ended up relying on the full-time kindergarten teachers in the same building. While also underprepared at first, these teachers did have limited experience working with children with disabilities.

This one example demonstrates that it is nearly impossible to train every teacher in a 46-municipality program, and it highlights the need for continued thinking about ways to efficiently provide the training necessary for teachers in diverse classroom environments.

Relevance of Budget Models

The 300-hour program was completely free for parents. According to a senior policy-maker, early childhood programming is economically beyond the reach of many families (unless provided free in a government-sponsored 150- or 300-hour program). Stakeholders agreed that it is difficult for families with only one or no income to pay fees that are needed for children to attend full-day kindergarten. One Roma Assistant discussed some of the cost barriers to kindergarten and why the 150- and 300-hour programs are so attractive. He stated,

One hundred-fifty hours is free but not free—distance is the reason in some cases [why certain parents don’t send their children]. Roma parents send [children] to the 150-hour because it is free, but the other [full-day kindergarten] is not free. It costs 125 KM per month. If parents are not employed, they cannot afford paying 125 KM per month. Most collect raw materials and sell these and cannot afford 125 per month. Many Roma parents would like to send their children to all-day programs.” In this case, a relevant budget model (i.e., free for parents) supported inclusion.

He stated further, “I know that there were attempts to separate (Roma and non-Roma children) in Bosnia [in some program], I can’t remember which one. I liked [our program] very much in that children were not separated and staff members are kind, and embrace all children equally. They make no difference among children.”

Although providing a program free-of-charge to parents was considered a strong facilitator of inclusion, it was not enough to garner financial support across municipalities that were responsible for funding ECE programs. A 300-hour early childhood model that was free-of-charge was only sustained in a few municipalities after the completion of the Dubai Cares-funded projects. Most municipal governments could not or would not invest the funds necessary to provide a free 300-hour program. As *Education for All 2015 National Report* highlighted, the investment in ECE is “directly conditioned by the level of development of municipalities” and their financial ability to support the program (Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2014).

Investment in ECD is complex because the educational system in BiH, including ECE, is the full financial responsibility of entities, cantons, and Brcko District, with a high degree of coordination from the federal bodies. Financing of education reflects this structural complexity, as “there are thirteen separate educational budgets: two at the entity level, one in the Brcko District and ten cantonal budgets” (Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2014). Furthermore, while the overall financing of primary through higher education comes from these 13 budgets, the funding of ECE programs primarily is the responsibility of the municipalities. There is, however, some supplemental funding for specific groups of disadvantaged children in ECE, and some of this funding also comes from the 13 budgets.

Although policy for ECE programs is developed at the entity, canton, or district level, the funding is primarily allocated at the municipality levels, which may or may not be well represented in the policy discussions. The possibilities for ensuring continuous funding for ECE programs within municipality budgets are difficult to understand and predict. As noted in the *Education for All 2015 National Report*, the wealth or poverty level of municipalities is reflected in the municipalities’ capacity to allocate funds, and thus to support or not-support ECE programs. Such complexity may both explain the excitement over external funds to support the 300-hour program as well as the lack of sustainability once external funds disappeared.

## **Efficiency**

Efficiency relates to the effective use of resources within a set of time constraints. In this program, UNICEF originally envisioned delivery of services in approximately one-third of BiH’s municipalities. At the end of the project, 46 municipalities participated in the 300-hour kindergarten model. The financial and technical support emanating from Dubai Cares made it feasible or attractive for municipalities to support the program. In addition, for many parents this model was attractive because a program was offered closer to home than previous options. To this end, the program was very successful in enrolling a large number of children in ECE programming. It met its goals through the efficient use of resources. However, the three kindergarten directors interviewed all noted that rural access remains a problem (i.e., outside of municipalities). Furthermore, according to two center directors and parents, transportation for Roma children and for some children with disabilities may still be a limitation.

To meet these challenges, local centers attempted their own innovations. In one municipality, the center used the available primary school classrooms and scheduled the early childhood classes during times when teachers could commute to these areas. In another municipality the center had a bus that picked up Roma children in the morning to take them to the kindergarten because most parents did not have their own transportation, and public transportation was not adequate. Similarly, in a third municipality the program had provided transportation for the Roma children to the kindergarten. Stretching resources to facilitate transportation supported the participation of remote children. In one of the municipalities that provided transportation to Roma children, the local Roma coordinator explained, “when we had our first meeting in the kindergarten, we noted that it was important to have transportation for the children to school and home.” He also noted that the program “provided assistance for the children in terms of clothing, food, and transportation to ease the transition for children into the kindergarten program and for parents to feel like their children will fit in.” All of the additional program components described above came through creative financing and an efficient use of external funding to maintain the service free of charge for families.

The 300-hour program itself was also efficient. Parents in one municipality described the impact that a longer program made on their children. “The difference between three months and five months is big. It takes time to get used to the program. The three-month program creates chaos in the heads of children. Five months is longer for building relationships, and it is more useful for children. In three months, as soon as they get used to anything, the program ends. In five months, there is plenty of time for playing games and for getting to know other children; and they are so sad at the end of the program.” Another parent explained, “I too think that 300 hours is much better than 150. It is much easier for parents. Children get to know each other, get used to learning, they acquire learning habits, they get used to having teachers, and they get to know their friends and future schoolmates. It is work and discipline through games.”

The additional time provided by the efficient implementation of services had wide-ranging perceived effects. When asked if there were any challenges with the longer program, parents responded, “Absolutely no—absolutely positive. We parents did our portion of work, and teachers did their portion of work. [Ours was] to bring our children, to come here, take our children from here, make sure our children had sandwiches, and to maintain good cooperation with teacher. We shared the goal to make our children happy. We kept company after hours because children wanted more time together.”

The use of resources to create additional time in programs added a qualitative element to learning. “Most of the parents don’t have time to visit firefighters, museums, or a police station, but it was in the program. For instance, my colleague has a special police uniform, and they liked to see that. Many children are afraid of police or doctors. In the compressed program, they visit the library, with no visit to the police station, so the mandatory program ended 10 days ago with only a few visits. At the end of the [300-hour] program, children were given files with all of their work. A friend of mine had a child in a three-month program; she was not as pleased. There were no files [on the children], no visits, nothing. Only a grading card.”

Another parent added: “Quite frankly before the program, my child was attached, did not play with others, but after the program she cried. Simply my child and other children wanted to go to the kindergarten; they were not happy there was an end. So actually here they learned and played—in school it is different. As my friend told me, as soon as the [150-hour] program ended, there was no time to enjoy.”

Finally, a teacher explained the qualitative differences between the 150- and 300-hour programs. “Most probably, [150- and 300-hour programs] are equally inviting, but we do not have much time for details. The time is too short. Teachers, parents, and children do not have enough time. Children get to know each other and teachers and all activities in a 300-hour program because today a teacher would explain and tomorrow teacher shows them. For example, for the 150-hour program we talk about fruits. In the 300-hour program we learn about fruits, go to marketplace to buy fruits, make a fruit salad, etc. We also teach different vocations of people—a doctor, a postman, a nurse. Also I think birthdays—we celebrate birthday of each and every child—we did not have time to celebrate in the 150-hour program. At the end of the 300-hour program, we organized a performance that lasted for an hour in which children showed everything. Parents come to see the performance. Simply teachers have more time to prepare. The 150 is theory, 300-hour is theory and practice.”

These quotes exemplify the high satisfaction rates that were described in relation to the 300-hour program. This program, which utilized existing spaces and models (but doubled the input of time) can be characterized as an efficient, nationwide approach to providing early childhood services.

## **Success**

According to a variety of parents, kindergarten teachers, center directors, and primary school teachers, the 300-hour program was successful because children appeared to be socially ready for their first year of primary school. Along with the socialization component, teachers, directors, and parents noted that children benefitted from learning the behaviors and routines found in primary school (i.e., listening, following directions, following a schedule) as part of the kindergarten program. Indicators such as literacy, numeracy, and language development were not mentioned by any stakeholders as important indicators of kindergarten success, demonstrating that these academic components have less curricular focus than do social goals for children.

As noted above, the parents interviewed for this study expressed high levels of satisfaction for the program. In one municipality, parents explained, “We didn’t expect them to learn their letters and numbers, but how to share things and develop good hygiene habits as well as an opportunity to play and make friends.” They further added, “At home they didn’t have many opportunities to play with other children.” In the same municipality, one Roma parent noted that she wanted to know that their children were safe and were being prepared for school; and, that they learn how to be calmer, to play, and to socialize with other children.

In a second municipality, the kindergarten pedagogue described both the challenges and the successes of the program.

In our municipality, one of the challenges that we had in implementation was that some parents just weren’t interested. In general, if there is a cost involved, with many being unemployed, this is too difficult for them. With the project we were able to get 45% of children access to the three-month kindergarten program. Now, although we are not at 45%, we are still at 35%.

The project finished at the end of May. I did some of my dissertation research on some of the outcomes. We found that children involved in the kindergarten are achieving better results in primary school in all areas. When children started primary school we collected baseline data. Then, in December, we collected another round of data. We concluded that there was a significant difference between children’s physical/intellectual development and speech. With socio-emotional [development], if we introduced parent involvement, then this wasn’t significantly different.

An often-observed benefit that exemplified the success of the 300-hour program was school readiness. First grade teachers complimented children’s readiness after they attended the 300-hour program. According to one parent, the first grade teacher said that the children who were in the program were patient and respected authority.

Ministry officials in one canton also highlighted an unanticipated success related to children with developmental delays. According to the officials, a “small handful” (estimated at four children) with documented developmental delays entered the Dubai Cares-sponsored 300-hour program. The officials noted that such a small number is typical, as parents generally do not like to expose their child’s disability. However, the length of the program was perceived to have a positive effect on the *identification* of children with developmental delays. Specifically, developmental challenges in children who otherwise may have been missed in short programs were more easily recognizable in longer programs. Ministry officials said the evidence for this was the relatively high number of children who were identified as having developmental delays (n=46) at the end of the extended kindergarten program (Ministry of Education Zenica-Doboj, 2014).

*Limitations to Success*

Compared to highly successful program models from around the world, parent involvement was relatively limited in the 300-hour program. According to the kindergarten directors, Roma coordinators, and kindergarten teachers interviewed, parents were only involved in kindergarten activities twice each year; and there was no formal involvement from home. Involvement activities included parent meetings and sometimes a parent education class. Teachers reported that they were happy to talk with parents about a child’s progress. However, such communication was not an explicit part of the daily program. The communication between teachers and Roma parents was less frequent than communication with non-Roma families. Yet in one municipality, the Roma assistants would often interact with parents when they dropped off their children each day.

The program did not have an explicit component that addressed parent engagement. While documents revealed Roma parents’ engagement through NGOs to some extent, kindergartens did little with regard to structured outreach to parents. While several interviews and program reports identified teachers’ or kindergarten centers’ initiatives to integrate children with developmental delays or to work with their parents to help them support their child’s development, few teachers described structured programmatic approaches to maintain contact with or solicit ideas from Roma parents.

The core work of Roma NGOs was to facilitate parents contact with and support for kindergarten. Such outreach may be crucial. An increasing number of reports (Amnesty International, 2006; Čicak & Hamzić, 2006; Čilić, Halvadzija & Dželilović, 2014; OSCE, 2014) indicate that poverty, social discrimination, and community relations within Roma communities affect how Roma parents understand and are able to support their children’s education. While country-level initiatives improved Roma status during the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, the improvements are mainly visible in the improved housing or the employment of Roma adults, and less so in the educational outcomes (OSCE, 2014). The parents who themselves have experienced discrimination in their own schooling years and face high poverty, also need support in building their trust in educational institutions and in finding resources to provide their children with what they need to attend school (e.g., books, adequate clothing, meals) (Amnesty International, 2006; Čilić, Halvadzija & Dželilović, 2014). Roma NGOs are helping to close the kindergarten-to-community gap, but little evidence was present that school directors and teachers were actively involved in this outreach and communication.

A second area that did not align with global standards related to the age range of participants. The 300-hour program focused on children aged 5 to 6 for a relatively short period of time (i.e., four to five months). This limited focus contrasts with BiH *Preschool Policy Brief* (2014), which called for a minimum of 600 hours over the course of the year before primary school. Both the program and policy brief recommendation may have limited the potential of the program by focusing only on the year immediately before school.

Finally, coordination between health, education, and social welfare sectors was minimal in the four locations visited. This lack of coordination may have made it more difficult for children with developmental delays to succeed in kindergarten programs.

Evidence from a Ministry of Education Zenica-Doboj Canton (2014) roundtable and workshop report indicates that parents in Zenica-Doboj Canton aligned with the findings above. Parents recommended the need for longer as well as more continuous early education opportunities. Specifically, the parents participating in these sessions recommended that the mandatory 150-hour program be expanded to a minimum 300-hours beyond the length of the Dubai Cares project; and, that the program should enroll not only children in the year prior to primary education, but also younger children. The recommendations also noted the necessity of professional development for caregivers and teachers, and the need to improve learning materials and resources. The efforts would also need to focus on informing parents about the importance of ECE, particularly the parents of children with developmental delays or difficulties. Finally, the recommendations noted that it is necessary to build relationships with the private sector or other potential donors in order to fund these programs.

In sum, the interviewed stakeholders perceived the program to be very successful in increasing enrolment nationally and in supporting children’s development of competencies, social skills, and school-readiness. At the same time, the program was not long enough, broad enough (across ages), or adequately multi-sectoral to meet its full potential.

## **Sustainability**

Interviews were conducted with government officials at both the federal and cantonal levels, as well as with UNICEF personnel. Four main points emerged from these interviews, which illustrate the past, present, and future of ECE in BiH. The primary challenges to sustainability identified were that funding was not sustained in 40 municipalities, and that kindergartens themselves are at capacity. The opportunities for future sustainability lie in a policy document currently circulating in BiH and in those examples of innovations in sustainability among programs that have continued the 300-hour program.

*Challenges to Sustainability*

First, there was tremendous interest in and support for the 300-hour program: over 45 municipalities participated in the program. The main driver of such participation was external funding. At present, only five municipalities have continued programming without the support of Dubai Cares funding. This indicates that for the majority of municipalities, ECE is not a central funding priority, but there is interest if external resources exist. The five municipalities that are currently engaged with UNICEF have both interest and funding to support programs. For the rest of the country, high-quality ECE is only for those who have disposable income. There are 150-hour, government-sponsored programs across the country, but the 300-hour program exists in only five municipalities. Extended-hour kindergartens are at full capacity and therefore are inaccessible to many citizens. A central government-level policymaker commented that ECE is available “mainly through urban areas; it is organized for those who can pay. Mandatory preschool year is free, but there is still a problem with participation.” She further asked how one would bring a child to school in a remote area, and why an unemployed parent would send a child to school.

Kindergarten privatization is an unknown factor in relation to sustainability of the 300-hour program. As one policymaker stated, “Kindergartens are now in the care of the local community and privatized. The official program is more private than state. When a school turns children down, it is because of capacity. They may also turn down Roma children. State systems still cost money. Interventions are needed to help.”

The second major barrier to sustainability was that the public kindergartens visited were all observed to be at capacity. Stakeholders commented that it is difficult to get accreditation to be a public kindergarten, and that there is only one accreditation level. An additional complicating factor was that teachers need a bachelor’s degree in ECE in order to be employed. According to some stakeholders, such accreditation challenges have given rise to “illegal” or unregistered kindergartens in homes. Accredited kindergartens have relatively high attendance rates.

*Opportunities for Sustainability*

The 300-hour program as it was previously implemented is not sustainable. However, at the federal, cantonal, and multinational (UNICEF) levels, there is great hope and enthusiasm for the 2016 *Platform for the Development of Preschool Education and Care for the Period 2016–2021.* This document provides a vision for ECE and Care; it calls for funding from local, cantonal, entity, and national governments to support programming; and it outlines activity packages to extend ECE and Care to younger children and to more marginalized children than are presently served. The document, which is currently circulating through various governmental bodies, is intended to break the cycle of inaccessible ECE and Care due to cost or social exclusion. It will extend benefits to children as young as three years old. Support for this platform will likely be a key factor in the success of future programs.

In addition to policy opportunities, there are site examples of how programs have sustained themselves after the initial inputs from Dubai Cares. In both Bihac and Bijliena, directors and pedagogues of kindergartens secured support from external entities for programs they deemed necessary. For example, in Bihac there was a room for children with disabilities and a part-time speech therapist that were supported in part by Save the Children. In Bijliena the pedagogue secured funding from outside donors to sustain the 300-hour program.

In conclusion, there was a tremendous jolt to the sustainability of the 300-hour program after the completion of Dubai Cares support. Even if support had continued, some kindergartens were at capacity and faced sustainability challenges. The dramatic decrease in programs demonstrated that the infusion of funds and programming could not be sustained without ongoing external support.

There appears, however, to be two opportunities for leveraging sustainability among the remaining 300-hour programs in the country. First, *Platform for the Development of Preschool Education and Care for the Period 2016–2021* provides an impetus for increased government funding for ECE and Care. Second, local examples of leveraging alternative external funds exist in both Bihac and Bijliena and may be used as exemplars of local sustainability.

# **9. Conclusions**

In conclusion, there are several noteworthy findings from this evaluation. Each is listed below in relation to its evaluation focal area.

*Relevance*

The EDUS and Kali Sara models for engagement represent areas of focused success, and they also identify an area of emphasis for next steps with Roma children and children with developmental delays. Diagram 1 (below) demonstrates how children were targeted for participation in the two models. Specifically, the Kali Sara program provides cultural outreach and support to children in classes; it also explicitly focuses on monitoring Roma children’s development across a range of indicators. Similarly, the EDUS model has a very strong monitoring and assessment component, and it conducts outreach efforts to encourage parents of children with developmental delays to send their children to kindergarten. Both models appear to be effective, but they have different foci. Although as yet we do not know how a socially-focused disability inclusion model that would also be more focused on monitoring Roma children would work, potentially the two models could benefit from each other’s strengths.

Figure 1: Models of Support



 *Efficiency*

UNICEF’s most efficient function in this project was that of convener. The organization was able to bring together multiple stakeholders to provide a higher quality program than what had previously existed. With adequate funding, the 300-hour program was very popular across BiH. Popularity waned when the funding concluded. UNICEF then regrouped its efforts to work with a smaller number of municipalities willing to co-sponsor programs, which resulted in ongoing improvements in service delivery to Roma children and children with disabilities. The smaller, cost-shared model appears to be very efficient as it makes use of multiple available resources for positive results.

The smaller model also yielded a variety of educational products that can now be leveraged across sites. In an effort to empower governments to take greater responsibility, UNICEF commissioned EDUS to produce training materials. According to an administrator in EDUS, “tools can stay behind” long after any project or personnel shifts. Eventually, the administrator believed, “government will take these on. Once you bring a curriculum in, it stays in a preschool. They [government entities] need to be owners of it. Government needs to feel they are owners of this process.”

*Success*

The UNICEF 300-hour early childhood program was designed to increase enrolment in ECE, expand services to marginalized populations, and influence policy. On many levels, the program succeeded. For example, the program shifted mid-stream to become more *relevant* for Roma children and children with disabilities. Second, the program efficiently scaled up to provide programming in 46 municipalities—well beyond organizational expectations. Third, perceptions of the 300-hour program were very positive in terms of child development outcomes.

*Sustainability*

The most significant challenge faced by this program was sustainability. Once external funding disappeared, the additional costs of moving from a 150- to 300-hour program caused many municipalities to drop the program in favor of the less costly 150-hour program. Though it was not possible to measure cost-effectiveness in this evaluation, it seems that stakeholders experienced a variety of educational benefits from the 300-hour program. Nonetheless, after the loss of Dubai Cares funding, just five municipalities opted to cost-share with UNICEF to maintain the 300-hour program.

After funding ended, UNICEF reached out to municipalities with high Roma populations, convened expert panels, supported training, and required co-funding from governments. Since it requires local support and resources, the current model appears to be sustainable; however, municipalities’ participation decreased dramatically. Nevertheless, new policy opportunities and local innovations may provide insights into future versions of a sustainable ECE agenda in BiH.

# **10. Recommendations**

At the conclusion of this evaluation, both the movement of the *Platform for the Development of Preschool Education and Care for the Period 2016–2021* and the recent focus of UNICEF BiH programs on municipalities that are willing to share program costs created new opportunities for next steps. The data collected for this Summative Evaluation demonstrate the feasibility and potential for governmental buy-in for focused programs in a smaller sub-section of BiH (e.g., for year 1, an additional five municipalities). Such a focused approach may benefit from the following interventions:

1. **Integrate quality assessment of the early learning environment and of children’s learning into the program.** Wherever possible, use already developed and validated tools such as Save the Children’s IDELA (2016), the ECD quality assessment tool, and other tools developed as part of the 300-hour initiative. Such assessment will provide valuable outcomes information to policymakers, potential funders, and professionals working in the field.

 **2. Expand programming beyond 300 hours.** Although participants deemed the 300-hour program far superior to the 150-hour program, one five-month program immediately before school will not help children develop socially, physically, and cognitively as well as they could in a year-long or multiple-year program. In order to align with global norms, we recommend that future programs immediately move to a 600-hour program for children aged 5 and 6. The doubling of hours (from 300 to 600 hours) would likely not mean doubling the cost, since most program materials already would have been purchased. The largest expenditure to take into account for both the expansion of hours and expansion to younger children most likely would be personnel costs (e.g., teachers and allied therapists). Increased intensity programs can then be added for younger children.

1. **Expand early intervention kindergarten programs to children aged 3 to 5.** In addition to expanding the quantity of time for children aged 5 to 6, expanding early intervention services for children aged 3 to 5 will better prepare marginalized children for kindergarten. Currently, EDUS is delivering many of the early intervention services to children with developmental delays in BiH (e.g., early communication and social skill development) while early childhood programs (that require parent contribution) exist for children aged 3 to 5. If programs for children aged 3 to 5 are expanded to serve younger children who are vulnerable, then service delivery provisions can be included in the general education model. Such provisions would require cross-sectoral or cross-disciplinary coordination and communication; that is, therapists, representatives from social services, and educators would need to meet regularly to plan intervention services inside and outside of kindergartens, as well as full sponsorship for low-income families.
2. **Develop best practices among providers of early childhood intervention for marginalized children.** A starting point for this is to develop cross-pollination of ideas and models from NGOs currently working with Roma children and children with disabilities. Specifically, it is recommended that UNICEF and partners increase assessment and monitoring of Roma students and increase outreach for children with disabilities. Further cross-learning would occur from engagement with other organizations in BiH also engaged in ECE for marginalized children (e.g., Save the Children).
3. **Introduce parent support/education and involve parents.** Effective parent education is based upon the recognition and respect for the knowledge and experiences parents bring into the early childhood environment. We recommend that both parents and children, newborn to first grade, participate in activities and experiences that foster children’s social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and language skills.

These recommendations are Outlined in Table 4 below, and are listed according to evaluation report audience/stakeholder group(s) who would engage in exploring and implementing the recommendation.

**Table 4: Recommendations**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Recommendations | Audience |
| * Conduct and integrate ongoing quality assessment of the early learning environment as well as children’s learning outcomes. This may be facilitated through existing measures such as those developed by other organizations (see Save the Children’s IDELA[[2]](#footnote-2) tool), internal assessment tools (ECD quality assessment tools), or those developed by UNICEF partners.
 | * Dubai Cares
* UNICEF BiH and Partners
 |
| * Extend programs beyond 300 hours to a minimum of one full year (600 hours) before primary school, and beginning earlier than age five.
* Focus on identification and early intervention for children with developmental delays and physical disabilities (i.e., for children aged 0 to 3).
 | * Dubai Cares
* UNICEF BiH and Partners
* BiH policymakers
 |
| * Facilitate a “best practices” dialogue between organizations already working with Roma children and children with disabilities to learn programmatic approaches to facilitating inclusion. Specifically, existing programs for marginalized children (e.g., programs developed by Kali Sara and EDUS) for possible cross-pollination of ideas between programs; with particular regard for the assessment of Roma children and outreach to families of children with disabilities.
 | * UNICEF BiH and Partners
 |
| * Focus explicitly on parent education and on parents’ involvement in the context of all-day programs that support children’s holistic on-going development.
 | * Dubai Cares
* UNICEF BiH and Partners
* NGOs in BiH
 |
|

# **11. Lessons Learned**

There were many lessons learned, but key among them was that UNICEF is an important partner to governmental and non-governmental organizations. As an international agency, it has the credibility, authority, and trust to convene diverse stakeholders around important issues.

Four important issues on the horizon for BiH are: (1) how to leverage learning from partner NGOs; (2) how to support early intervention efforts; (3) how to involve families in ECD and education efforts; and (4) how to expand programming to younger children and ensure that the programs are of sufficiently long duration to produce desired results (for further discussion, see Conclusions section above). These issues are informed by high-level lessons learned from the previous program, including:

1. Participation of marginalized groups and parents cannot be assumed. UNICEF’s mid-stream contracts with non-governmental organizations were a necessary expenditure because Roma parents and parents of children with disabilities did not immediately enroll children in kindergarten programs. Specific outreach and support efforts were necessary to ensure attendance by these marginalized groups. Further outreach to parents as partners in the early education process will likely facilitate greater participation, but this will not occur if not structured and purposeful.

2. An increase in funding facilitates increased ECE participation. The very high rate of municipal participation in the kindergarten program (and subsequent low rate after Dubai Cares funding was completed) demonstrates that funding can facilitate new activity. This lesson can be applied to expanding time of programs or extending programs to younger age groups and with new direct focus on early intervention. Dubai Cares funding facilitated national participation in the 300-hour program, which was widely acclaimed by stakeholders. Similar funding infusions can be used to incentivize the creation of early childhood intervention programs or longer kindergarten programs, with the expectation that alternative funding needs to be in place after initial grants.

 3. Sustainability and expansion is possible if successful examples can be replicated. Although a small number of municipalities continued with the 300-hour program after Dubai Cares support was complete, a blueprint exists for how to expand to new municipalities in a targeted way. Through a combination of the use of existing materials, leveraging additional funds, and government cost-sharing, programs carried on with UNICEF support in five municipalities. By sharing this success model (and leveraging policy momentum from the *Platform for the Development of Preschool Education and Care for the Period 2016–2021*) a new cohort of municipalities participating in the 300-hour program should emerge.

In short, a rapid infusion of funds will create excitement, but it does not specifically address the needs of marginalized populations and parents unless explicitly designed to do so. Further, a rapid infusion of funds creates an increase of program quality, but this quality can only be sustained if local investment is made in the programs. UNICEF has demonstrated success in managing the contributions of multiple stakeholders, communicating the need for local investment, and management of external funds. Such management will be important for targeted future investments by Dubai Cares.

# **Annexes**

## **Annex A: Documents Consulted**

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## **Annex B: Terms of Reference**



**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR FINAL PROGRAMME EVALUATION**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Programme Title:  | **Increasing Early Learning Opportunities for Children in Bosnia & Herzegovina**  |
| Location:  | Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH)  |
| Activity:  | Final Evaluation  |
| Timeframe:  | April 2016  |
| Commissioned by:  | Dubai Cares  |

**1. About Dubai Cares**

Dubai Cares, part of Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives, is a UAE-based global philanthropic organization working towards providing children in developing countries with access to quality education through the design and funding of programs that aim to be integrated, impactful, sustainable and scalable. Education is more than a human right, it is an irrevocable asset. Yet, 124 million children and young adolescents around the world don’t go to school and a further 250 million cannot adequately read and write.

Education is one of the most effective tools to break the cycle of poverty, a belief held by our founder His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai. It was from this belief and the desire to give children - regardless of their gender, nationality, race or religion - the opportunity to become positive contributors to society, that His Highness established Dubai Cares on September 19, 2007.

*Focus Areas*

Our mission to increase children’s access to quality education is realized through integrated programs that eliminate the underlying obstacles that prevent children from going to school and learning. This is achieved through building and renovating schools and classrooms, improving water, sanitation and hygiene in schools, providing school feeding, deworming activities, early childhood education, as well as teacher training, curriculum development, literacy and numeracy.

Gender equality is a cross cutting theme in all Dubai Cares’ education programs with an approach that aims to secure equal access for boys and girls to safe learning environments with adequate facilities, materials and academic support from gender sensitized teachers and communities.

Central to Dubai Cares approach is a focus on monitoring, evaluation and learning. This ongoing process enables the organization to gather evidence collected during regular field visits, relevant reports by implementing partners, as well as reports by academic institutions that Dubai Cares appoints to independently evaluate its programs. Dubai Cares uses this knowledge to design and fund innovative and stimulating programs that test alternative models and hypothesis to increase the impact of its interventions.

**2. Background & Context**

After over seven years of intensive work on preparation of policies, strategies and the Framework Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is a general consensus that preschool education needs to be promoted and expanded throughout the country, and that capacities need to be developed to ensure quality ECE. This will contribute to better outcomes for children and increased primary completion rates.

The adoption of the Framework Law on Preschool Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the pending streamlining of the corresponding laws at the cantonal and entity level and in Brčko District created the formal conditions for the increase in preschool education enrolment in the year prior to school entry.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, only around 15% of 4- to 5-year-old children are enrolled in preschool education. The country has the lowest preschool participation rate in the European and Central Asian region. 85% of children aged 4 to 5 in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not have access to preschool education.

Inclusion as a concept in education exists in theory, but no infrastructure and appropriate by-laws, standards, monitoring and quality control have been put in place in BiH. Although there are some attempts in the area of early childhood development, a coherent system that would tie in health, education and social work sectors is still lacking, primarily because of the lack of trained professional staff.

Only a very small number of Roma children attend preschool education, due to limited services available, prejudices towards the Roma population, and limited awareness amongst parents of the importance of early learning. It is estimated that only approximately 1.5% of Roma children of preschool age in BiH are attending preschool education in BiH. As a result, children are not well prepared for primary school and are at high risk of drop-out.

**3. Program Details**

Given the context mentioned above, Dubai Cares in 2013 launched a 2-year intervention to increase access to organized early learning programs prior to primary school entry and improve the physical, socioemotional and cognitive development and to increase early learning opportunities for children aged 4 to 5 in 15 municipalities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with special attention to vulnerable children such as Roma children and children with developmental delays and disabilities.

The project had 3 main objectives:

1. To increase the preschool education enrolment rate in 15 municipalities, for all children aged 4-5, including Roma children, and children with developmental delays and disabilities.
2. To enhance the quality of early childhood education in BiH for children aged 4 to 5, including Roma children and children with developmental delays and disabilities.
3. To support evidence-based advocacy, adoption of legislation, policy development and budgeting to expand early childhood education in BiH.

Through the above objectives, the project aimed to test the followinghypothesis:

The impact of preschool interventions is bigger for vulnerable children:

* Roma children who attended one year of good quality preschool programme show 30% improvement in four domains compared to other Roma children;
* Children with developmental delays and disabilities who received early childhood intervention services and attended one year of good quality preschool programme (with an individualized and multidisciplinary approach) show 30% improvement in four domains compared to other children with developmental delays and disabilities.

***Component 1: To increase the preschool education enrolment rate in 15 municipalities for all children aged 4-5, including Roma children and children with developmental delays and disabilities.*** This component was designed to achieve: increased awareness of parents, especially from socially disadvantaged groups, on the importance of and need to enroll children in early education, in 15 municipalities; increased number of facilities in 15 municipalities where children can have access to inclusive Early Childhood Education (ECE) services and Early Detection Interventions (ECI), which are adequately equipped; equal opportunities for poor children, children with developmental delays and disabilities and Roma children to have access to inclusive preschool education.

***Component 2: To enhance the quality of early childhood education in BiH for children aged 4 to 5, including Roma children, and children with complex developmental delays and disabilities.*** Support to this component aimed to achieve: increased number of facilities in 15 municipalities where children have access to inclusive Early Childhood Education (ECE) services and Early Detection Interventions (ECI) that are adequately staffed, with qualified teachers and assistant teachers; institutionalized capacity development initiatives for preschool teachers, taking into account the special needs of children with developmental delays and disabilities, and Roma children; implementation of the one year preschool program based on the common core curriculum and ensure the stimulation of children through: a) physical development, b) socio-emotional development, c) cognitive development and d) development of speech, communication and creativity, with special attention to Roma children, and children with developmental delays and disabilities.

***Component 3: To support evidence-based advocacy, adoption of legislation, policy development and budgeting to expand early childhood education in BiH.***

This component had the objective of employing: operational system to monitor progress in children´s learning achievements and school readiness, as a result of various formal and informal ECE programs, developed and used in 15 municipalities; evidence-based budgeted policy options submitted to the BiH authorities to inform future policies and programs in the country, as well as effective reallocation of resources in support of ECE; evidence collected in BiH through the Dubai Cares – UNICEF program to inform global research, policies and programs related to early childhood education.

**4. Evaluation Objectives**

Dubai Cares is committed to an evidence based approach where monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) is an integral part of every program. Final program evaluations conducted by an external consultant aim to provide an unbiased opinion on the programmatic achievements in order to raise awareness of activities/approaches that yield results to relative stakeholders as well as guide future decision making. As such, the overarching objectives for the evaluation are to:

1. Provide an independent verification of the program outputs and achieved outcomes as per the agreed contract (and approved revisions) and,
2. Derive key learnings on specific areas of interest identified by Dubai Cares and other stakeholders as outlined further in the document with the ultimate goal of informing the proposed second phase of the program

**5. Scope & Key Areas of Interest**

In alignment with the evaluation objectives, the assessment will seek to obtain answers to the following questions:

*Relevance & Program Design*

* How relevant is the inclusion of vulnerable children such as Roma children and children with developmental delays and disabilities in the design of this program to the context in BiH?
* How relevant are the budget policy options submitted to authorities in the BiH context?
* What are the main lessons learned that can inform the second phase of the program?

*Efficiency of Implementation*

* How well was the availability/usage of means/inputs managed?
* To what extent were the program processes, procedures and structures in place capable of delivering program activities and targets on schedule?

*Success & Effectiveness*

* How well was the project able to achieve its planned objectives in all three components?
* To what extent did the program activities relating to increasing awareness of parents cater to socially disadvantaged groups?
* To what extent was the program effective in the inclusion of vulnerable children such as Roma children and children with developmental delays and disabilities?

*Sustainability*

* What is the level of ownership of the project outcomes by target groups?
* What is the level of policy support and financial resources provided and the degree of interaction between project and policy level?
* To what extent has program outcomes attracted additional external support

**6. Methodology**

The evaluation should represent a mixture of methods, both qualitative and quantitative for data collection and analysis. The consultant will review key program documents and reports provided by Dubai Cares and other stakeholders. Such documents shall include, but not limited to the background program documents, grant proposals, program revisions, progress reports, and other documents related to the program.

In addition to the review of relevant literature related to the task, the consultant shall also undertake data collection using different methods such as: key informants, questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions with relevant respondents in order to enrich the program review with both qualitative and quantitative information. The consultant is expected to provide the detailed methodology to be used to deliver the stipulated scope of work and review questions. Direct observation is critical for gathering evidence and opinion and is highly recommended by Dubai Cares.

**7. Time-frame**

Please provide a realistic time table to include the following key activities:

1. Development of the evaluation design; finalization of the evaluation matrix; sampling strategy
2. Development of research instruments (questionnaires, interview guidelines, etc.)
3. Data collection & analysis
4. Meeting with project staff and stakeholders on the initial findings and recommendations
5. Preparation of the draft report
6. Incorporation of comments and finalization of the evaluation report.

The evaluation as it is designed is expected to be completed within **30 days**.

**8. Proposal Template**

The proposal should include:

* A detailed elaboration of issues to be addressed/covered;
* A description of the review plan including details of the proposed methodology, sampling, study design; major stages and milestones for the review and a timetable of activities.
* Detailed budget

o The consultant shall be required to submit a budget breakdown, in the form of a financial proposal. The budget presented should include professional fees, travel and subsistence, reproduction charges, courier costs (if applicable) and unit costs should be calculated as a per day tariff (e.g. fees).

* Past performance summaries (at least three brief descriptions of past or current contracting mechanisms for efforts similar in size, scope and complexity) and list of references that demonstrate performance in conducting similar evaluations.
* CVs conforming to the qualifications listed above for all persons to manage and conduct the review

**9. Profile of the Evaluation Consultant**

Dubai Cares will select the consultant based on their proven past experience, qualifications and ability to deliver a quality product in the time allotted. Particular qualifications for the consultant include:

* Phd in Social Sciences / Economics / Education with at least 10 years of relevant experience
* A minimum of 10 years in conducting in-country program evaluations in the field of education, child development, child health and social services
* At least 10 years in planning and conducting both qualitative and quantitative research (field work, data collection, validation, analysis)
* Demonstrated ability and experience in working with communications in Europe
* Demonstrated analytical skills
* Excellent writing skills (previous publications)
* High levels of interpersonal skills; facilitation and interviewing skills

**10. Outputs and Deliverables**

The consultant is expected to prepare and submit to Dubai Cares a set of key reports in the course of undertaking this evaluation. The following have been identified as key reports to be submitted:

1. *Inception Report*
	* To be prepared and submitted within two weeks after the signing of the contract. Based on the literature review and discussions with Dubai Cares, the inception report should focus on:
		1. the understanding of the Terms of Reference and scope,
		2. the relevant methodology to be adopted,
		3. the evaluation design and key questions,
		4. the work-plan for the assignment and evaluation matrix.
		5. Note: The inception report must be approved by Dubai Cares before proceeding to the next phase.
2. *Draft Report*
	* To be prepared and submitted for Dubai Cares’ feedback, comments, questions and inputs.
	* In addition, the consultant may also be required to present the Draft Report to a wider audience for validation.
3. *Final Report*
	* To be prepared and submitted to Dubai Cares on, or before the expiry of the assignment contract. Any valid extension may be mutually agreed between the consultant and Dubai Cares, provided it carries no extra cost to the latter.
	* The final report shall be no more than 30 pages and must include an executive summary of the key findings, conclusions and actionable recommendations.
	* Additional requirements are delineated on the Final Report Template attached as ANNEX 1

**11. To Apply**

Qualified consultants with the requirements detailed above are invited to apply:

To: Nada Al Hajjri Country Program Officer

nada.alhajjri@dubaicares.ae

**ANNEX 1**

**Final Report Template**

Title Page including: project name, date of report, authors and their affiliations.

1. Executive Summary (1-4 pages)
	* Brief project description and context
	* Purpose and expected use of the evaluation
	* Objectives of the evaluation
	* Summary of the evaluation methodology
	* Principle findings and conclusions, especially relating to project goals / targets
	* Key recommendations
	* Summary of lessons learned

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

1. Purpose of the evaluation
2. Audience for and use of the evaluation
3. Objectives of the evaluation
4. Evaluation methodology, including: rationale for choice of methodology, data sources, methods for data collection and analysis, participatory techniques, ethical and equity considerations, major limitations of the methodology
5. Composition of the evaluation team, including any specific roles of team members
6. Project description, including: context, underlying rationale, stakeholders and beneficiaries, conceptual model, results chain or logical framework, and project monitoring system
7. Evaluation findings,
8. Conclusions: insights into the findings; reasons for successes and failures; innovations
9. Recommendations (based on evidence and insights)
10. Lessons learned with wider relevance and that can be generalized beyond the project

Annexes to the evaluation report:

* + Terms of Reference for the evaluation
	+ Evaluation matrix
	+ Timetable
	+ List of individuals interviewed and of stakeholder groups and/or communities consulted
	+ List of supporting documentation reviewed
	+ Research instruments: questionnaire, interview guide(s), etc. as appropriate
	+ Project logical framework
	+ Specific monitoring data, as appropriate
	+ Summary tables of progress towards outputs, targets, goals – referring directly to the indicators established for these in the project log frame
	+ Short biographies of the evaluators.

## **Annex C: Evaluation Matrix**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Question | Response | Evidence Sources | Notes |
| How relevant is the inclusion of vulnerable children such as Roma children and children with developmental delays and disabilities in the design of this program to the context of BiH? |  |  |  |
| How relevant are the budget policy options submitted to authorities in the BiH context? |  |  |  |
| What are the main lessons learned that can inform the second phase of the program?  |  |  |  |
| How well was the availability/usage of means/inputs managed? |  |  |  |
| To what extent were the program processes, procedures, and structures in place capable of delivering program activities and targets on schedule? |  |  |  |
| How well was the project able to achieve its planned objectives in all three components? (Relevance, Efficiency, Sustainability) |  |  |  |
| To what extent did the program activities relating to increasing awareness of parents cater to socially disadvantaged groups?  |  |  |  |
| To what extent was the program effective in the inclusion of vulnerable children such as Roma children and children with developmental delays and disabilities?  |  |  |  |
| What is the level of ownership of the project outcomes by target groups? |  |  |  |
| What is the level of policy support and financial resources provided and the degree of interaction between project and policy level?  |  |  |  |
| To what extent have program outcomes attracted additional external support? |  |  |  |

## **Annex D: Evaluation Timetable**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Deliverable** |  | **Target Date** |
| **Inception Report** | Literature ReviewRelevant MethodologyEvaluation Design and Key QuestionsWork Plan for the AssignmentEvaluation Matrix | May 30, 2016 |
| **Evaluation Design**  | 1. Finalization of the Evaluation Matrix
2. Sampling Strategy
 | May 30, 2016 |
| **Research Instruments** | 1. Classroom Observation Tool
2. Staff Interview Questions
3. Key Stakeholder Interview Questions
4. Parent Focus Group Protocol and Questions
 | May 30, 2016 |
| **Data Collection & Analysis** | 1. Translation of focus groups and interviews
2. Utilizing consultant team expertise in analysis
3. Synthesis of analysis
 | June 6-10, 2016 (data collection)June 13-24, 2016 |
| **Initial Findings/ Recommendations** | Presentation of initial findings and recommendations for feedback by Dubai Cares, UNICEF, and other stakeholders | June 27 – July 1, 2016 |
| **Preparation of Draft Report** | Submission of draft report to Dubai Cares and UNICEF by July 24, revision requests due July 31  | July 4-15, 2016 |
| **Final Report** |  | July 31 (dependent on revision requests) |

## **Annex E: Field Visits and Interviews**

**TENTATIVE PLAN OF VISITS 6 – 10 JUNE, 2016**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DAY** |  | Rhiannon Williams | Christopher Johnstone |
| **Sunday,** **5th June** |  | Arrival | Arrival on Tuesday, 7th June |
| **Monday,** **6th June** | 10:00 – 11:30 | Meeting with UNICEF staff |
| 11:30 – 12:30 | Visit to Public Institution “Djeca Sarajeva” (Sarajevo kindergarten) and meeting with representative of Ministry of Education Sarajevo Canton and kindergarten director |
| 12:30 – 20:30 | Trip to Bihac |
| **Tuesday, 7th June** | 09 00 – 10:30 | Visit to Bihac kindergarten and observation of teachers` work in one group |
| 10:30 -11:30 | Meeting with stakeholders (ministry, municipality, center for social work, Roma coordinator, kindergarten director) |
| 11:30 – 12:30 | Focus group with Roma parents |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch break  |
| 13:30 – 14:30 | Focus group with non Roma parents |
| 14:30 – 20:30 | Trip to Sarajevo |
| **Wednesday, 8th June** | 07:30 – 11:30 | Trip to Bijeljina  | 09:00 – 11:00 | Meeting with Roma NGO “Kali Sara” |
| 11:30 – 13:00 | Visit to Bijeljina kindergarten and observation of teachers` work in one group | 11:00 – 12:00 | Meeting with Assistant minister for education, Ministry of Civil Affairs BiH |
| 13:00 – 14:00 | Lunch break | 12:00 – 13:00 | Lunch break |
| 14:00 – 15:00 | Meeting with stakeholders (ministry, municipality, center for social work, Roma coordinator, kindergarten director) | 13:00 – 15:00 | Visit to early detection and intervention activities – NGO EDUS |
| 15:00 – 16:00 | Focus group with Roma parents |  |
| 16:00 – 17:00 | Focus group with non-Roma parents |  |
| **Thursday, 9th June** | 09:00 – 10:00 | Trip to Brcko | 09:00 – 09:45 | Trip to Kakanj |
| 10:00 – 12:00 | Visit to ECD Center in Brcko | 09:45 – 10:00 | Visit to Kakanj kindergarten and observation of teachers` work in one group |
| 12:00 – 13:00 | Lunch break | 10:00 – 11:00 | Meeting with stakeholders (municipality, center for social work, Roma coordinator, kindergarten director) |
| 13:00- 17:00 | Trip to Sarajevo | 11:00 – 12:00 | Focus group with Roma parents |
|  |  | 12:00 – 13:00 | Lunch break |
|  |  | 13:00 – 14:00 | Focus group with non Roma parents |
|  |  | 14:00 – 14:30 | Trip to Zenica |
|  |  | 14:30 – 15:30 | Meeting with director of Pedagogical institute, Zenica Doboj Canton (TBC) |
|  |  | 15:30 – 16:30 | Trip to Sarajevo |
| **Friday, 10th June** | 10:30 – 12:00 | Meeting with UNICEF staff | 10:30 – 12:00 | Meeting with UNICEF staff |
| **Saturday, 11th June** |  | Departure |  | Departure |

## **Annex F: Evaluators’ Biographies**

Team Leader: Christopher Johnstone, Ph.D.: Inclusive education expert in the European and International context. Dr. Christopher Johnstone has over 10 years’ experience consulting on inclusive education projects in international settings. During this time, he has led or lent his expertise to projects in Lesotho, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Tanzania, and India. He has specifically consulted with UNICEF in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan. He was also selected to develop an Inclusive Education module for UNICEF CEE-CIS (2014). Johnstone is an Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota (USA) specializing in Comparative and International Development Education. Prior to his career in consulting and higher education, he was a special education teacher, community based rehabilitation specialist, and international education administrator.

Team Co-Lead: Rhiannon D. Williams, Ph.D.: Expert in ECE quality assessment, evaluation tool design, implementation and analysis. Dr. Rhiannon Williams has 14 years of experience in research, project management, and policy writing, which includes developing and implementing surveys, conducting focus groups, coding, analyzing, writing, and presenting results. Her main research interests are children’s rights, early childhood education (both domestic and international), access and equity in education (K-12, and Higher Education) and internationalization of higher education. Her 2010 dissertation research, “Constructions of Equitable Notions of Quality in Early Childhood Care and Development from Two Communities in the Philippines: Local Practices of *bayanihan* and *dagyaw*,” was closely related to the focus of this evaluation. At the University of Minnesota, she has participated in four research projects, including the Assessment of Quality Early Childhood Family and Day Care Settings in Minnesota (QUINCE Project). Dr. Williams has conducted evaluations and research in five countries and has traveled in over 50.

Jasmina Josić, Ph.D., Expert in evaluation and Bosnian language, culture and the BiH education system. Dr. Jasmina Josić has 10 years of experience in research and evaluation in various sectors of education (K-12, higher education, non-formal education) in the US and internationally. Dr. Josić examined the quality of higher education in BiH and the value of the educated workforce for the country’s economic development in her master’s thesis. She provided linguistic and consulting support to the U.S. Army peace-keeping mission in BiH during the postwar period, focusing on civic, political and military stabilization. Dr. Josić has also managed and conducted research on youth programs in urban U.S. settings, where her interests lie in examining youth citizenship and identity, student engagement and achievement, and urban education.

Shirley Miske, Ph.D.: Evaluation and Area Expert. Founder of Miske Witt and Associates Inc. (MWAI), Miske has over 20 years of experience and wide-ranging expertise in evaluating education projects, planning education programs and coordinating research projects. Particular areas of expertise include: quality of education (especially through the rights-based, Child-Friendly Schools approach, of which Inclusion is one component), teacher professional development and curriculum review, and the relationship of education policies to practice. Miske has taught early childhood learning and is committed to fostering high quality and equitable ECE learning environments. She oversaw the development of a best practice report on ECD for Child Fund, and she led a system-wide study of inclusive education (early childhood through secondary education) for the Ministry of Education, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Inter-American Development Bank (2008).

1. See <https://nwb.savethechildren.net/news/why-are-pre-school-programs-so-important-children-bih-infographic> for more information on the IDELA tool and its current uses in BiH. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See <https://nwb.savethechildren.net/news/why-are-pre-school-programs-so-important-children-bih-infographic> for more information on the International Development Learning Assessment (IDELA) tool and its current uses in BiH. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)