

**Evaluation of Child Protection Unit intervention within the framework of social welfare system reform and decentralisation of social service processes in Albania**

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## Chapter 1

### 1 Acknowledgements

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We are very grateful to the children and families we visited, who so generously let us into their lives and shared their concerns with us

## Chapter 2

### 2 Executive Summary

#### Our mandate

This report takes the form of an evaluation of the Child Protection Units located in local authority structures in Albania and follows the requirements of the Terms of Reference drawn up by UNICEF and ADC.

In having approved the "National Strategy for Children" and in creating an accompanying Action Plan (2005-2010) the Government of Albania has demonstrated that it is taking seriously the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Monitoring of this strategy is undertaken by the "Inter Ministerial Committee on the Rights of Children" and a Technical Children's Secretariat

The terms of the evaluation allowed us to conduct a comprehensive Desk Review, which was invaluable to our familiarising ourselves with the present situation of children and families in Albania

The degree to which the intentions contained in these high-level government declarations are being taken seriously is manifested at local level by the creation of Child Protection Units – which now exist in 14 areas of Albania, at city, town and commune level

Our team was asked by UNICEF and ADC to examine and analyse the impact of four functioning Child Protection Units, bearing in mind that the original *rationale* for having created them had been to assist children at risk of being trafficked and recognising that now the Child Protection Units were tackling a wider remit. We are expected to suggest improvements for making the work of these decentralised entities more effective in reaching and making a difference to intended beneficiaries and to consider the extent to which Child Protection Units might be developed into responding to referrals of other vulnerable and socially-excluded groups

In particular, we focussed on whether or not the Child Protection Units had discharged their basic mandate to promote children's rights at the local level, to identify and refer vulnerable children in need of support, to prevent and protect children from all forms of abuse, exploitation, violence, neglect and trafficking, by coordinating actions between local actors towards efficient management of the cases identified

The context: Child Protection Units

It is with these structures that this evaluation primarily is concerned and a range of implications arising from their performance and development. The inception of Child Protection Units is based on the National Strategy and Action Plan for Children, ratified by Decisions of the Council of Ministers 368, dated 31.05.2005 and Decision No.487, dated 30.06.2005

Within the National Child Protection Strategy, the establishment of specialised child protection offices was seen at the local level operating as social services departments under the administration of Municipalities or Communes

The Action Plan of the National Child Protection Strategy, point 1.2, clearly foresees “The creation of specialised structures for the protection of children at a local level”, a duty seen to be covered by the anticipated State Committee of Child Protection as foreseen in the draft Children’s Code involving responsible ministries, local government units and non-governmental organisations as well as the development of “a case management system for children who are violated and maltreated”

Although the initial impetus for the creation of these organisational units was to tackle trafficking of children, they can be said to have deepened and widened in terms of reach to children and families and to other socially excluded individuals and groups in communities – now in 14 areas of Albania

These entities are embedded within the administrative structures of the Municipality – and three within the Commune structure – and as such can be considered as embryonic examples of the beginnings of a free and universal social services geared to children and families in particular

The structure of the Child Protection Units is of enormous significance, as it indicates the importance that the governing authorities in Albania afford to child protection, as these entities, once funded by external donors, are now funded, at least partially, by Albanian local authorities

This Report will make reference to a possible formula for future funding. The potential for this model of social work service designed to support families and protect children to be used as building blocks for permanent child protection structures in Albania – in partnership with civil society and international organisations – is clear and realisable

Furthermore, the development of the Child Protection Units- as a core component of social services and economic aid - fits well with a parallel and continuing process of decentralisation in Albania. In locating these structures dedicated to protect children and support families at local level, municipalities and Communes are given an opportunity to provide services to their most vulnerable and marginalised citizens, that are accessible, accountable and sensitive to local needs. In doing this, local authorities in Albania are following best practice in family support and child protection services practised internationally

We were required to scrutinise the ability of these embryonic social service structures to identify vulnerable, often hard-to reach children and families and whether these families were referred on appropriately to agencies that could help them and to coordinate interventions in order to avoid duplication and confusion of purpose and roles. We felt we were able to report positively on the abilities of the Child Protection Units to achieve this

Furthermore, our evaluation was to analyse information concerning the service users of the Child Protection Units in order to reveal consistencies and disparities concerning the delivery of the service, the social and ethnic composition of client groups and examine documentation used to plan and record the respective interventions

We also included in our examination the of running costs of a Child Protection Units, separating expenses met by local government in Albania from development costs provided by external partners to the initiative. We also make reference to the likely long-term costs of not having family support and child protection services in place

A series of Field Visits was conducted in four separate areas of Albania – to Child Protection Units which were at different stages of development and which were meeting different constituencies of need. However, we were struck by the integrity of the operational model in all four Units, which had the interests of families and children uppermost and dealt with intractable problems head-on and with determination and resilience

We report on the findings of our Field Visits in detail below, including visits to families and children as well as Focus Groups and we have included in the Report some indication of our discussions with and observations of, the Child Protection Units

Our mission required us to examine and report upon matters of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Consequently, we were bound to examine precisely what the work of the Child Protection Units actually was, where the referrals came from and what was done with them. For this reason we devoted some attention to case management

Since accurate assessment is at the core of confident and competent child protection work, we also looked at the methods of assessment used. We were reassured to learn that every Child Protection Worker is required to refer to the Child Protection Worker Guidelines which amounts to step-by-step procedures when working with challenging and risky situations. We also examined the paperwork used by the Child Protection Units and again, we were reassured to learn that standardised pro-formas are used, with which to construct individual files on each child involved in the service. Mandatory training on both of these is regularly organised and indeed such training took place for all Child Protection Workers, when we were in Albania. We would, however, prefer that the Child Protection Worker Guidelines are renamed Child Protection Worker Procedures, since procedures are binding, unlike guidelines

We have included a separate section on the practical difficulties of establishing the best interests of children, in a country where there is no agreed, standardised formula for establishing vulnerability and where the existence of an enormous informal and often fairly invisible economy makes it difficult to decide precisely what the resources of a family actually are

We make recommendations on the need for national mapping exercise to try to establish the degree to which children are vulnerable and think that this would be an appropriate task for a developed and supported Regional State Social Services

We also include sections on confidentiality, whilst recognising that cultures differ on the importance of this question, whilst making the point that the right to keep private matters off public agendas is advisable in any culture and separately we refer to matters of social work education and training and to the need for nationally-agreed standards. We were told of the turnover of staff in local government and of the lack of authority conferred on social workers. If there is to be a credible system of child protection in Albania, then it will require to be paid for, with social workers trained at University level and being required successfully to undertake practical placements, as there is too often an over-emphasis on social workers produced by academic process, which has been a problem in several countries in the Balkans. These points are linked to a proper career structure for social work which should be regarded as a profession with appropriate status and where social workers who are “fit for purpose” are recruited by local authorities on a transparent and competitive basis of equal opportunities

We make several references during our report to the need for services to support families and protect children- and we make the point that these are indivisible- and that this is best organised by a civil society coalition of like-minded actors in partnership between government at local and central level, national and international NGO’s, churches and community groups – in a “mixed economy of care”

We are aware of the existence of a private sector concerned with the care of children, but would simply remark that robust examination and licensing needs to be brought to bear on this particular sector, if international experience in this regard is anything to go by. We understand that the business community in Albania is reluctant to donate to social causes because tax relief for doing so is not available but we have referred to the need for Child Protection Units to become involved in fund-raising activities

We have also referred to such media, publicity and awareness-raising as we came across during our field visits and do realise that without promotion and proactive steps being taken, take-up of family support and child protection services may be less than hoped for or may become unduly stigmatised. Radio and television stations should be prevailed upon to offer publicity about the services offered by Child Protection Units. In some countries, “champions” have been found to be identified with good causes and perhaps an Albanian celebrity might be found to champion the cause of Child Protection Units!

Such was the importance of Albania’s National Anti-Trafficking Strategy in the genesis of the Child Protection Units, that we have inserted a section on this Strategy, which clearly considers the further development and consolidation of Child Protection Units as being of vital importance and as the Strategy asserts : - “The present Strategy against Trafficking identifies goals and objectives that will contribute to the functioning of the overall child protection system in Albania, in particular through increasing support to these of Child Protection Units already being piloted in Albania.” The National Anti-Trafficking Strategy also urges the eventual creation of Municipality/Commune level child protection systems, or ‘child protection safety nets’, comprising the child protection workers in Child Protection Units in the entire country by 2010.

The Evaluation Team makes mention of the perils and pitfalls of governments making use of the Non-Governmental sector to provide the bulk of direct services, instead of having them test-bed and pilot new ways of working by means of demonstration projects

We are also mindful of the need for our study to contain a policy and strategic perspective, alongside considering practitioner issues and for this reason, we have included remarks on the policy environment and Albania and links with the European Union

No issue that we came across during our visits and discussions exercised us as much as those concerned with the shortcomings in Albanian legislation to provide measures on an urgent basis to protect children and if necessary remove them from dangerous places, with or without the consent of parents. An equally important and linked concern was the lack of resources for placing children in a safe place and the fact that if children had to be placed away from home, an institution seemed to be the only choice. We were most concerned to learn of babies abandoned in maternity hospitals languishing sometimes for years, in institutions

We are aware of the provisions of the Family Code in Albania in this regard and are struck by the lack of family-based solutions for children, despite the fact that varieties of foster care have been piloted in Albania for over ten years. We are also concerned at the possible collision of interests in trying to reconcile professional foster care with traditional kinship care in Albania – hence we have devoted as section to these matters

We conclude by feeling confident and indeed enthusiastic, about Child Protection Units in Albania, which we feel have shown that they have been able to “punch above their weight” in terms of impact

Our report places great emphasis on what we saw and learned during our field visits and makes constructive suggestions for improvement. We feel optimistic about the potential for deepening and widening the ability of the Child Protection Units to provide a service to a wider constituency of service users, provided a number of conditions are met

Our Terms of Reference required the Evaluation to consider the following criteria and indicators under the general heading of scope and objectives, which led us to certain conclusions:-

i) Relevance

In the view of the Evaluation Team, the design of the Child Protection Units are well-suited to the beneficiaries they are designed to serve

It is difficult to envisage another model that would be more relevant, given the present movement towards decentralisation of services in Albania

ii) Efficiency

Our conclusions concerning efficiency is that, bearing in mind that the Child Protection Units amount to embryonic social services in Albania, that their inputs are significant, represent value for money and make best use of scarce resources. Also, it must be borne in mind that these entities are created as paradigms to be tested to see if they work – and if so – can they be applied and replicated in every municipality and commune in Albania? It is never the purpose of pilot or demonstration projects run by civil society organisations to offer direct services to meet all possible needs that local communities require. The purpose is to establish a working model to see if the model works in practice and not to provide unlimited direct services and so run the risk of becoming overwhelmed.

Our indicators took account of stakeholder responses the team received when visiting families, making use of the service and feedback from Focus Groups and the view of line Ministries and Non Governmental Organisations in the field of child protection

### iii) Effectiveness

We have no doubt that results have been measurable, that the capacity of key players have been built and moreover, that such results can be considered sustainable

We were informed of the capacity and willingness of social administrators to exercise a wider remit than a strict definition of their job descriptions would permit and work closely with Child Protection Workers in joint visits, for example

We learned that there is a serious problem with the concept of cash assistance – as there is not an adequate definition of poverty – but there is no doubt that the experience of the Child Protection Units could contribute to the present review of Ndihme Ekonomike that is underway

The present system of social services evidently are not effective in encouraging and enabling beneficiaries to change their status, but we saw examples of close working cooperation between Child Protection Workers and social administrators. During interviews with key players and during the course of Focus Groups we saw and heard of examples of excellent inter-sectoral cooperation

### iv) Impacts

We were left in no doubt that the intervention of the Child Protection Unit had brought about measurable changes to the welfare of families as evidenced by the majority of beneficiaries we met. Analysis of the questionnaires completed by children and families confirms this

The potential for Child Protection Units to make further impact on cross-cutting issues we think is considerable, given the central positioning of the Child Protection Worker as the conduit of all referrals and as coordinator of meetings concerning children and families and other “client groups”, since referrals are not rejected as not falling within the remit of the Child Protection Unit

### v) Sustainability

We think that changes and outcomes brought about by the Child Protection Units can be sustained at the sector level and in each implementation region, if the impetus of the Child Protection service and the initiatives are supported by central and local government, as well as by the “third sector” of Non-Governmental Organisations

There is no doubt that the service could readily be extended to addressing the needs of other social excluded categories on several conditions being set- staffing, training, support, goodwill and supervision

If the development of the Child Protection Units is seen to be of national importance, not only from the point of view of providing services that actually work in protecting children and supporting families, but making a significant contribution in providing one of the building blocks of good governance, social inclusion, provision of a basic safety net and the process of decentralisation, there is every likelihood that sustainability will be ensured

## Chapter 3

### Introduction and background to the Evaluation

3.1 Albania has undergone dramatic economic, political and social transformation since the demise of the communist regime in 1991, which has seriously affected the capacity of Albanian families to provide a protective and nurturing environment for their children. The transition from one of the most uncompromising centralised economies of the communist nations towards a free market economy left many families without any social protection whatsoever. Moreover, drastic demographic shifts weakened traditional informal community-based protection networks that once assisted families to manage

3.2 The present situation in Albania is now one where children and young people have become increasingly vulnerable to violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect and there is a pressing need for an effective system to be established that protects children and keeps them safer than they are at present

3.3 The outcome of these dramatic changes has led to an increase in the number of children affected by exploitation, violence, abuse and neglect. Single parenthood, reconstituted families and alcohol abuse are also factors undermining the capacity of families to provide a nurturing and protective environment

3.4 We were made aware of the prevalence of blood feuds and the dramatic effects of this on children as well as the increase in violence within the home, largely brought about by weakened family structures through rapid economic, political and demographic change

3.5 We are aware that social inclusion cannot be tackled exclusively through economic growth if large sectors of the population are socially excluded, particularly since the poorest families are those that have more than three children

3.6 What we were aware of prior to and at the beginning our field visits were the existence of fundamental challenges and intractable problems that will continue to disfigure the social landscape of Albania and we became acutely aware of the gravity of such challenges – which include :-

- The lack of money available to central and local government to provide a basic safety net for children and families living in poverty
- The need to target cash benefits to children families who need it most and arrive at a meaningful definition of vulnerability
- An absence of coordination mechanisms between the various structures responsible for providing basic child protection – principally by supporting families to discharge their responsibilities as parents
- A lack of clarity as to the respective duties and responsibilities at central and local government structures for family support and child protection
- The lack of equal and equitable access of children to education services across the country, particularly affecting children of ethnic minorities
- Provision of access to health services for all children at country level
- Inadequate provision of legal measures to protect children without adequate parental care, particularly in emergencies and a corresponding absence of resources in which to place them to make them safe

- The lack of a coherent, coordinated statistical system to ensure reliable mapping of children and families in need in Albania in order to inform need
- The process of decentralisation being undertaken on a piecemeal, administrative basis, as a result of the underfunding of local authorities

3.7 In undertaking a comprehensive desk review, it is noticeable in reading the plethora of documents that exist concerning the situation of children and families that much if not most of Government statements refer to statements of intent rather than measurable action having been taken

3.8 Notwithstanding these serious shortcomings listed above, many commentators have made the point that Albania has made considerable strides in tackling the legacy of the past regime and the social casualties created in the aftermath of the fall of communism at the end of 1990

3.9 For example, it has been pointed out that following the nineties, Albania drafted from almost scratch its entire body of laws and regulations; it has ratified a number of international instruments, including those related to human rights, and acquired membership in the Council of Europe (Quoted in Children's Alliance The Rights of the Child are Human Rights- Alternative Report on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (2005 – 2009) page 3)

3.10 Albania's National Strategy for Children 2005-2010 is seen as the most crucial and important document, based on United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Albanian Constitution, covering areas of child development, protection, education and participation. It defines the institutional mechanisms at central and local level for child protection issues and cooperation with relevant Ministerial duty bearers. Targets of this Strategy's Action Plan include actions foreseen for children without parental care, setting up of new community - based services for children in every municipality, provision of alternative services for children to prevent institutionalisation, programmes to prepare youngsters for independent living and implementation of foster care

3.11 The Social Protection Strategy 2007-2013 aims at reforming the payment system and social services. The fields covered are reduction of poverty, improvement of payment in cash for families, extension of community-based services, piloting of foster care and consolidation of family-type services. This strategy targets children living in absolute poverty, children living in deprived communities; remote villages and on the edges of major cities; Roma and Egyptian children; children without parental care; children with disabilities; trafficked children and children working in the streets

3.12 Foster Care Strategy 2008-2010 – Foster care service will be piloted in two Municipalities until 2013, when it is aimed to expand the service in other local government units, depending upon needs and financial resources. The Report contains a separate section on Foster Care below

## **Chapter 4**

### **Terms of Reference and Methodology**

4.1 We were commissioned by UNICEF and ADC to evaluate the impact of established and functioning Child Protection Units' intervention viewed within the framework of social welfare system reform and governed by decentralisation of social services processes in Albania

4.2 This evaluation will follow three main pillars:-

4.3 analysis of impact (or lack of it) of functioning Child Protection Units at local government (municipality or commune) level

4.4 We were asked to suggest improvements for making the work of the Child Protection Units more effective and efficient in legal and policy terms as well as enhancing capacities in service provision, with a particular focus on the decentralisation process

4.5 The Evaluation Team is expected to assess the potential of the Child Protection Units to expand into a referral centre to respond to other social problems being experienced by vulnerable or marginalised individuals, families or groups

4.6 We needed to consider whether these Child Protection Units amount to the creation of at least a partial safety net for children through the coordination of effort for children in need with stakeholders in local communities, such as – schools, anti-trafficking round tables, community groups, police, courts, shelters and joint work with social administrators from the Office of Economic Aid and Social Care

4.7 The Terms of Reference require us to make suggestions to UNICEF and ADC on the implications of the investment that has been made from a variety of sources to the Child Protection Units in order that UNICEF and ADC might be in a position to make a case to the Government of Albania as to the future of these child protection entities and the part they might play both in a cross-cutting policy and in a strategic context

4.8 This evaluation has been guided by these three overarching pillars concerning analysis of impact, improvements and potential of the Child Protection Units as determined by the specific objectives of the Terms of Reference. The methodology took the form of a wide-ranging literature review, field visits involving in-depth and comprehensive discussion with beneficiaries and providers of child protection services, other stakeholders, partners to the service and key players, in four areas of Albania

4.9 In setting out to meet the requirements of this evaluation, we attempted to operate a model that was as participatory and collaborative as possible. From children we spoke to in beleaguered families to senior officials in line Ministries in Tirana, we took pains to explain exactly why we were in Albania and conveyed the message that we needed candid and spontaneous information, opinions and suggestions, if we hoped to arrive at anything approaching a realistic version of what we actually happening as a result of the endeavours of the Child Protection Units

4.10 The intervention of the Evaluation Team took the form of interviewing children and their families, all staff of Child Protection Units, discussion with key players in the four regions, pre-discussion and circulation of questionnaires, organisation of Focus Groups with key players in child protection, discussion with key officials in line ministries in Tirana and with national and international Non Governmental Organisations concerned with children and with family support

4.11 The Evaluation Team was concerned to strike a balance between assessing the impact of Child Protection Units, identifying areas for improvement and for future areas of service development whilst not losing sight of the wider strategic and policy considerations. For example, we considered whether the Child Protection Units might make a contribution to institutional capacity- building at a decentralised level in helping, by practical example and lessons learned, to construct services to children and families that are accessible, effective, transparent and accountable. For this reason we not only examined in detail the workings of the Child Protection

Units – their caseloads and case records, but spoke to senior officials in line Ministries in Tirana, scrutinised policy documents on social inclusion and met with the Austrian Development Agency

## **Chapter 5**

### **The Desk Review – documents consulted**

5.1 The Desk Review informed our thinking and was invaluable in the Evaluation Team arriving at an understanding of the context of family support and child protection in Albania, and is summarised at **Appendix One**

## **Chapter 6**

### **The Child Protection Units - Operation and service users of the Child Protection Service**

**i) Case management**

**ii) Assessment**

**iii) Best interests of children?**

**iv) Data base**

**v) Standards**

**vi) Confidentiality**

**vii) Training**

**viii) Status of Social workers**

**ix) Equal opportunities**

**x) Child Protection Units and Fund-raising**

**xi) Media, publicity and awareness-raising**

6.1 We think it is important to re-emphasise that the Child Protection Units are located within the bosom of the Municipality and associated with Office of Economic Aid and Social Care – which we noticed were signposted “Social Services” of the Municipality and were referred to during conversations, as social services. This is significant, as such a generic description indicates an awareness that the Child Protection Projects serve a wider group of service users than families whose children are at risk, as the name of the service would suggest

6.2 The Evaluation Team was concerned to gather detail of the particular service groups and individuals benefitting from the services of the Child Protection Units and amongst the beneficiaries were:-

- Families from the Roma and Egyptian communities – vastly over-represented, particularly in Korça and Fier
- Children from families whose children are at risk of abuse or from trafficking

- Families with chaotic and irresponsible lifestyles whose children suffered directly as a result
- Families whose children have not been registered
- Children of divorced parents
- Children living in poverty
- Families affected by domestic violence
- Children whose parent (s) abuse alcohol
- Children with physical and intellectual disabilities who had pronounced additional needs
- Children who spend long periods of time outdoors away from home
- Young people in conflict with the law

### 6.3 Services provided by Child Protection Units that we observed included:-

- Direct personal counselling and support services to individuals and to families
- Referral on of families and children to other organisations
- Negotiating with schools to accept children with non-attendance and brought back to school
- Advocacy in attempts to have claims for cash benefit claims accepted or the allowance increased
- Advocacy concerning application for housing or shelter
- Supply of pedagogical materials
- Referring children and young people to kindergartens, vocational classes, day centres, drop-in centres
- Arranging for poor and marginalised children to attend summer camps
- Provision of in-kind assistance to families in poverty – particularly food, clothes and medicines

6.4 Poor families are evidently still bedevilled by the need to pay for services – some families told us that they could not afford to pay for medical services that are supposed to be free – the medical system is not free of charge and it seems that under-the-counter payments still persist (*eg* the boy in Korça who was taken to Tirana for a scan for his epilepsy – by a Non-Governmental Organisation – who paid for this) Although the services of the Child Protection Units are free, help is still required with money in regard to the payment of procedures fees for cash beneficiaries in order to establish eligibility

6.5 Our team was particularly impressed by the determination of Child Protection Units to provide a range of important personal social services that are not altogether conspicuous or measurable. One director of Municipal Social Services spoke eloquently of the importance of not under-estimating the invisible – non-tangible – services that are so valuable in befriending and supporting beleaguered families who need :-

- befriended
- supported
- to be given hope
- to be listened to
- to be empowered
- to have workers who are reliable
- to have services and workers that are reliable
- to be given unconditional positive regard

- not to be given up on - “stickability”

6.6 Child Protection Units were also said to be involved in a wider “community development” function, such as the organisation of community activities. These included – sessions on the rights and responsibilities of children –reintegration of children in social life – children caught up in domestic violence- awareness sessions with police, parents and schools – sessions on child trafficking- all of which help to destigmatise the service and increase the visibility and reputation of the Child Protection Units as serious and valuable local resources and come with the additional bonus of strengthening local networks

### **i) Case management**

6.7 Training is seen to be an ongoing process, supported by UNICEF and led by Terre des hommes and included case management of individual cases, by utilising standardised tools, working in partnership in multidisciplinary teams to find solutions for single cases and providing practical supervision on case management

6.8 Training during the past two years has also covered the classification of risk and risk management – so crucial to the assessment and management of child protection cases.

6.9 In September – training took place on the use of the standardised electronic data base used by all 14 Child Protection Projects in Tiranë and Vlorë. The guiding principle behind these activities is the transfer of know-how from the Non-Governmental Organisations to the Child Protection Projects

6.10 The evaluation team was told of the documenting and drafting of local Action Plans for Children – in Korça and Fier, for example, which indicates the development of a strategic dimension and not only a practitioner perspective

6.11 We observed an important development in case management practice – in Kukës - where we heard a description of the weekly case management team, which had to be changed to involve only those who had the power to commit resources as the previous case management team was recommending unaffordable measures. The organisation of the weekly case management team was changed to involve only those who had the power to make decisions and to commit resources

### **ii) Assessment**

6.12 Additionally, in line with established good international practice, intervention in child protection concerns needs to be guided by assessment. Whilst assessment of need and risk is not an end in itself but a process which will lead to improvement in the welfare of a child or young person, the conclusion of an assessment should result in :-

- an analysis of the needs of the child and the capacity of parents to respond appropriately to the needs of the child within the context of the family
- establishing whether or not intervention by the Child Protection Units or another appropriate agency is required and if so, what form intervention is needed to protect the child or children

- the formulation of a realistic plan of action- including which services are required and detailing precisely who has responsibility for action, a timetable for intervention and a process for review

We noticed elements of these in all of the Child Protection Units we studied

6.13 We examined in detail the sections on assessment in the Child Protection Workers' Guidelines and can confirm that in our view the material on assessment is of a high quality and requires Child Protection Workers to complete Child Protection Workers' Assessment reports, although we were bound to say that the size of the Guidelines document is somewhat daunting. We understand that the document is currently under review and as stated elsewhere, work in child protection needs to be regulated by procedures, which determine step-by-step intervention and not merely guidelines, that workers can choose or not to choose to follow

### **iii) Best interests of children?**

6.14 The point was made by the Children's Alliance Alternative Report on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - (2005 – 2009) at page 16 of the draft document, that in terms of implementing the principle of the best interest of the child in lawsuits involving family issues, at present in Albania this principle is still practically non-effective and unrealisable for reasons related to lack of knowledge of this principle and the various difficulties that arise when it comes to verifying the indicators

6.15 During discussions with Judges and Prosecutors, this draft document lists a series of difficulties which undermine the effective implementation of this principle; namely those related to the lack of services for care and placement of children, such as custodian families, in the event of children having to be removed from their own families

6.16 A further obstacle to establishing the best interest of the child, was said to concern the inability to explore during judicial procedures what the best alternative for the child would be, because it is almost impossible to determine the sources of income of each spouse, but also his or her standing in relation to economic condition, family and moral values. Lack of social workers would lead to this situation

6.17 Of course, this feature is exacerbated by the enormous informal economy in Albania – indeed in some of the families we visited it was far from clear to us what their sources of income were – the dilemmas facing Courts in ascertaining verifiable indicators of vulnerability will be mirrored in families where social workers are trying to assess risk to children

6.18 We make mention of this in view of the emphasis the Evaluation Team have placed on the need for new law to protect children- which needs to find a way around the problems of verifying protective factors affecting children- or the lack of them - if the best interests of children are to be served. In some countries, this problem has been overcome by Courts applying a civil standard of proof in cases involving the welfare of children – going on the balance of probabilities and on information supplied by skilled social workers - and not relying on a standard of proof requiring being beyond all reasonable doubt

6.19 For example, we would regard it important that there was agreement on what was considered minimum parenting standards and thresholds of tolerance concerning definitions of significant harm and risk to children. In other words, in order to protect children effectively, there needs to be legal definition of what constitutes a “lack of parental care”- which could be illustrated in sub-

laws or Regulations or Guidance on the principal legislation. Otherwise, what is felt to constitute risk, harm and danger to children are of the order of subjective judgements

#### **iv) Data base**

6.20 The use of the standardised electronic data base in all 14 Child Protection Units will contribute to the mapping of need concerning children and families in Albania. An Excel system has been devised to facilitate the entry of statistical data on children – to be updated quarterly- and involves bi-annual reports to be prepared on the basis of these statistics of cases managed by the Child Protection Units. This information is sent to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and could in future contribute to a national mapping exercise pinpointing vulnerability in children and families, leading to the experience of the Child Protection Units influencing national policy

6.21 We also understand that as from this year, Child Protection Units are expected to produce an Annual Report that will be studied by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

6.22 Such information is vital in identifying need in local communities for family support and child protection services – which of course will differ from area to area- and help to inform social policies and shape practice in children’s and family services and highlight what is needed to strengthen families and protect children – the two usually being indivisible

6.23 The data base will also demonstrate whether the objectives of the Child Protection Units concerning capacity- building have been met – assisting Municipalities to recognise their responsibilities for child protection at local level and identifying mechanisms that keep children safe. This could make a reality of a new social services structure, by illustrating operational competence by effective interventions with families and assisting key players located in local government to be more responsive to child protection concerns by using a common methodology for case management

6.24 One of our recommendations will concern the proposal that Regional State Social Services collaborate closely with the Child Protection Units in sharing information concerning vulnerable families- including information held by the Office of Economic Aid and Social Care -in a nation-wide mapping exercise

#### **v) Standards**

6.25 It would be difficult to introduce child protection services that actually work without standards to define minimum standards, good enough care and thresholds of acceptable and unacceptable care

6.26 This evaluation attempts to highlight the effectiveness or otherwise of structures in Albania for the provision of direct child protection services, which will need a methodology specifically required by the demands of practical decentralisation, in order that a coherent and standardised service for children and families at risk is delivered in the different municipalities and to avoid serious differences and inconsistencies in practice standards across Albania. Quality of child protection should not depend upon where families live, as they do at present

6.27 Standards are -linked to the need for training - The Evaluation Team would wish to follow best practice in the assessment of children at risk, involving at least three domains of assessment:-

children's developmental needs  
parents' or caregivers' capacities to respond to the needs of children  
consideration of wider family and environmental factors

It was gratifying to see that this fundamental principle of the assessment of children at risk, was contained in the Child Protection Worker Guidelines used by all 14 Child Protection Units

6.28 In the area of welfare, standards tend to stem from government policies, legislation, set objectives and arising from lessons learned from practice, as well as from contemporary research and good practice and is inextricably linked to the concept of quality

6.29 Research has demonstrated that quality of services cannot be achieved without agreement about standards, their importance and the manner in which they are to be put into practice. Social welfare workers need to take part in the development of standards through the application of minimal ones and the effort to achieve the standards of excellence in their day- to -day work. This helps promote the principle of "ownership" which means that the new quality of standards of services becomes the part of the mindset and the practice of professional and other staff. This is best achieved by involving staff in the standard-setting process, through active participation and full comprehension of the reasons for changes effected

6.30 Standards should ensure consistency in social welfare agencies' functioning in society – as well as transparency and fairness, particularly since child protection work in Albania will inevitably involve compulsory measures necessary to keep children safe, against the wishes of parents on occasion

6.31 We understand that the government in Albania is concerned with standards. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities has produced general standards for social services in Albania (the “Social Services Standards”) and standards for children in residential care (the “Residential Care Standards”). As of January 2007, the Ministry has also created draft social services standards for victims of trafficking (the “Draft Trafficking Standards”)

6.32 These Social Services Standards were drafted in a participatory process using multi-disciplinary, multi-agency working groups in four pilot regions. A multi-disciplinary group within the Ministry produced the Residential Care Standards. Both sets of standards have been published in the Official Gazette, resulting in their distribution to Regional authorities

#### **vi) Confidentiality**

6.33 The evaluation team was made aware during the course of our field visits and conversations that the question of confidentiality is one that requires to be addressed, whilst bearing in mind that communities in this part of the world are much closer-knit than in some cultures and community support networks did tend to be aware of families' problems in communities. Whilst we regarded the Round Tables as a positive example of interdisciplinary endeavour – there were concerns about placing private matters on practically public agendas. For this, reason at least one Child Protection Unit did not discuss details of individual families at Round Tables, preferring to convene case discussion involving only those who had a contribution to tackling the problems and finding a solution – involving only those who “needed to know”

#### **vii) Training**

6.34 We were made aware during our visits and discussions of a problem of too few qualified staff to develop the work of child protection. – such social work education as such as there is, seems to be extremely academic – and having no practical work placements as part of the curriculum, resulting in new workers having no hands-on experience

6.35 We realised that there is a definite emphasis in Albania that social problems have to be tackled by psychology and by psychosocial counselling. In our view, this is an obsolete relic of past social work practice – sometimes labelled post-Freudian or the “psychiatric deluge” - or the medical model of social work. Families in poverty and with a multiplicity of problems need to feel supported and receive help to be empowered – not treated as though they were ill

6.36 We do recognise, however, that in Albania, psychologists- who evidently train for 7 years, operate in some ways as social workers and that they are a valuable resource. We wondered whether a Non-Governmental Organisation might be found to undertake training of social workers and look at designing a University Training curriculum on social work, perhaps in a joint social work- psychology degree. We also recognise that valuable training has been and continues to be offered by several Non-Governmental Organisations in Albania

#### **viii) Status of social workers**

6.37 There is a Balkan-wide problem of social workers having little or no power- which is a problem in child protection work and some Child Protection Workers said that they would be reluctant to report families for neglect or abuse for fear of repercussions. It would also be important to predict that when referrals to the Child Protection Units increase, as they will, that the Child Protection Workers do not become overwhelmed in understandable attempts to respond to all-comers and run the risk of “burn-out”

#### **ix) Equal opportunities**

6.38 Appointments appear to be on a “grace or favour” basis in local government – described by one senior member of a Non Governmental Organisation as “upside down”. There appears to be no notion of workers being “fit for purpose” and political appointments and nepotism were said to be rife. The system was said to change after every election and opportunities for performance evaluation or promotion are far from clear. It is important to have a transparent and equitable career structure if social work is to flourish in Albania

#### **x) Child Protection Units and Fund-raising**

6.39. In all areas where the Child Protection Units are located, different efforts are devoted to fund-raising and attracting donors as well as lobbying the Municipality to devote a proportion of their local budget to child protection

6.40 The Evaluation Team heard that training has been organised on project design and management with the intention of helping the Child Protection Units gain skills in fund-raising

6.41 Whilst the business community do not appear to be significant in providing funds for child protection in Albania – and there is a link with the seeming unwillingness of the Government to concede tax relief to donating businesses – we heard of some examples of funds donated from businesses

## **xi) Media, publicity and awareness-raising**

6.42 The Evaluation Team studied a number of publications advertising and promoting the services of the Child Protection Units – in Peshkopi and Fier, for example and an a very impressive newspaper for and largely written by children and young people in Kukës

## **Chapter 7**

### **Findings from Field Visits - Operation of the Child Protection Service**

7.1 The direction of our findings were guided by the specific overarching objectives of the Terms of Reference

#### **i) Analysis of impact:- *analysis of the ability of the Child Protection Units to perform its mandate***

7.2 The Evaluation Team was impressed by the commitment and indeed even passion – shown by the Child Protection Workers in the Child Protection Units. We learned that in at least one Child Protection Unit, the workers from the Unit and from social services sometimes responded to calls at weekends. The majority of frontline workers we talked to appeared to be managing almost unmanageable caseloads but appeared determined to ensure that the service users involved received the attention that they had come to expect. It became clear that there was a correlation between the ability these workers had to refer service users on to other providers and the size of the workloads that they could manage. Such a strategy depended upon a combination of factors - such as the *gravitas* and respect the worker commanded in the community of partners and stakeholders; the network knowledge possessed by the worker – knowing where to refer work on and the commitment of officials and workers from other institutions and from local Non-Governmental Organisations

7.3 The question of providing effective child protection services only during normal working hours and not at weekends will undoubtedly become an issue as the work of the Child Protection Units grows and the service becomes widely known- which will present a challenge to social workers' conditions of service

#### *7.4 - evaluate the ability of the Child Protection Units to identify vulnerable children and families, and its outreach*

7.5 Our experience was that the majority of referrals being received by Child Protection Units came from schools, social administrators, police, psychologists, community groups, neighbours, nurses, doctors, national and international Non-Governmental Organisations and that those referrals included appropriately vulnerable children and families

7.6 We observed that the Child Protection Units were probably not so good at locating “hard-to-reach” families. There may be a perverse incentive operating in that to promote the service of the Child Protection Units too robustly – they would run the risk of being completely overwhelmed

7.7 We came to realise that the Child Protection Workers were seriously disadvantaged by not having regular access to a vehicle – although in the remoter areas where there is a Child Protection Unit presence at Commune level- the supporting Non-Governmental Organisation provides transport

*7.8 - evaluate the ability of the Child Protection Unit to refer vulnerable children and families and effectively connect them to the appropriate social services*

7.9 The Evaluation Team was able to ascertain this by speaking to children and families, to key individuals, during detailed discussions at Focus Groups and through discussion of the reasons for producing questionnaires and from the questionnaires themselves- we received confirmation that in some areas where the Child Protection Unit was working, a significant proportion of claimants for cash benefit assistance received such assistance or increased level of cash payment, as a direct result to the advocacy of the Child Protection Unit. We learned of concrete examples of direct referrals on to community support organisations for parents of children with disabilities, for example, and a referral to a legal clinic for minors for a young person in conflict with the law

*7.10 - evaluate the ability of the Child Protection Unit to positively influence improvements in the quality or reach of social services and coordinate services in an integrated package*

7.11 It was difficult precisely to ascertain the quality of social service, without a shared set of benchmarks, but in meeting a significant number of children and families making use of the service provided by the Child Protection Unit, only one adult and one young person expressed dissatisfaction with the service. There were indications that generally the Child Protection Workers took pains to reach families by not only going to them but advocated outreach on the part of other agencies who could be of benefit to families. On the question of coordination of integrated packages of intervention, we were impressed at the extent of “joined-up working”

*7.12- analysis of the data set*

7.13 The section on fieldwork concerning the practical work of the Child Protection Units refers to details of caseloads. Records are in the process of being standardised along the lines of a good and established working model– concerning which national training involving all 14 Child Protection Units is ongoing. We examined several files of differing quality and it was evident that the standardised exercise is “work in progress”. Information on children did, however, indicate source of referrals, ethnic origin and plans of action

*7.14 - conduct a cost-benefit analysis*

7.15 It has been difficult to access precise information on the respective financial contributions running the Child Protection Units and the development costs

7.16 We are interpreting *cost-benefit analysis* as a term that refers explicitly or implicitly to weighing the total expected costs of service against the total expected benefits of one or more actions within service in order to choose the best or most profitable option. We understand this formal process to be either CBA (Cost-Benefit Analysis) or BCA (Benefit-Cost Analysis)

7.17 Any comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of Child Protection Units in Albania should be undertaken within particular analysis of a project. So, within this report, we will make a short overview of main factors that have an influence on costing services provided by Child Protection Units

7.18 Child Protection Units are functioning and performing services within project activities, indicating that costing and planning were based on budget of the project. As usual budgets are in line with several groups of costs:

- *management*
- *activities*
- *running costs*
- *office costs*

7.19 important characteristics of project costs are that they were :-

- *donor-oriented*
- *autonomous*
- *time-limited*

7.20 These characteristics concern cost effects referring to the potential to increase costs of services intended to be delivered through project activities. On the other hand, if we consider sustainability of services developed by the Child Protection Units and Child Protection Units as a service provider -in line with its new role in child and family protection system in Albania – some changes are expected in budgeting of work, organisation and method of service delivering. Orientation and purpose of changes should increase effectiveness and efficiency, which could imply

- *revision of structure of costs*
- *revision of internal organization of Child Protection Units*
- *revision of principles of service delivery*

7.21 Mention of a need for revision does not imply jeopardising the quality of services or prejudicing benefits to service users

7.22 Structure of costs could be revised in line with closer collaboration with local authorities which has to offer tangible benefits for Child Protection Units as service providers that are important for citizens. Local authorities are or should be able to offer services, resources and utilities that Child Protection Units could use without charge, such as –office premises, equipment, electricity and access to vehicles. Lack of mobility will eventually affect the extent to which Child Protection Workers can speedily respond to pressing child protection demands, as previously remarked

7.23 This partnership is oriented to synergy of resources and capacities between local authorities and Child Protection Units

7.24 Some start-up costs (e.g. equipment procurement) needed in the very beginning of the mandate of Child Protection Units are not relevant to a continuation of its activities, but nevertheless, some activities of Child Protection Units could be outsourced – such as engagement by “secondment” of specialised professionals from schools, medical institutions as well as duties undertaken by staff (financial, administrative, technical) engaged for other activities in local authorities’ offices

7.25 Economies of scale could be achieved by Municipalities deciding to re-align responsibilities of their own staff to share some of the responsibilities presently discharged by the Child

Protection Worker. A significant number of “Key Player” respondents to the questionnaires, in answer to the question as to what would happen if the Child Protection Units ceased to function, replied by saying that municipal social services would try to help the families. Clearly, there is considerable potential for the role of social administrators to develop their role into a more direct social worker type of role

7.26 Standardisation of services could affect costing of service by achieving economies of scale – such as maximising the use of scarce resources –such as utilising the canteen in institutions for the elderly to provide a meal for poor families and their children or using kindergarten and education premises for proactive activities by the community, particularly in areas of high concentrations of ethnic minority citizens who tend to be marginalised and disempowered within service delivery

7.27 An important factor in decreasing costs of services is making use of inter-municipal/communes synergy and partnership in association of capacities and resources

7.28 The Evaluation Team heard that in general, it was felt that the Child Protection Units had been managed efficiently: Money has been spent as planned in the budget and any change has been done with UNICEF’s approval. The main change will continue to include the costs of intensive counselling services to vulnerable children young people and families. More money will be required for intensive intervention and counselling services because of changes in the approach (counselling sessions at home require more time and effort if they are to be effective) so there will inevitably need to be a change in budget lines

7.29 The basic cost of the Costs of salary of a Child Protection Worker can be calculated on the basis of a salary of a Child Protection Worker of 24000 leke/month ( \$261 ) whilst previously-costed running expenses such as office rental, office equipment and electricity can represent a direct contribution by the respective Municipalities or Communes

7.30 The Evaluation team would have wished to make a particular recommendations on financial sustainability and on techniques of ascertaining whether value for money has been achieved, in an area of endeavour where such calculations are notoriously difficult to prove, because of the differing interpretations of outcomes.

7.31 What seems value for money to us, considering the financial and social costs of not having the service, would indicate that Child Protection Units are indeed good value for money. Until local government is in a position to meet the full costs of the Child Protection Units - from transfers from central government, augmented by increased Municipal revenue-raising - we would recommend a “tapering” arrangement. Under the terms of the taper, the donors would contribute less each year and the Municipality – supported by central government- correspondingly more each year for 5 years

7.32 The Evaluation Team would like to refer to the cost in human, social and financial terms of not having Child Protection Units in place in Albania. Much research exists as to such costs, many of which are well-known, such as the incidence of individuals’ not having a stake in society and the cost of the State caring for children without parental support and the long-term demands on services once children reach adulthood - street children – drug and alcohol abuse- mental illness – homelessness – offending behaviour. Quite apart from a direct comparison made

between the cost of keeping families together as compared to the cost of residential care, research has well-documented the costs to the State of adults whose parents have failed them as children

## **ii) Suggested Improvements**

*7.33 - Suggest changes in legislative framework or policies that will strengthen the mandate and authority of the Child Protection Units; what are their contents and functioning*

7.34 The urgent need for legislation accompanied by resources to quickly make children in dangerous situations safe is one of the most pressing resource requirements in our view and is dealt with in detail later in this report

*7.35- Suggest changes in sector strategies and policies (health, education, police etc) that will increase the access and use of services by vulnerable children and families – especially when referred by the Child Protection Units*

7.36 In particular, there is a need to increase the capacity of social administrators to exercise a wider remit than a strict definition of their job descriptions would permit and to work closely with the Child Protection Workers- which in all the four areas we examined – they did. There is also considerable potential for joint work with psychologists and for work with school and community nurses. We think that the role of classroom mentors could be developed, as they are closest to children in schools and also have links with parents. We observed positive joint work with the police- particularly those specialising in responding to domestic violence, in line with the new law in this respect. In particular, the evaluators consider that there is a window of opportunity for Regional State Social Services to work much more in partnership with Child Protection Units and not only operate an inspectorial and licensing function – particularly in Commune areas, where we discussed the notion of an inter-sectoral mobile team providing responsive service

*7.37 - Suggest improvements in operational capacities or procedures to increase effectiveness, efficiency and outreach of Child Protection Units*

7.38 We think that the development of drop-in and day-care facilities attached to Child Protection Units would render them more user-friendly, less stigmatised and could launch preventative programmes – such as raising awareness. Furthermore, changes in working hours to provide services during “unsocial hours” when child protection needs tend to be greatest would increase outreach enormously but would run the risk of creating a demand that could not be met. We think that there is a need for pilot projects in on-the-job training around practice issues, such as interviewing techniques – communicating with children, engaging hard-to-reach and hostile service users and keeping Child Protection workers safe during their work, such as defusing and de-escalating difficult situations

*7.39 - Look at the service providers’ response and future role outside of the Child Protection Unit as main partners of the Child Protection Units in regard to referral mechanism*

7.40 So far as we could ascertain, the practice of routing all referrals through the Child Protection Workers is almost standard practice and furthermore, referrals of a wide variety are received- not all concerning family support and child protection

*7.41 -Suggest changes to ensure effective social service and protection in the context of decentralisation*

7.42 Work in each municipality is calculated to ensure coordination between the different key players in child protection and designed to ensure effective joint work, but in view of the fact that attendance at the key interdisciplinary mechanism to plan practical child protection – the Round Table- is not mandatory, more formalised mechanisms are needed- a point raised by key players in the questionnaires. Changing job descriptions would help here- to make attendance at interdisciplinary case discussions compulsory and concerted joint action between all actors in child protection would highlight the underfunding from central government that is presently bedevilling the progress of decentralisation

### **iii) Potential for wider reach**

*7.43 - Evaluate the possibility to add other referral services not directly related to child-related protection services, such as issues of domestic- or gender-based violence, issues affecting migrant or returning migrant families, ethnic disadvantages*

7.44 There are a range of possibilities here -dealing with alcohol and drug dependency of adults and young people - domestic violence and socially excluded groups, including migrant or returning migrant families - HIV and AIDS and children and young people in conflict with the law. However, care needs to be taken not to spread the service too thinly – (“more means less”)

7.45 However, extending service provision to a wider range of vulnerable users would provide “added value” to the service and widen and deepen the Child Protection Unit towards a more generic social services facility.

7.46 It is worth making the obvious point that a single Child Protection Worker cannot be expected to do everything and during our deliberations, the Evaluation Team noticed that Child Protection Units seemed often to be expected to do everything. The principal role of the Child Protection Unit should be to identify risks and problems and refer to a multidisciplinary group

7.47 We came across two views as how best to develop the child protection service – plan carefully and not accept any further work until additional staffing arrives – the planned approach – and the evolutionary/incremental approach – where only one worker takes on more and more work in the hope that eventually more workers would be appointed. In such an approach, burn-out of the workers would be inevitable

7.48 Wider reach should include Child Protection Units in miniature in at least the larger Communes in order to have a element of child protection services in the rural areas- in conjunction with Regional Social Services taking amore active, partnership role

7.49 Child Protection Units are gaining experience in working with a range of marginalised and socially excluded groups and it may be possible to attempt a range of new models of intervention – not only new client groups but new ways of working such as prevention, building resilience, outreach, crisis intervention, groupwork and early intervention, to give a few examples, as well as risk assessment and management

*7.50 - Assess the marginal (or incremental) costs (e.g. human resources, time, financial resources) of adding additional referral services*

7.51 In order to add referral services, we would suggest making a straight calculation of doubling the costs to pay for two Child Protection Workers and their associated costs, with a doubled

element for training and development and possibly including an element towards the costs of a study visit to examine decentralised child protection teams in operation in Bucharest -Romania

*7.52 - Estimate the costs of creating additional Child Protection Units, considering that standard job descriptions, staff profiles, training materials, tool kits, processes and procedures and legislation have already been developed*

7.53 A calculation could be based upon a medium-sized town in Albania with as many joint and shared opportunities as possible for training on national and regional level to ensure economies of scale - involving the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and Regional State Social Services , as indispensable partners in training and development and selected Albanian and international Non-Governmental Organisations

7.54 At the very least, for the Child Protection Service to develop and expand, each Unit would require two Child Protection Workers with a doubled budget for training and development

*7.55 Determine whether macroeconomic and social sector policies and programmes are consistent with the general principles of human rights*

7.56 Each area having a Child Protection Unit could ensure that they would convert the “Round Table” model of interdisciplinary working in the interests of children to a downsized child protection case conference on a case-by-case basis involving only those who need to be involved in resolving individual cases. This question is discussed in the section on confidentiality

7.57 There is of course a human rights question in compulsory state intervention in private matters but best practice in child protection and international Conventions recognise the need for compulsory measures in cases of danger to children, irrespective of parental wishes – it is not always possible in practice to ensure that the rights of children and the rights of parents can be met at the same time and the right of families to privacy as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights cannot be allowed to conceal familial abuse of children

## **Chapter 8**

### **Focus Groups- Deliberations of Focus Groups**

8.1 All of the four Focus Groups in Kukës, Korça, Fier and Peshkopi were addressed with a uniform standardised introduction :-

- Outlining who we were, why we were in Albania and the purpose of our mission. It emphasised that the objective of the evaluation was not only to analyse the impact of the Child Protection Units, to suggest improvements for making their work more effective and to evaluate the potential of the Child Protection Unit to offer a service to other socially-excluded individuals and groups living in communities, but to assist UNICEF and ADC to make a case to the Government of Albania to build on the experience of this initiatives in child protection and replicate them elsewhere in Albania
- Explaining that, in order for such a case to be made, evidence needs to be produced that the Child Protection Units are meeting the objectives for which they were set up
- Dedicating around an hour and a half was devoted to examining case studies

8.2 Membership

- Core membership of the Focus Groups included Representative of municipal Child Protection Unit; Representative of Non Governmental Organisations, Residential and Community-based Social Service Care Providers (Director and/or Staff); Social Administrator; Representative of Municipal Child Labour Monitoring Committee; Representative of Municipal Police; Primary Health Centre Staff; Primary School and Secondary School Staff (Director, Teacher and School Psychologist); Public Children's Homes (Director and Specialists); Representative of Regional Office of State Social Services
- The purpose, form and content of the questionnaires designed for key players, for families and their children were explained to the members of the Focus Groups, in order to share with these key actors in the field of child protection and social care the *rationale* for using questionnaires
- The notion of a one-door, one-stop shop located in the heart of local government was also outlined to the members of the Focus Groups – whilst we took care to include in this model the significant contribution of Non-Governmental Organisations - in a "mixed economy of care"

8.3 Views on the Child Protection Unit were sought

8.4 Focus Group discussions are referred to in the section on field visits

## Chapter 9

### Information from Field visits

Table 9.1 Information from Field visits

	Positives	Negatives
<b>Kukës</b>	<p>The service has been known as Child and Family Protection Unit reflecting the indivisible connection between family support and child protection;</p> <p>As a direct result of the advocacy of the Child Protection Unit in its early days, Kukës increased social benefits by 100% with their service users, because of the extent of poverty and as a result of the methodology of collecting all stakeholders together, led by the Child Protection Unit, in advocacy;</p> <p>Initially, schools were the main focus for targeting need – the Child Protection Unit had good co-operation with schools- picked up on non-attendance and brought children back to school;</p> <p>In Kukës, Social Administrators now actually visit families – which they did not do before – and doctors now visit children at risk,</p> <p>Organisation of the Child and Family Protection Unit amounts to a significant switch in emphasis;</p> <p>Founding a newspaper produced by children;</p> <p>The reason that the Evaluation Team felt that the Child and Family Protection Unit in Kukës was the “flagship was that the work developed by the</p>	<p>One of the casualties of transferring the operation of family support and child protection services to the Municipality from the Non-Governmental Organisation was that previously-applied standards are not always maintained. We noticed that in the Child and Family Protection Unit, case records that that reflected the form, content and purpose of intervention, were not up-to-date when we scrutinised the files. We have no doubt, however, that this will be addressed as a matter of urgency, following our visit</p>

	<p>Non-Governmental Organisation since 2004 showed evidence of lessons learned over the years and every indication of becoming sustainable under Municipal direction</p>	
<b>Korça</b>	<p>The Child Protection Worker is part of the Directorate – clients with multiple problems tend to impinge on all elements of the service across 4 offices – a good integrated approach - as all the connections can be made – particularly with Housing- a distinct Korça advantage of having the entire caseload spread across 4 offices serving different service use;</p> <p>The team has a male and female Roma worker in Korça. Korça was said to be the first city in Albania to voice the needs of marginalized groups - Egyptian and Roma and the incidence of domestic violence;</p> <p>Influential Round Table Group formulating Action Plans;</p> <p>The Evaluation Team feels that Korça could be a model for social work in Albania, with a good capacity to develop as a Referral Centre with cross-cutting capacity</p>	<p>Concerns about children in the Baby Home in Korça, with a capacity 21 0-6 year olds – presently housing 11 children – who sometimes languish -in the institution in Korça or are transferred to other institutions- which we see as a window of opportunity for family care of babies;</p> <p>Abandonment was said to be a problem in the maternity hospital in Korça</p>
<b>Fier</b>	<p>Close working relationship with social administrators – sharing information and joint visits to families are routine;</p> <p>The Director of Social Services impressed as a champion of social service with a real grasp of the invisible- non-tangible social services;</p>	<p>Inability to respond to needs of the rural population- a project required for this moving population– highlights the problem of no service in communes and discrimination by geography</p>

	<p>Intervention by the Child Protection Unit include risk assessment, planned intervention, action plans and regular reviews – with the Round Table involved in planning the form of intervention;</p> <p>Appropriate involvement of other institutions in planning and reviewing intervention discussion at the Focus Group in Fier, demonstrated to the Evaluation Team in a convincing manner - the extent to which there was common understanding of the reasons for families’ problems- the type of intervention required and the need for joined- up working</p>	
<b>Peshkopi</b>	<p>The Child Protection Unit is proactive and have produced an attractive brochure and plan TV coverage of the service very soon;</p> <p>The Focus Group identified a need for a refuge/shelter/assessment centre – for emergency/ temporary stays</p>	<p>Problem of large Communes in the Peshkopi area where they have no family support and child protection services - one Commune has over 10,000 population- another has over 5,000</p>

Table 9.2 **Structure and Activities of the Child and Family Protection Unit**

	<b>Structure</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>Kukës</b>	Local social services in Kukës are now organised in two parts – cash benefits – employing 4/5 people and social services – and the Child and Family Protection Unit with 11 staff, as well as operating a day centre for children and young people and for elderly people- including employing social educators in the drop-in centre	<p>Psychosocial counselling</p> <p>Medical and health services</p> <p>Getting children back to school</p> <p>Befriending</p> <p>Support</p> <p>Respect and regard</p> <p>Not giving up on families!</p> <p>Family support and child protection</p> <p>Protecting women</p> <p>Services to elderly persons</p> <p>Services to disabled children</p> <p>Services to Roma children at risk</p> <p>Services to youth at risk</p>
<b>Korça</b>	<p>Director</p> <p>1 child Protection Worker</p> <p>2 cash benefit social administrators</p> <p>3 disability workers</p> <p>4 housing/shelter staff</p>	
<b>Fier</b>	<p>1 economist</p> <p>3 social service workers</p> <p>1 child protection worker</p> <p>1 worker for disability</p> <p>1 worker for elderly persons</p>	
<b>Peshkopi</b>	<p>1 Child Protection Worker</p> <p>4 social administrators</p> <p>1 economist</p> <p>1 statistician</p>	

### 9.3 Information from Field Visits

#### Resumé

*The Evaluation Team found the Child Protection Workers to be well organised and since there is only one of them in each Child Protection Unit, they made good use of such support and supervision as was available – in Kukës there are 11 staff dedicated to social services and the Director supports as well as having recourse to consult ALBAID in difficult cases – in Korça, the Child Protection Worker is part of a wider social services team, which includes Housing with support from an experienced Director, whilst in Fier, the Child Protection Worker is well supported by the Director of Social Services. In Peshkopi, the newest of the Child Protection Units we observed, the Child Protection Worker works closely with the Director who is well-regarded locally and has the support of the Mayor. We found that the role of the Child Protection Worker is very flexible in practice*

9.4 **Kukës** is said to be one of the poorest areas in Albania, where some 43% of the population in the Kukës region are said to receive economic assistance

9.5 The population of the town itself is 21,000 and it seemed to us in the Evaluation Team that for reasons explained above at Table 9.1, this Child Protection Unit was the “flagship” of the 14 initiatives in Albania.

9.6 Kukës was where the Child Protection Units began in 2004. In view of the fact that the close connection between family support and child protection is now recognised – the service in Kukës has since February of 2009, been known as the Child and Family Protection Unit- now located in good premises provided by the supportive Mayor, who the Evaluation Team met

9.7 As a direct result of the advocacy of the Child Protection Unit in its early days, Kukës increased social benefits by 100% with their service users, because of the extent of poverty and as a result of the methodology of collecting all stakeholders together, led by the Child Protection Unit, in advocacy

9.8 Initially, Schools were the main focus for targeting need – the Child Protection Unit had good co-operation with schools- picked up on non-attendance and brought children back to school

9.9 We also heard that in Kukës, Social Administrators now actually visit families – which they did not do before – and doctors now visit children at risk

9.10 In the 2007-2009 phase of the Child and Family Protection Unit - the municipality incorporated the cost of the Child and Family Protection Unit as part of local social services into the local budget in 2009, with the municipality taking over and paying for the two people formerly working in the Non-Governmental Organisation – VMA – now ALBAID

9.11 Local social services in Kukës are now organised in two parts – cash benefits – employing 4/5 people and social services – and the Child and Family Protection Unit with 11 staff, as well as operating a day centre for children and young people and for elderly people- including employing social educators in the drop-in centre - which amounts to a significant switch in emphasis, as the Child and Family Protection Unit offer :-

- Family support and child protection
- Protecting women
- Services to elderly persons
- Services to disabled children
- Services to Roma children at risk
- Services to youth at risk

9.12 One of the casualties of transferring the operation of family support and child protection services to the Municipality from the Non-Governmental Organisation was that previously-applied standards are not always maintained. We noticed that in the Child and Family Protection Unit, case records that reflected the form, content and purpose of intervention, were not up-to-date when we scrutinised the files. We have no doubt, however, that this will be addressed as a matter of urgency, following our visit

9.13 Following our discussion in Kukës, we learned that the non- financial services provided by Child and Family Protection Unit included :-

- Psychosocial counselling
- Medical and health services
- Getting children back to school
- Befriending
- Support
- Respect and regard
- Not giving up on families!

9.14 The Non-Governmental Organisation, VMA – now ALBAID continue to provide training and staff development, capacity-building and assistance with particularly difficult cases to the Child and Family Protection Unit

9.15 In what is now the Child and Family Protection Unit in Kukës, there were said to have been 1855 children protected and helped between 2008 and April 2009- which included children participating in the social activities of the Centre

9.16 The Evaluation Team found many positives in visiting the Child and Family Protection Unit in Kukës – as well as visiting families and organising a Focus Group attended by 16 people with whom the services is involved. These positives included :-

Helping a poverty-stricken town to get more and increased cash benefits developing a day centre founding a newspaper produced by children (“Jemi edhe ne”) selecting good, representative families for the Evaluation team to visit Good focus group – 16 attended – displaying a professional approach in examining the case studies

9.17 We visited the following families in Kukës :-

- i) A family living in poverty on cash benefits in a shelter next to gas tank on the edge of town
- ii) cash benefit recipients – 14-year old and 2 boys – child in bed –seriously disabled
- iii) a poor family – teenage girl wants to be a journalist – said Child and Family

Protection Unit helped her and her brother- day centre – she contributes to the newspaper for children and young people in Kukës- but the Child and Family Protection Unit could have connected her with vocational courses- father gets no more than 5 days a month casual work

- iv) a Roma family – 14 children – don't know all the names of their children– wedding sidetracked our visit
- v) a Roma family – living in shack – parents had left child to clean up –parents not at home when we called
- vi) a large family – 100% cash assistance- daughter on housing list
- vii) in the fisheries' building –family living in extreme conditions – no light – woman in her 90's –who had been on the Housing list for 14 years in the fisheries' building – extreme conditions -4 in one room- several old ladies we spoke of the old times when “things were simpler”
- viii) two families together – wives of brothers who are away – child with asthma- one woman not too positive about the Child and Family Protection Unit
- ix) a divorce case – grandmother denigrated the father in front of the children – boy and teenage girl – grandmother held the worker's hand – Child and Family Protection Unit had been counselling her

9.18 **Korça** - the initiative here has been led by Terre des Hommes and supported by UNICEF, long involved in the area concerning trafficking of children, with concentrations of Roma and Egyptian communities in Korça and where children passed through Korça *en route* to Greece

9.19 Korça municipality needed to get involved in strategies against trafficking – which led to the creation of the said Child Protection Unit- the municipality took over responsibility in 2007 – they agreed to take over, but the arrangement still amounts to a UNICEF and municipality partnership . There was a gradual transfer – May 2008 – when the Mayor agreed to the transfer of the structure to the municipality whilst UNICEF and Terre des hommes continue with capacity-building

9.20 The name of the Department in Korça is – Social Welfare and Housing, having 4 offices, comprising a :-

Director  
1 child Protection Worker  
2 cash benefit social administrators  
3 disability workers  
4 housing/shelter staff

9.21 The Child Protection Worker is part of the Directorate – clients with multiple problems tend to impinge on all elements of the service across 4 offices – a good integrated approach- and indeed, in the opinion of the Evaluation Team, in terms of structure- the best we will see, as all

the connections can be made – particularly with Housing- a distinct Korça advantage of having the entire caseload spread across 4 offices serving different service users

9.22 The Child Protection Worker is also supported by a coordinator on social policy and analyst provided by Terre des hommes

9.23 The Social Welfare and Housing, section also have responsibility to supervise residential institutions – including a home for 6-11 year-old children and appear to have a decentralised *ad hoc* Commission for placing children

9.24 There is said to be good joint work with social administrators

9.25 The Child Protection Worker has 80 cases- all minorities – 60 Egyptian and 20 Roma and has worked with 240 cases since 2007

9.26 We were struck by the maturity of the team in Korça which includes an experienced Director and a Roma specialist who took us on a visit. The team has a male and female Roma worker in Korça. Korça was said to be the first city in Albania to voice the needs of marginalised groups - Egyptian and Roma and having a high incidence of domestic violence

9.27 Discussion took place on the Baby Home in Korça, with a capacity 21 0-6 year olds – presently housing 11 children – who sometimes languish -in the institution in Korça or are transferred to other institutions- which we see as a window of opportunity for family care of babies

9.28 Abandonment was said to be a problem in the maternity hospital in Korça

9.29 The Round Table in Korça is said to amount to a technical committee – child labour section decides on child labour cases- they come up with an Action Plan agreed by the group- there was said to be no disagreement in the Round Table Group

9.30 In the view of the Evaluation Team, we feel that Korça could be a model for social work in Albania. Korça has a good capacity to develop as a Referral Centre with cross-cutting capacity – for example, Korça spoke of a national strategy for disabled children but no-one is monitoring it; for example, the question of access is still not tackled – but a Referral Centre could deal with “orphans”, abandonment, elderly persons and children and families - and Korça acknowledged that they need more services in the field.

9.31 Korça liked the one-stop-shop one-door approach-but pointed out that without accompanying Regulations and Guidelines this would be difficult

9.32 The Focus Group discussion in Korça illustrated the futility of trying to introduce a Child Protection system in the absence of laws that protect. Discussion took place on authority and the law – Parental Rights take 6 months to assume and happen rarely

9.33 Visits to Families - Korça

- i) the Roma family living in poverty – the Child Protection Worker helped the family become can recyclers - given a grant from microcredits to start their own business with husband and family – they were loading the cart with sacks of cans- \$80.00 for

one week's work. Daughter epileptic – mother is worried that she will not take her medicine whilst at school – mother needed breast operation in Tirana – 14- year old daughter with baby

- ii) AMAROROM NGO kindergarten – came in specially to meet with the Evaluation Team- kindergarten for minorities located on land owned by the Mosque – who want to sell the land. 50 children 3-6 attend until 12.30. No community use in the afternoon – Ministry of Education won't allow it and the chairs are too small – Director wants to install a kitchen to feed the children-no great tension reported between the communities
- iii) Roma woman's shack – very bad conditions – divorced violent husband lives through the wall- read case file earlier – her daughter's view – Child Protection Unit has helped her at school – to get to school and to summer camp - mother spoke of husband in hushed tones – afraid of family violence
- iv) visit in block where the city of Korca allocates one room per family- good conditions - mother received microcredits – sells underwear and socks and sells roasted corncoobs in the evenings- doing OK she said -but teenage daughter not too enthusiastic about the help her mother gets from the service
- v) two women sharing a house with two “mean” brothers in law. Roma woman got very upset – had to be calmed down. Multiplicity of problems- been on housing list since 2004 – not enough income evidently- daughter very positive about the service – concerning school particularly. Mother said that she would have “died” without the help of the Child Protection Unit – food, clothing, medicine – A Non-Governmental Organisation took her son to Tirana recently for medical examination for his epilepsy

9.34 **Fier-** The Child Protection Unit in Fier serves a population of around 90-95,000 and was opened some 2 years ago, being chosen as one of the biggest municipalities in the country and because of the numbers of social problems in the city

9.35 The Child Protection Worker is the only member of staff focussing on child protection and is located within the social services department of the Municipality (The initiative here is led by Terre des Hommes and supported by UNICEF).

9.36 There are 5 communes in Fier, with a high number of Roma families which contributed to the need for the establishment of a Child Protection Unit in the city

9.37 The social services department has 7 people working in the section, with the Child Protection Worker carrying a caseload of some 40 cases- featuring a variety of social problems, including -children at risk of being trafficked- especially from the Roma community, domestic violence, which is on the increase- linked with unemployment and alcohol

9.38 Structure of Fier social services has :-

- 1 economist
- 3 social service workers
- 1 child protection worker
- 1 worker for disability
- 1 worker for elderly persons

Cash benefits are located in another sector but in the same Department

9.39 The Child Protection Worker enjoys a close working relationship with social administrators – they bring the information and they have more access to families as they have the legal authority to enter the family – so joint visits are customary between the social administrators and the Child Protection Worker - in Fier the Child Protection Worker **has** never been refused entry to a family

9.40 Not all cases are referred to the Child Protection Unit by the social administrators – referrals are also made from psychologists, nurses, teachers, police and community organisations, neighbours and relatives – all of the caseload is within the city limits

9.41 The Director of Social Services in Fier struck us as being a champion of social service with a real grasp of the invisible- non-tangible social services, which are not always easy to justify or finance- making the point that funds tend to go to visible infrastructure such as buildings **or roads**, with the Director making the point that the non-tangible side of service needs to be fought for

9.42 Problem of the rural population was pinpointed – rural people come to the city in the morning –trebling the population- to sell their produce but children also come to beg- a project is required for this moving population – says the Director – highlighting the problem of no service in communes and discrimination by geography

9.43 Focus Group in Fier discussed the 3 case studies in detail, presented by The Child Protection Worker and it was evident that intervention by the Child Protection Unit in this city included risk assessment, planned intervention, an action plan and regular reviews. It was clear that the Round Table had a hand in planning the form of intervention

9.44 In all 3 cases – involvement of other institutions was seen to be of crucial importance, including :-

- Health
- City Legal Department
- School psychologist
- Housing Department
- Social Administrator
- Red Cross
- Non Governmental Organisations
- Catholic Church

9.45 visits to families in Fier was with the community mediator- himself a member of the Roma community :-

- i) Visited two Roma families- one by the railway- large family of 7– no vehicle access – appeared to be a ghetto – the family had their own house- father – head of family

making urns in which to make rakia – sells 2 a week and so can feed his large family

- ii) The other family- Roma mother - looks a lot older than she is - living in a partially-built house with no windows – selling second-hand clothes – appreciated services of the Child Protection Unit but very beleaguered – especially when very well-looking husband turned up drunk and treated their predicament as a joke – said to be violent
- iii) Visited a family of 3 young children whose mother had died and whose father was struggling to look after them – family given a house by the Catholic Church – dilemmas facing this family discussed at the Focus Group – many of whose members were aware of the family

9.46 This discussion at the Focus Group in Fier, demonstrated to the Evaluation Team in a convincing manner - the extent to which there was common understanding of the reasons for families' problems- the type of intervention required and the need for joined-up working

9.47 **Peshkopi-** The Child Protection Unit in Peshkopi serves a population of 18,000. The managing partners of the Child Protection Unit in Peshkopi is Partners for Children – Partnere per Femijet – supported by UNICEF to manage. The Unit had originally been established to combat sexual abuse and neglect- although little or none has been evidenced to date

9.48 The Child Protection Unit in Peshkopi forms part of the economic assistance and social services section, comprising :-

- 1 Child Protection Worker
- 4 social administrators
- 1 economist
- 1 statistician

9.49 All these staff are said to support the Child Protection Unit - including a service offered to families with disabled members, “orphans”, some benefits to those who care for people with disabilities- and special payment for families with three or more children. The Municipality pays all salary costs – based in the Municipality building

9.50 Although the Child Protection Unit currently have only 6 cases- all of whom the evaluation team visited- and exceptionally the service offers services outside the municipality –although transport is a problem- the Unit is proactive and have produced an attractive brochure and plan TV coverage of the service very soon- for which they will have to pay

9.51 Slow start of a completely new service in the town– began on the 12th of December, 2008 and is named Peshkopi social services and child protection service and is an integral part of the municipality

9.52 The first few months were devoted to disseminating information about the new service and to a series of training- initially there was one case a month, beginning with a child who had

dropped out of school – then a domestic violence case – we met the family

9.53 Of the 6 cases serviced by the Child Protection Unit – only 3 receive cash benefit – one father is working in Greece – one opinion had it that the central government allocation of cash assistance was 10% less than needed

9.54 A major cause of social problems in Peshkopi was said to be poverty and domestic violence

9.55 Training has been an early priority of the Child Protection Unit in Peshkopi with Partnere per Femijet having trained 2 people and providing monthly supervision. In addition, an English Social Worker who was behind the Child Protection Workers' Manual, offered training in May on general child protection

9.56 The problem of large Communes in the Peshkopi area was discussed as they have no family support and child protection services - one Commune has over 10,000 population- another has over 5,000

9.57 Regional Social Services are responsible for registration and inspections – they inspected the Child Protection Unit in Peshkopi, with a positive outcome

9.58 The Child Protection Unit in Peshkopi is keen to have service extension to other client groups and will continue with publicity and awareness-raising

9.59 The Child Protection Unit and social services do make use of Round Tables but considerations of confidentiality were said to limit their use in direct cases. This was the only Child Protection Unit we studied which had this concern about confidentiality

9.60 The Focus Group in Peshkopi took place in the new premises of Association for the Partners of Children and was positive, including discussion of the high incidence of disability amongst children in the Peshkopi area

9.61 Previously in the area, IQ testing had been identified and refined by an international Non-Governmental Organisation, but classification of disability was still said to be too simplistic and although legislation was said to exist for integration of children with disabilities into mainstream schooling, there were no powers or procedures to implement the law, which undoubtedly highlights the need for Regulations and implementing frameworks in Albania

9.62 The Focus Group spoke of the definition of children at risk- it was thought that the current definition is too broad- and we must be more specific regarding the definition, although the value of the Child Protection Worker Manual on risk assessment was recognised

9.63 The Focus Group discussed in detail 3 Case Studies and the content of the questionnaires that the Evaluation Team asked them to complete. During subsequent discussion of the cases there was disagreement as whether to remove children and serious cases that had come to the attention of the Regional Social Services were shared with the group. This highlighted the fact – and not for the first time during the field visits – that it is the Regional level of Social Services that responds to serious and high-profile child protection needs – not the Child Protection Units

9.64 During Focus Group discussion in Peshkopi, divorce was said to be on the increase in North East Albania- in which case – children stay with the fathers' families- presenting an enormous problem to estranged mothers. The Focus Group also thought that money has to be spent by

government to combat the pressures on families of emigration and poverty and the fact that domestic violence is on the increase

9.65 Work has been done already in Peshkopi with children about their rights and children do speak of being subject to violence and parents were involved in discussing discipline

9.66 The Evaluation Team met all 6 families receiving a service from the Child Protection Unit in Peshkopi, including, unusually, one family receiving a service whose child was in conflict with the law

9.67 During discussion with the managing Non Governmental Organisation in Peshkopi, the point was made that there can be a problem of having family support and child protection services accepted – as such services can arouse suspicion, shame and fear of being blamed. This is exacerbated in a patriarchal society in a small town where everybody knows everybody else. For example, it had been found, as a result of the European Union “Second Chance” project, that even University-educated Albanian parents had not registered their children. It will take some time to have Child Protection Unit services fully accepted and utilised in Peshkopi. Discussion will take place between those Child Protection Units operating in small towns and those that have begun in 3 Communes on the small-town problem

9.68 A general point was made that inexperienced social workers working with difficult families in Albania can feel physically threatened and vulnerable to legal challenges – and it may be necessary to consider indemnification

9.69 One participant in the Focus Group in Peshkopi was of the view that Albanian families are only strong from the outside and that the main factor in keeping families together is the force of parental authority and not mutual respect – “who loves you –beats you! “ She also said that teachers were not working with children effectively

9.70 Arising from discussion of the case studies in Peshkopi, the constantly-recurring question came up on the question of removing children at risk – even if you had the authority – there was nowhere to place them- only the interrogation room in Police stations – and the Focus Group identified a need for a refuge/shelter/assessment centre – for emergency/ temporary stays

9.71 Whilst the Focus Group emphasised the need for a family solution at all costs in line with Albanian tradition – it was pointed out that this is not always in the best interests of the child – and if no extended family possibility exists – institutional care is the only safe option. It also emerged that some members of the Focus Group distrusted alternative family care measures as some experience had shown that some families abused this provision to extract money from the system of cash benefits

## **Chapter 10**

### **Analysis of Questionnaires**

10.1 The questionnaires were formulated in an attempt to gather the opinions and impressions of those who used the services of the Child Protection Units, those who contributed directly to the operation of the service and representatives from other institutions upon whom the services of the Child Protection Units impinged more indirectly

10.2 The questions contained in the questionnaires were designed to elicit the requirements of our Terms of Reference which expected the Evaluation Team to analyse the effects of functioning Child Protection Units in terms of what impact these initiatives had on those who used the service- families and children – and on other stakeholders- vital to the operation of the Child Protection Units or operationally associated with them

10.3 A further purpose in using the questionnaires method was to establish from service users and stakeholders their views as to how these child protection entities might better serve the cause of everyday child protection, operating as a decentralised service of the municipality and whether families, children and stakeholders had a view as to the scope for the Child Protection Units’ offering services to other marginalised sectors of communities

10.4 It was not surprising that most of the respondents concerned in the questionnaires were well-disposed to the Child Protection Units, but we would like to emphasise that the Evaluation Team did have ample opportunity to speak personally to respondents, and with rare exceptions, there were very positive responses to the work of the service. There were several *themes* that the questionnaires concerning key players, children and families addressed and the following concern such matters as definition of risk, referral routes and other concerns addressed in the questionnaires, including some direct quotations from the questionnaires :-

*Definition of risk included -*

children who are continuously exploited.  
abused or trafficked children  
children who are sexually abused, violated, neglected, abused  
children involved in domestic violence, sexual abuse, neglected children, exploited or at risk of being trafficked  
children at risk of physical violence and physical harm  
children subject to discrimination, physical and psychological violence

*Most at risk included –*

Roma community who are not stable  
children at risk of being trafficked  
street children  
children in rural areas  
teenagers

*Referral routes of children to the Child Protection Units -*

through school psychologists  
through Social Centre for Economic assistance  
families referring themselves - self referrals  
teachers  
doctors  
nurses  
neighbours

*Role of Municipality and sustainability-*

“it is a governmental institution, but more should be done in the field of social services  
the sustainability of the organisation will be viable because this service will be provided by the municipality”

“Local government is very supportive to the work of the Child Protection Units”

*Decentralisation-*

decentralisation –“it has simplified work, because the solutions are at local level”

*Children’s participation –*

“children have the tendency to ask for involvement in decision-making through the senate and youth parliament”

*Involuntary clients ?-*

“no family has been engaged involuntarily”

“there are difficulties in some families regarding close supervision”

“to a certain extent, because there are families who don’t speak because of the mentality”

*New areas for the Child Protection Units ? –*

children at risk living in rural areas

Roma – as they are mobile

teenagers

street children- need to be included in work of the Child Protection Units

*If the Child Protection Units closes- what will happen?*

– “problems will increase”

“municipal social services will follow them but it would be a much reduced service”

“It would be a failure. The children and families involved in the Child Protection Units might become part of the violence and crime activities”

*Why are the Child Protection Units popular? –*

“Because they befriend”

“They shouldn’t be different, and there are no others.- *ie* the Child Protection Unit is all there is and is unique”

## Questionnaires- in detail

### *Key players*

10.5 The target group of this part of the analysis were key players in Kukës, Korça, Fier and Peshkopi

i) **Kukës** – There were 14 key players who took part in our research: Cash Benefit Office; Child Protection Office, Kukës Municipality; Children’s Cultural Centre, Kukës; Regional Department of the National Employment Service; Kukës Hospital; State Labour Inspectorate, Kukës; Municipal Police; ”Bajram Curri” School; Primary School, ”Prizren League”; Secondary School ”Havzi Nela”; State Police Department, Kukës Region; State Social Offices, Kukës Regional Office; Women’s Counselling Centre and Social Services

ii) **Korça** – There were 4 key players who took part in our research: Help for Children Foundation, Regional Education Department, Regional Police Directorate and Social Support and Housing Department

iii) **Fier** – There were 5 key players took part in our research: Terre des hommes, Fier; Social Services Department, Fier Municipality; Public Health Department; DEA Association; Child Protection Unit and Fier Municipality

iv) **Peshkopi** – There were 10 key players who took part in our research: Cash Benefit Sector, Peshkopi Municipality; Child Protection Office, Municipality of Peshkopi; Peshkopi Hospital; Information Office, Peshkopi Municipality; Peshkopi Hospital, Pediatrics Ward;”Selim Alliu” Primary (9-year) School; ”Demir Gashi” Primary (9-year) School; ”Seit Najdeni” School

### **Key players**

#### ***Main findings***

The Non Governmental Organisations do not have enough space for action, compared to the governmental agencies

Databases are mostly both electronic and hard copies

Information exchange is the issue

#### ***Key Recommendations***

Referrals should have a defined format

The relationship between different players should be improved

All procedures for intervention, case management and cooperation should be formalised

### *Families*

10.6 The target group of this part of analysis were families in Kukës (20 families), Korça, (14 families), Fier (4 families) and Peshkopi (10 families).

Families were part of the research through filling out questionnaires with five groups of questions: General knowledge on Child Protection Units; Entrance into the System; Referral to Child

Protection Unit; The way that the Child Protection Unit has made a difference to family member and family as service user and Suggestions.

**Main findings** Results on **general knowledge** are presented in table1.

Table 1: General knowledge of families of the Child Protection Units

<b>Did families have knowledge what the Child Protection Unit is?</b>		
	Yes	No
Kukës	18	2
Korça	14	0
Fier	4	0
Peshkopi	10	0
<b>Total</b>	46	2
<b>Total number of families</b>	<b>48</b>	

**i) Kukës:**

Almost all families included in the research had research had an awareness as follows: *“It is an office that has helped us in filling our request - general knowledge of the Child Protection Unit. Typical answers and definitions of the Child Protection Unit. Child Protection Unit is the Child Protection Office supporting and assisting them when they need it; “Has helped us for everything; the Child Protection Office is the office providing assistance for children in need; The Child Protection Office is a second home for us; It is the best thing, because they have helped us; Child Protection Office is the office for the identification and protection of children’s rights; A central office that has helped us for any problem we have had as a family”*

Ways of **entry into the child and family protection system** in the Kukës area were explored at first by question on getting assistance for children and family from the Municipal services before the Child Protection Unit became involved. Main result was that **Social Administrator** offered assistance. Also, in 13 (from 20) cases **Social Administrators** have found and recognised families as eligible for assistance.

Regarding a **referral to** Child Protection Units research showed that Child Protection Units, through its proactive approach has found the family as a family in need, in 17 (from 20) cases. In other cases family found the Child Protection Unit and asked for assistance.

Families included in the research showed that they were satisfied with the service they got from the Child Protection Unit in 16 (form 20) cases. Families that were not satisfied answered that they had other expectations, or wanted for additional or other assistance, e.g. *“We want courses and services for our children”*; *“I thought something would change”*

**The main issue of families** included in this research, concern economic issues and unemployment.

**Key Suggestions** of families were formulated as services they suggested to be offered by the Child Protection Unit as well as other service providers, e.g. *Support for the family; Other*

*services; Other activities; Courses for children; Help the families in need; More material aid for families and children; More services; More employment opportunities; Medical check-ups*

## **ii) Korça:**

All families included in the research in Korça had a general knowledge of the Child Protection Unit. Typical answers and definitions of the Child Protection Unit were as follows - *“The Child Protection Unit is giving assistance; Supports us when we need it; Visits us; Cares for children; It is the place where we turn our head to; We discuss our problems, and where we turn our head to when we need something”*

Ways of **entry into the child and family protection system** in the Korca area were explored at first by question on getting assistance for children and family from the Municipal services before the Child Protection Unit became involved. Main result was that **Social Administrator** offered assistance (in 10 cases), but also and **community mediator** offered assistance in 8 cases, as well as a **Non- Governmental Organisation** in 1 case. Also, in 9 (from 14) cases service provider have found and recognised a family as eligible for assistance, but in 5 cases the family itself found the service provider and asked for assistance.

Regarding a **referral to** Child Protection Units, our research showed that the Child Protection Unit found the family as a family in need, in all (14) cases.

Families included in the research showed that they were satisfied with the service from the Child Protection Unit in all (14) cases. Concerning services offered by the Child Protection Unit that were found most helpful, they included: *Food aid, and medicines; Clothing; Micro-credits*

**The main issues of families** included in research, were: *Health; Poverty; Unemployment; Education; Violence; Alcoholism*

**Key Suggestions** of families were formulated as following: *“Continue to help us, because we have a lot of difficulties; Help us with housing”*

## **iii) Fier:**

All families included in the research in Fier had a general knowledge of the Child Protection Unit. Their definitions of the Child Protection Unit included the following: *“Help given by the Municipality for poor children; Staff in the municipality working for the protection of the rights of the children; It is the office in the municipality working for the children’s problems and helping them; It is the office helping poor families and children”*

Ways of **entry into the child and family protection system** in the Fier area were explored at first by a question on getting assistance for children and families from the Municipal services before the Child Protection Unit became involved. Main result was that **Social Administrator** offered assistance, but also a **Non Governmental Organisation**. Additionally, in all cases service providers found and recognised families as eligible for assistance.

Regarding a **referral to the** Child Protection Unit, the research showed that Child Protection Unit found the family as being a family in need, in all 3 cases and the family found the Child Protection Unit and asked for assistance in 1 case.

Families included in the research showed that they were satisfied with the service received from the Child Protection Unit in all (4) cases. Amongst those services offered by the Child Protection Unit that were found to be most helpful, there were recognized : *“Support for the house rent for several months; Social services, meetings with family members; The food they bring and the increase of the cash benefit; The intervention together with the police about the violence in our family”*

**The main issues of families** included in research, were: *Domestic violence; Poverty; Health problems; Alcoholism; Unemployment, children had no books and clothes to go to school*

**Key Suggestions** of families were formulated as following: *There should be more staff for this service; They should be able to offer more*

#### **iv) Peshkopi:**

All families included in the research in Peshkopi had a general knowledge of the Child Protection Unit in the town. Their definitions of the Child Protection Unit included following: *“It is a child protection service, and was helpful for me because they helped me with my problem; For child protection; To help our children”*

Ways of **entry into the child and family protection system** in the Peshkopi area were explored at first by question on getting assistance for children and family from the Municipal services before the Child Protection Unit became involved. The main result was that the **Municipality** offered assistance (7 cases). Also, in 5 cases service providers have found and recognised the families as eligible for assistance, but in 4 cases the family themselves found the service provider and asked for assistance.

Regarding a **referral to the** Child Protection Unit, the research showed that the Child Protection Unit found the family as being a family in need, in 5 cases and the family found the Child Protection Unit and asked for assistance in other 5 cases.

Families included in the research showed that they were satisfied with the service they got from the Child Protection Unit in (9) cases. One answer was that service user was not satisfied with service from the Child Protection Unit *“Because they do not provide financial assistance, do not help getting a loan”* Services offered by the Child Protection Unit that were found to be most helpful, included: *“All, such as psychological, social and financial assistance”*

**The main issues of families** included in our research, were: *The case has been my son’s lack of willingness to go to school; My husband, he needs a job; Unemployment, economic needs*

**Key Suggestions** of families were formulated as following: *Beside the services they should help financially the people or families who don’t meet the minimum living conditions for their children; They should offer financial assistance*

### **Families – Summary**

#### ***Main findings***

Child Protection Units is have good visibility in societies in Kukës, Korça, Fier and Peshkopi  
Families are mostly satisfied with services getting from the Child Protection Units  
The Child Protection Units have a proactive approach in line with finding families as families  
in need

#### ***The main issues of families***

Domestic violence

Poverty

Health problems

Alcoholism

Unemployment

#### ***Key Suggestions***

Child Protection Units are called to continue with work

Child Protection Units have to develop other activities and other services

### *Children*

10.7 Target group of this part of analysis were children in Kukës (15), Korça, (17), Fier (6) and Peshkopi (7).

Age and sex of children included in the research are shown in table 2.

*Table 2: Age and sex of children included in the research*

	<b>Age</b>		<b>Sex<sup>1</sup></b>		<b>Total per municipality</b>
	<b>From 4 to 10</b>	<b>From 11 to 17</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	
<b>Kukës</b>	2	13	4	11	15
<b>Korça</b>	7	9	8	8	17 <sup>2</sup>
<b>Fier</b>	2	4	1	2	6
<b>Peshkopi</b>	4	3	3	4	7
<b>Total Age and Sex</b>	15	29	16	25	
<b>Total number of Children</b>	<b>45</b>				

As shown in the table 2 above - the research dominantly included girls in age from 11 to 17 years. Among them in Peshkopi were 4 children in age from 4 to 10.

<sup>1</sup> In 3 questionnaires in Fier as well as in 3 questionnaires in Peshkopi wasn't filed out the sex of the child.

<sup>2</sup> In one questionnaire in Korça wasn't filed out the age and sex of the child.

Table 3: General knowledge of children of the Child Protection Unit

Did children have knowledge of what the Child Protection Unit is?		
	Yes	No
Kukës	15	0
Korça	17	0
Fier	6	0
Peshkopi	5	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total number of Children</b>	<b>45</b>	

**i) Kukës:**

All children included in the research had a general knowledge of the local Child Protection Unit. Typical answers and definitions of the Child Protection Unit included the following: *“The Child Protection Office for me is a centre that has offered services for my family and me, cooperating with the social workers; It is an office for child protection; The Child Protection Office is an institution working for child protection and looking at different problems the families might have; It protects children from violence; We play, learn, draw (girl, 11); We have fun (girl 13); Takes care of children; Protects children”*

Representative answers on the question “How did you feel when the lady or man from the Child Protection Unit came to your house?”, were as following: *“I felt very well because they were ready to help us; Very well; I was happy because with a representative of the Child Protection Office I managed to look into the different family problems I had; A little confused (girl, 13); I was afraid” (girl, 13).*

**ii) Korça:**

All children included in the research had a general knowledge of the town’s Child Protection Unit. Typical answers and definitions of the Child Protection Unit included the following: *“We go often to the office and talk about what we need; She told me I need to go to school and not beg; We go to the camp, get schoolbags, food; Protection activities, school; Assistance; It is the worker who protects our rights”*

Representative answers on the question “How did you feel when the lady or man from the Child Protection Unit came to your house?” were as follows: *“Fine, happy;a little shy (girl, 12); It felt nice that somebody was listening to me”*

**iii) Fier:**

All children included in the research had a general knowledge of the Child Protection Unit. Typical answers and definitions of the Child Protection Unit were as follows: *“The staff working for children in the Municipality; Child Protection Unit is for me the one helping children; It is the one coming always meeting us and brings food; The office in the municipality that helps and protects the children”*

Answers on the question “How did you feel when the lady or man from the Child Protection Unit came to your house?” were as following: “*I was surprised in the beginning, and confused (girl, 12); Very happy; Fine; Fine, because she brought me toys and books (child in age 8); I was shy because I didn’t know her(child in age 11); Very well.*”

**iv) Peshkopi:**

Only two children included (in age of 4 and 6 years) didn’t have basic knowledge of the Child Protection Unit. Typical answers and definitions of the Child Protection Unit were as follows: “*It is the child protection office; For the protection of the rights of the child*”

Answers to the question “How did you feel when the lady or man from the Child Protection Unit came to your house?” included the following : “*Very happy; Very fine; Don’t know*” (boy, 4 years)

Table 4: Changes in family after the Child Protection Unit’s visit

Were things different at home after the lady/man from the Child Protection Unit came to see your family?		
	Yes	No
Kukës	15	0
Korça	17	0
Fier	6	0
Peshkopi	6	<sup>3</sup>
<b>Total</b>	44	0
<b>Total number of Children</b>	<b>45</b>	

**i) Kukës:**

All children noticed the difference after a professional from the Child Protection Unit visited their family. Differences were described as: “*I am happier; I felt better; Better communication in family; Parents have behaved better; She counselled my mother*”

**ii) Korça:**

All children noticed the difference after a professional from the Child Protection Unit visited their family. Differences were described as: “*We eat better; I was healed with the medicines she gave me; I go to school; For any problem our parents say we should go to the workers, Yes, we went begging less.*”

**iii) Fier:**

All children noticed the difference after a professional from the Child Protection Unit visited a family. Differences were described as: “*We were more pleased and happy; Relationship with*

<sup>3</sup> One answer on this question was missing.

*each other; We have more food and medicines; We were happier; We were calmer, we had books and notebooks”*

**iv) Peshkopi:**

Almost all children noticed the difference after a professional from the Child Protection Unit visited the family. Differences were described as: *“We were happier; I go to the kindergarten; It was different because I was given the trust that I can do more; It was different because I managed to get to school”*

**Children – Summary**

***Main findings***

Children have a general knowledge of the local Child Protection Unit  
Children feel fine in relations with professionals from the Child Protection Unit

Children expect assistance from the Child Protection Unit

***Differences noticed after a professional from a Child Protection Unit visited a family***

Children feel positive changes after Child Protection Units’ activities

**10.8 A cross-section of findings from questionnaires**

10.9 The target group of this part of the analysis were key players in Kukës, Korça, Fier and Peshkopi

**10.10 Main findings – Kukës**

Work with other key players is through exchange of information, collaboration; collective leadership is much more effective than individual; individual leadership, due to the nature of our work, is not effective; Roma children should be involved more; the NGOs do not have enough space for action, compared to the governmental agencies; databases are mostly both electronic and hard copies; information exchange is the issue; local government supports the Child Protection Unit in all activities; there are no funds for direct child protection services; recently, the voice of children and young people has started to be heard in the families, but there is still a lot to be done in this direction and there are gaps in the effectiveness of cooperation

**10.11 Key Recommendations-**Paperwork and documentation have to be confidential; more cooperation between agencies is needed; it would be more helpful if the child protection institutions reported cases of children in need; those children with social, economic and psychological problems should receive the most attention – they could be enrolled in different courses where they can pass the time and somehow forget their problems; referrals should be accurate, based on the problems presented and there is a need to create a local network for information exchange

**10.12 Main findings - Korça**

10.13 Directors and Heads keep continuous contacts with local institutions working for children and their staff, monitor and evaluate staff performance and the achievement of objectives - databases are in hard copies

10.14 **Key Recommendations**-Better cooperation is needed between players in the field of protecting children at risk, as well as unification of forms on child/family; there should be a gradual passage to the development of an electronic database despite the difficulties in updating it; consolidation of reporting forms for children; efforts should be made to raise funds from government, and also develop different services. Cooperation should be more effective and efficient, such as cooperation between police structures for the prevention of illegal activities and the collection of testimony, always geared towards child protection and cooperation on the identification, referral, follow-up and solution of cases cooperating with all the players working for child protection. Job descriptions are clearly defined, but the means to accomplish them should be more effective; all the data should be in electronic form; Child Protection Offices should be supported with electronic equipment and the activities should be funded adequately. The relationship between different players should be improved for the solution of each case; referrals should have a defined format; child protection is indispensable. The institution of child protection has been created in the municipality and should continue working; there should be standards in place for child protection from neglect and abuse. There should be space for different cultural activities concerning standards for each aspect of the child's life from health to education, from social to civil rights

#### 10.15 **Main findings - Fier**

10.16 After the identification of cases, the Working Group meets to draft the action plan and each player undertakes his or her responsibilities; more staff and logistic support needed; Child Protection Unit takes the first steps, but it has a lot to do such as intervention, treatment and support in all areas; databases are both in electronic and hard copy; collective leadership is effective, the individual approach is not successful; children are actively involved, and the action plan is approved after their consent is given (with some exceptions); The mandate should be the same but there should be Child Protection Units in Communes too. There are no other agencies with the same mandate; Roma communities are outside of the municipality jurisdiction; there is no training of staff in Child Protection Units ; no outsourcing in Child Protection Units until now; family visits are very difficult and there are cases when the family is abusing the child and children are protected without the consent of the family; supervision of Child Protection Unit staff is necessary and the Child Protection Unit is still in need of experience. In the activities we have organized in cooperation with the Child Protection Unit, we have had the support of local government, but a limited one (Public Health Department); there are formal agreements with several institutions, to legalise and facilitate the cooperation; local government is supportive but the work of this office should be supported by an individual budget, without depending on donations alone. Family visits are always difficult, even though the family doesn't accept close supervision, the Child Protection Unit has approached the case through support and donations; having a State with a not completely functioning social structure, our organisation and its support are still necessary; not everything is formalised and a good part depends on the goodwill of the partners

10.17 **Key Recommendations** -Forms must be formalised; databases should be improved; for child protection, there should be a specialist to coordinate the child protection work; child protection structure should be complete and not simply an office; there should be more adequate funds for social services from the municipality and central government; the work would be more effective if all the institutions had child protection staff; all procedures for intervention, case

management and cooperation should be formalised; a referral form should be formalized, standardized and shared; the Child Protection Unit mandate should remain the same and whilst there are no structures within this mandate, they should exist to cover the areas outside the Child Protection Unit jurisdiction; both standards and staff need to be increased and the Child Protection Unit should extend its services in rural areas

#### 10.18 **Main findings-Peshkopi**

10.19 “I try to cooperate with the teachers and their families, but this process is often difficult” (School Psychologist); type of database: electronic and hard copy; “The main problem is that we have no formal procedures to coordinate and cooperate with the child protection players” (School Psychologist); “Joint working function in practice only when I take personal initiative” (School Psychologist); The inspection, monitoring and evaluation are formal, but do not go in depth and do not help (School representative); There is a good cooperation with the social worker at the local government level; The advantages are that the Child Protection Unit has opened, providing assistance for all children in need locally; we have a good collaboration with the NGOs, but there is lack of collaboration between the Child Protection Unit and NGOs (Cash Benefit Sector, Peshkopi Municipality)

10.20 **Key Recommendations** - Collective leadership and working in partnership is more effective and with co-operation much better work is achieved

10.21 The pro-formas used by the Questionnaires appear at **Appendix 2**

**NB The completed questionnaires have been archived with UNICEF, to preserve the anonymity of the responses – the blank questionnaires appear at Appendix 2**

## **Chapter 11**

### **The Law in Albania to protect children**

11.1 Unfortunately, Albania’s Law on Social Services does not specifically deal with child protection or measures to ensure children are protected. However, this law provides general guidelines relating to beneficiaries and provision of social services and emphasises that children are among the beneficiaries of social assistance

11.2 Draft Laws are in preparation. The Draft Law Concerning the Protection of the Rights of the Child, dated 2009, commendably sets out the Rights of the Child, makes mention of alternative care in caretaking families and sets out the institutional structures to protect children at national, regional and municipal level, but contains not one word about emergency measures to remove children from dangerous homes to places of safety

11.3 The Draft Law on Child Protection from Maltreatment, dated 2008, on the other hand, does at Article 11 deal with protection measures and at Article 2 (a) provides a measure to “place the maltreated child under the custody of a social care institution” or at 2 (b) “immediately remove the perpetrator from the house for a limited period of time”. It is to be hoped that when these urgent emergency measures are introduced, that they will be accompanied by limited resources within which to safely place children, including placement with relatives and in non-related foster care

11.4 Without emergency compulsory measures to make children safe without the consent of their parents, it will not be possible to protect children. Having stated this, we fully realise that an overhaul of law and introduction of compulsory measures of care in emergency situations carries with it a demanding corollary concerning immediate creation of resources for children needing to be cared for away from home. However it might be possible to accelerate the pace of foster care, support kinship care financially and there may even be a need for the creation of a very small number of refuges for emergencies

11.5 Albanian legislation does not contain a unified legal instrument to provide for the treatment of children who fall victim to exploitation, abuse or violence. Instead, relevant provisions are scattered in specific pieces of legislation in accordance with the nature of the abuse. Thus, reform of the legislation is an important element in the fight to protect the child's best interests. Some progress has been made with regard to improving civil and penal legislation to ensure protection of the child from phenomena that pose serious threats to society in general and the future of children in particular

11.6 The Code of the Family upholds as one of its most important principles the best interest of the child. The Code also defines additional principles/other child rights which would constitute the criteria to determine whether a certain decision making procedure has been driven by the best interest of the child. As a primary consideration, the best interest of the child also permeates adoption procedure. It has been pointed out that the supremacy of Codes as determined by Article 116 of the Constitution of Albania means that laws in Albania rank below these Codes in the hierarchy of legal acts - in which case a Children's Code might be preferable to a law on the rights of children (pointed out in *Children's Alliance The Rights of the Child are Human Rights Draft Alternative Report on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (2005 – 2009)*)

11.7 The Law No 9355, date 10/03/2005, on Social Assistance and Services Article 31, defines the role and tasks of social administrators in municipalities and communes, which include the need to: identify families in need of economic aid, persons with disabilities and the needs of individuals for social care services and verify the social and economic situation of families in need the moment when they enter the cash benefit scheme. These social administrators also recommend to the municipal/communal council, families in need to be included in the cash benefit scheme to cover these services

11.8 The Law on the Organisation and Functioning of Local Government –According to this law, the local authority is responsible for the delivery of economic assistance to families and individuals in need and for drafting a community development plan based on needs and local priorities. This particular Law provides the organisational and legal context for the location of this embryonic child protection system.

## **Chapter 12**

### **National Anti-Trafficking Strategy and the Child Protection Units- relevance to Child Protection Units**

12.1 Reference to this has been included, in view of the importance of the movement against child trafficking in Albania – which provided the initial impetus for the creation of the Child Protection Units in the first place- (and if vulnerability of children and families increases – so will the incidence of trafficking)

12.2 Albania's Strategy for the Fight Against Child Trafficking and the Protection of Child Victims of Trafficking 2008-2010, makes reference to the genesis of the Child Protection Units, in remarking that the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, in cooperation with the project 'Transnational Action against Child Trafficking' (TACT) and UNICEF, have been implementing a pilot project for the establishment of Child Protection Units, as part of the Section of Economic Assistance and Disability Allowance in the municipality structures

12.3 The present Strategy against Trafficking identifies goals and objectives that will contribute to the functioning of the overall child protection system in Albania, in particular through increasing support to the Child Protection Units already being piloted in Albania

12.4 Specific objectives of this Strategy includes increasing the coverage of the existing child protection system through the creation and staffing of new Child Protection Units in 2009, and the eventual creation of Municipality/Commune level child protection systems, or 'child protection safety nets', comprising the child protection workers in Child Protection Units in the entire country by 2010. We regard this as a most admirable ambition and hope that this Report will help to inform consideration of this objective

## **Chapter 13**

### **Remarks on Social Inclusion**

13.1 The Social Inclusion Strategy (2007-2013) is a component of the National Strategy for Development and Integration. It focuses on poverty and social exclusion risks that remain after the onset of economic growth. The connection between poverty reduction and social inclusion is well established. As a crosscutting strategy, it is fully consistent with the underlying sector strategies and in particular those policies and institutional arrangements described in these strategies that aim to assist vulnerable individuals, families and groups in the community so that they are able to operate on their own, to be self-sustaining and to have the same rights as other members of society. One of the purposes of having such a high-priority strategy is that the preparation of a social inclusion action plan, is a standard requirement for European Union accession –(Quoted in European Commission Social Inclusion and Social Protection in Albania September 2008)

13.2 Ndhme Ekonomike provides a means-tested monthly cash benefit to approximately 120,000 households in Albania.

13.3 Coverage of the extreme poor has increased but there it is said that are problems with leakages to wealthier groups and non-coverage of poor households (67 percent are not covered, as noted by the Strategy for Social Inclusion 2007-2013- 15 November 2006

13.4 The Evaluation Team met families who told us that they had either been denied assistance from Ndhme Ekonomike or had been removed from the scheme because their circumstances were deemed to have improved. It was not without significance that through the efforts of the Child Protection Units, many families either received this benefit who had been previously refused it or received an increase in Ndhme Ekonomike

13.5 We believe that new measures and systems need to be created in Albania to preserve family solidarity and to prevent families from disintegrating

13.6 Evidently, a review of Ndhme Ekonomike is currently underway to reassess the:-

- Structure of the Ndhme Ekonomike including the value of the benefit in relation to the poverty line
- Rules for receiving benefits *i.e* eligibility criteria and responsibilities of beneficiaries, including information required from the beneficiary and links between receipt of Ndhme Ekonomike and active employment measures
- Techniques for distinguishing between applicants for benefits so that, as far as possible, the cash benefits are only paid to those who are intended to benefit and are not paid to those who are not intended to benefit
- System of administration, including ease of use for the beneficiary, ease of use for the worker, central and local roles

Only if these questions are resolved will these prototype social services make a signal contribution to poverty-reduction in Albania

13.7 As remarked earlier, we feel that the experience and lessons learned to date by the Child Protection Units do contain significant social policy considerations. There is a sense in which Child Protection Units provide an opportunity to demonstrate examples of good governance – with children as an entry point

13.8 It seems to us that an opportunity exists arising from the review of Ndhme Ekonomike, that in considering the provision of cash assistance to benefit children at risk, the assessment of the needs of families must consider factors of vulnerability – not whether the family has a television or adequate beds

13.9 Although in many countries, the provision of cash assistance is separate from social work services, in the present climate in Albania it makes sense to have a joint approach between the Section of Economic Assistance and Disability Allowance and the Child Protection Units, within the municipality structures

## **Chapter 14**

### **The role of Non- Governmental Organisations**

14.1 The evaluation team want to enter a caveat to the effect that the unique contribution of the Non-Governmental sector in Albania to family support and child protection runs the risk that Non-Governmental Organisations may be expected to offer a range of direct services instead of providing Government with a series of paradigms or models, methodologies, techniques and best practice examples for them to introduce and follow. To rely exclusively on Non-Governmental Organisations to provide social services would allow the Government to avoid taking responsibility for providing personal social services

## **Chapter 15**

### **Policy context**

15.1 Our reading revealed that The Strategy of Social Services (2005-2010) and the Law on Social Assistance and Services (2005) pave the way for the deinstitutionalisation and decentralisation of the care institutions to local government with the development of services close to families and community. It is hoped that this reform will encourage civil society in the

provision and development of new social care services in partnership with local government and there will be licensing agreements with both government and private providers.

## **Chapter 16**

### **Albania and the European Union- Pre-accession to the European Union and the Strategic dimension**

16.1 The introduction of Child Protection entities in Albania- called Child Protection Units or Child Protection Offices, signify a major shift in priority in country where children have not always been regarded as top priority in a period of transition, where economic and infrastructural projects are seen as absolute imperatives. Child Protection now is a matter of national concern and deemed worthy of investment by central and local government

16.2 The Child Protection Units represent a major building block in strengthening a national child and family protection system in Albania and towards establishing permanent and sustainable structures for child protection.

16.3 It seems that social services for children and families in Albania have been introduced exclusively through child protection – children as entry points, as referred to at 13.7 above

16.4 In a few years' time, Child Protection Units should be able to be defined as local authority structures which demonstrate that inter-disciplinary work in the best interests of children can produce measurable results

16.5 Social exclusion in Albania has been said to come about as a result of poverty, weak governance, slow and incomplete decentralisation, inadequate social policies, insufficient targeting of poor households by social administrators and inadequate laws . Building Child Protection Units can demonstrate that social exclusion can be tackled and redressed and provide even a rudimentary safety net – not all of which involves cash assistance (befriending and advocacy, for example)

16.6 There is a possibility of Albania's accessing additional EU funds in the pre-accession phase. During this current phase, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance – the IPA- is the EU's financial instrument for supporting the pre-accession process of countries aspiring to join the EU for the period 2007-2013. In its current status of a potential candidate, Albania has access to funding within the component covering transition assistance and institution -building.

16.7 The Evaluation Team discussed these matters with senior representatives of the Austrian Development Agency and the Coordination Office for Technical Cooperation of the Austrian Embassy in Tiranë

16.8 The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities could be helped – by the Austrian Development Agency and by UNICEF, for example – to submit a *fiche* to the European Commission- requesting financial assistance for consolidating and building on the Child Protection Unit structure as a visible means of supporting vulnerable families through transition and as major building-block in developing good governance. In our view, this would present a good opportunity for the experience of this embryonic child protection to impinge upon the governmental in a vertical sense, as the Ministry can use this example as a basic building block for more comprehensive social services, for which the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance is being sought

## **Chapter 17**

### **Abandonment – baby fostering and adoption**

17.1 During our discussions it was not clear as to the precise extent of abandonment in Albania – there were twelve 0-6 year olds in the institution for children in Korça, but only 2 abandoned babies in the maternity hospital in Kukës over the past 2 years, which is the poorest area in Albania. – in contrast to the claim made by the “Alternative Report” . UNICEF is presently in discussion with the Government on this very question, with a view to assessing the present situation and formulating proposal with municipalities designed to prevent and tackle abandonment

17.2 “The Children’s Alliance Alternative Report” says it is concerned about the great number of children being abandoned and placed in residential institutions indefinitely, even though their parents are well and alive. This is a sign that the government is not up to its responsibility to support the family and thus contributes to the institutionalization of children, the Report says at page 35

17.3 This draft Report goes on to say that they recommend the provision of financial support to families in order to improve their economic situation to raise their children in order to reduce the phenomenon of “social orphans”, i.e. children placed in institutions because parents can not support them

17.4 In the view of the Evaluation Team, that in a country where the only placement away from home is in an institution, the Draft Law on Child Protection from Maltreatment 2008– Article 11, 2 (a) -mentioned above at 11.3, this law represents an enormous window of opportunity to provide family-based solutions to children in Albania. This opportunity could begin with children abandoned in maternity hospitals who can languish in institutions for years and place them instead in baby fostering. In cases where children are removed from dangerous homes – and relatives are not an option – unrelated foster care could be considered- such measures have proved successful and sustainable in Romania

## **Chapter 18**

### **Fostering – alternative family care limitations**

18.1 The Evaluation Team would like to share our view that whilst we agree wholeheartedly that foster care should be developed in Albania, there are serious implications for kinship care in developing a professional foster care service

18.2 The Evaluation Team met with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and a Non-Governmental Organisation concerned with the foster care pilot projects in two cities of Albania.

18.3 We learned that the new foster care scheme will start with related foster carers responding to crises concerning the children of their relatives- who will be paid what it costs to look after the extra child, but not a reward element, whereas the promotion of non-related foster care will involve a reward element

18.4 We had long discussions on the perils and pitfalls of bringing related foster care – kinship care into a paid scheme – based on the experiences of other countries –

- undermining traditional caring networks- very powerful tradition in Albania- there are said to be around 16,000 kinship carers in Albania and only a few receive cash benefit
- formalising the informal
- the question of introducing accountability and supervision of related foster care
- may raise questions of compensation from established carers

18.5 Established carers may resist supervision and the training that will be thrust upon them and refuse to have State intervention – what would then happen to the children if scrutiny reveals that the related placement is inappropriate?

18.6 The pilots are due to begin in October and this has implications for relatives who are already looking after children related to them

18.7 On the question of “net-widening” – where children will be fostered rather than remaining at home with their far-from-satisfactory parents, because foster care exists – the intention of the new initiative is that work will be done with birth parents designed to get the child home – undertaken by staff of the “community centres “ - set up by the World Bank. We wonder whether this highly-skilled rehabilitation work with birth families will be supported?

18.8 Regional Social services will inspect the foster care service

18.9 Multidisciplinary Foster Panels will be set up – in the United Kingdom they are statutory-but the final recommendation as to whether prospective foster parents are suitable will go to the Courts

18.10 With all due respect – the Courts will require assistance in assessing the question of whether potential foster parents – related or not related to the child – are suitable and whether their motivation to foster is appropriate-unless the Courts are simply to rubber-stamp recommendations from the Fostering Panel

18.11 One of the participants in one of the focus groups suggested that foster care should be developed to foster whole families – which indeed has worked well in some countries

18.12 The question of how to compensate relatives for caring for related to them is one that is unresolved in many countries, but probably the best solution is for governments to devise ways of supporting these relatives without having to bring the children into the care of the State system

## **Chapter 19**

Findings, Conclusions and Proposals

### *i) Decentralised structure of local government*

19.1 The Evaluation Team is aware that the law on decentralisation – law on the organisation and functioning of local governments of 31.07.2000, provides the organisational and legal context for the location of this embryonic child protection system

19.2 Principles underpinning the switch of emphasis from central control and regulation to delegating decision-making to local level, include confirmation that the purpose of local

government in the Republic of Albania is to promote the welfare of the people and guarantee good governance at the level closest to residents, through opportunities for communities to make choices between different kinds of local public facilities and services and the delivery of appropriate services which are sensitive to local needs

19.3 As remarked earlier, at 11.7, Law No 9355, date 10/03/2005, on Social Assistance and Services, Article 31, defines the role and tasks of social administrators in municipalities and communes, which include the need to :-

- identify families in need of economic aid, persons with disabilities and the needs of individuals for social care services
- verify the social and economic situation of families in need the moment they enter the cash benefit scheme, as well as twice a year for all beneficiary families
- recommend to the municipal/communal council, families in need to be included in the cash benefit scheme
- assist in the preparation of the documentation for persons applying for cash benefits, disability benefits and social care services
- participate in the process of drafting the decision for the families to be included in the cash benefit scheme, the list of persons with disabilities and persons to receive social care services
- calculate and recommend the amount of cash benefit for approval by the sector of cash benefit and social care services of the municipality/commune
- cooperate in drafting local and regional plans in support of people in need
- assess the needs of individuals or families requesting social services, in compliance with national and local priorities and the financial capacities to cover these services

19.4 We understand that decentralisation of services from the centre to the local level of government has not always been accompanied by adequate financial transfers. In this situation, certain local government units with insufficient revenues collected by local taxes are unable to cover the needs of their communities- (p 9 the Alternative Report)

19.5 The Child Protection Unit is an integral part of the Economic Aid and Social Care Department in each municipality or commune administration

19.6 On the question of how the intervention of the Child Protection Units affect the work of local and central government vertically and horizontally, since decentralisation is a cross-cutting issue, involving the portfolios of several ministries and institutions, the evolution of the Child Protection Units is significant – central government can quote them as an example of an indigenous structure created to absorb the worst social effects of transition and in meeting obligations entered into by having signed international conventions – such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Local Government can refer to a direct effect of decentralisation as having created embryonic social services as a first step and in a visible example of good governance, since the Child Protection Units are the creature of the Municipalities along with provision of economic aid

19.7 The development to of the Child Protection Units could streamline, accelerate and arguably justify and vindicate the process of decentralisation in Albania and make a major contribution to good governance. This could be achieved by responsibilities that were previously met by centralised Ministries and their Regional entities – such as duties of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and Regional Social Services now being effectively

discharged by local authorities – principally by the creation of a Commission for Child Protection, chaired by the Deputy Mayor

19.8 The emphasis on decentralisation is in line with best child protection practice in that it empowers local service providers and promotes Albanian solutions to Albanian problems by designing services that are sensitive to local needs, whilst at the same time requiring a positive dialogue between local and central government

19.9 To be effective, child protection services need to be located at local level if they ever hope to address and tackle the root causes of children in dangerous situations and to formulate interventions and measures to make children safe

### *ii) The Child Protection Unit*

19.10 The defining characteristic of a Child Protection Unit is the full-time employment of a Child Protection Worker at municipal or commune level, employed to work with children identified as being at risk of harm from whatever source and to coordinate referrals of children and formulate child protection measures

19.11 The main tasks of these Child Protection Units are to monitor the situation of children and families at risk; to coordinate protection and referral activities at the local level; and to identify and manage individual cases in a multi-faceted way. To this end, each unit has at least one trained social worker, for case work and case management, as well as drop-in centres for counselling, activities and information to children and families

19.12 One of our findings is that the Child Protection Units help to define clearly the responsibilities and the roles of Regions, Communes, and Municipalities in respect of the organisation and administration of the services of social care in the framework of the decentralisation processes.

### *iii) Potential for development*

19.13 We also found that indisputably there is good potential of Child Protection Units to operate as Referral Centres and their potential for cross-cutting development into serving other socially excluded and marginalised client groups is considerable and to some extent, already happens. Furthermore, there seems to us that there is a need to further involve Regions, as representing the second level of local government, further developed below

19.14 Other services to vulnerable and socially-excluded sectors of communities provided by the Child Protection Unit itself and referred on by the Child Protection Worker to other services accessible in the respective localities by community groups and national and international Non - Governmental Organisations – a State and civil society partnership – might well include :-

victims of domestic violence referred to the Child Protection Unit as having a one-door approach and linked to a Domestic Violence coordinator and the new coordinated community response Teams; ethnic minorities; migrant and returning migrant families, children and young people in conflict with the law; young people dependent on drugs, single mothers and those affected by HIV and AIDS

19.15 A degree of specialism will require to be developed on the part of the workers in the Child Protection Units if the service is not to be spread too thinly, accompanied by a small increase in staff

19.16 There is no doubt that the experience of the workers within the Child Protection Units can share their experience in contributing to the reform of family support and child protection services in Albania and in contributing to building the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and influencing other sectors concerned with children and families

*iv) Processes and Case management and risk*

19.17 We discovered that each of the 14 Child Protection Units use techniques to assess of the strengths and weaknesses of families, and estimate risks and protective factors concerning children, partially determined by the Child Protection Worker Guidelines, which set out step-by-step procedures to follow when becoming aware of a child in need of protection and identifying specific duties required

19.18 The Evaluation Team think that each Municipality and commune having a Child Protection Unit should consider creating :-

- i) a multidisciplinary Commission for Child Protection, chaired by the Deputy Mayor and comprising the Child Protection Worker from the Child Protection Unit as coordinator of all matters concerning children and families, social administrators, now trained to work along the lines of social workers, and senior members of Regional Social Services, who will act upon training and inspection needs. Membership would also include a psychologist, a representative from Health, Education, the Police and the NGO sector
- ii) This interdisciplinary structure would consider situations where children needed to be placed away from home, either in alternative families, whether related or not or, in very particular circumstances, an institution. The Commission would meet to discuss pressing matters of social policy in the municipality and work together to produce a regular Municipal Plan concerning family support and child protection for the area and setting targets
- iii) This Commission for Child Protection would have a sub-commission- a case management group- for discussing and deciding on intervention in individual cases, where only those involved and who could commit resources need to be involved- in line with “the need to know principle”- instead of the present looser Round Table arrangement
- iv) Participation of these professionals would be determined by their new job descriptions and an integral part of their professional duties and therefore additional payment for participating in the Commission would not be expected or required
- v) We understand that inter-municipal/commune cooperation is possible whereby two or more municipalities and/or communes can develop and deliver some services for children in partnership through conclusion of contracts or protocols

*v) Central government*

19.19 Central government and line Ministries in Tirana could be responsible for overseeing the effectiveness and efficiency of local government activities and have structures that ensure : -

value for money- cost effectiveness is ensured  
standards of service provision and delivery are applied  
inspection and regulation take place  
social service workers' training and staff development including University curricula in social services are being developed

19.20 This arrangement would leave local government to be fully responsible for family support and child protection services – so long as the funds to make this a reality are made available from central government

*vi) Evaluation and outcomes*

19.21 Being clear about outcomes that the Child Protection Units are seeking to achieve and establishing precisely how we will know if they are successful are the basis for developing effective practice. Evaluating the Child Protection Units not only measures results but maintains a focus on improvements to future practice- we think that the role of State Social Services should be developed to provide monitoring, expertise and support with a consortium of UNICEF and Non-Governmental Organisations helping them build capacity to accomplish this

*vii) Structure and operation of Child Protection Units*

19.22 The Child Protection Units possess a fundamental organisational integrity by being an integral part of local government and closely associated with the section issuing economic aid – accessible to local people – sensitive to local needs- they know what the locals needs are- and are consequently well-positioned

19.23 The central position of the social administrators responsible for cash assistance is recognised in the model of social service provision and their role as valuable agents of social action and change is central – they have unique knowledge of the families and also the legal authority to enter the house of families, which the Child Protection Workers do not have

19.24 The centrality of cash benefits – in promoting welfare and supporting families –targeted accurately to tackle vulnerability- as the best way to ensure that children are protected is undeniable, but there is also need to promote and value the less tangible, more invisible social services

19.25 The potential for the development in Albania of a one-door, one-stop shop approach is considerable– so that families with several problems do not need to knock on several doors to receive a service - which is a model that fully includes the Non-Governmental Organisational sector in a “mixed economy of care”. There are also advantages in having a team approach – skills are transferred, team members share information, the team supports each other - service users are ensured a speedy and responsive service even if “their worker” is not at work because of holidays or sickness

19.26 There is political accountability in that the Mayor is responsible for local decentralised services and is accountable to those who elected him and there would be electoral consequences

if services that are known to be available were not to reach those sectors of the community they are designed to benefit

19.27 The Child Protection Units are an integral part of a coalition of like-minded institutions working together in the interests of children – cash benefits, health, education, police, psychologists and Non Governmental Organisations, for example, but with the Child Protection Worker as the focal point to coordinate case management, ensure each case is appropriately recorded and that the plans for children and families are regularly reviewed. This meets the need for a whole-systems approach

19.28 In at least one area, the provision of housing and shelter, services to people with disabilities and cash benefit administrators are an integral component part of the child protection service, confirming the vital importance of cross-sectoral cooperation and complementary competencies, capable of allocating real resources to children and families across the caseload of the Child Protection Unit (Korça)

#### *viii) Future developments*

19.29 Articles 43 and 44 of the draft Law concerning the Rights of the Child in Albania referred to above, envisages the creation of a Unit for Protection of the Rights of the Child at the Regional Council level. At this second level of local government, responsibilities will include monitoring and evaluating the implementation of laws and policies related to protection of children's rights at the Regional level as well as identifying and coordinating referral of cases involving violation and abuse of the rights of children and maltreatment of children within its region of jurisdiction

19.30 Article 44 of the same draft Law envisages the creation of a Unit for Protection of the Rights of the Child at the Municipal Level – concerning which the 14 Child Protection Units presently represent practical demonstration projects – and whose responsibilities listed at Article 44 include identifying and managing child protection cases in accordance with a multidisciplinary approach, according to the needs and situation of the child; evaluating and continually monitoring the situation of families and children at risk until such children are considered “not at risk” and coordinating protection and referral of cases at local level

19.31 There is undoubtedly a need to involve the Regional level of State Social Services both in urban areas – where they appear to enjoy superior status to social services organised at Municipal levels and in Communes – where they are responsible for social services but without appearing to provide direct services

19.32 One proposal would be to create a mobile team – a peripatetic multidisciplinary team of workers from Municipalities and from Regional State Social Services operating at Commune level, with the ability to provide a rapid response to urgent situations. At present, there are no direct child protection services at Commune level

19.33 Regional Social Services could be helped to build their capacity to train workers to become competent and competent social workers – first train the training staff of Regional Social Services to train other trainers– there may be a need to identify a Non-Governmental Organisation which can train social work managers and practitioners not only in the theory of social work – but the detailed practice – such as interviewing techniques

19.34 A further future development pioneered by Child Protection Teams within social services could include measures and mechanisms to assess risks to children, formulate and utilise interventions with families that actually work and devise local mechanisms for “gatekeeping” *i.e.* regulating the removal of children from families because of the risk that is known to exist to children and facilitate the safe return of children removed to institutions back home

19.35 Without enabling legislation to deal with involuntary situations – removal of children from dangerous homes against the wishes of parents- and nowhere to place them if they were removed –integrated decentralised services could nevertheless devise local solutions to local problems – as authorised by the legislation on decentralisation and with the support of the Mayor – such as - emergency refuges, assessment centres, small scale foster care, and supported and safe accommodation for vulnerable and battered women

19.36 One of the principal advantages of the integrated model of social service operation is that measures and resources can be mobilised to prevent children needing to be cared for away from home – preventative services – family support – such as making use of the canteen in a home for the elderly, to provide free lunches for unemployed people and large families whose children are at risk of trafficking or neglect

19.37 At present, in the event of children having to be removed and cared for away from home- there is no alternative but to place them in institutions and given the very small number of such institutions in Albania, invariably children are placed far from their birth families. Local Child Protection Units could devise local resources to avoid this happening, by, for example, making innovative use of existing local resources

19.38 There is also the potential to prevent babies languishing in institutions before a family-based solution is found for them – several years spent in an institutional setting will inflict lasting developmental damage to infants. Instead, when babies are abandoned in maternity hospitals – the integrated team could mobilise quickly in conjunction with medical and police colleagues to find the mother of the child – or the father – work intensively with the parent(s) with a view to reunification – and should this prove difficult, long-term or downright impossible (because the parents cannot be found or because of proven parental unfitness) then at the very least an alternative family solution could be found for the baby – in the best interests of the child and in line with the imperatives of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, requiring care of children in families

19.39 It is clear that weakened traditional community-based protection networks are a cause of vulnerability to children and families. It might be possible to consider using cash benefit assistance to support relatives to care for related children and in cases of families with multiple problems and where with intensive support from the Child Protection Units in Albania the children might be able to be restored home safely. This might :-

-consolidate and reactivate weakened traditional community-based protection networks – and even create some new jobs

-avoid the perils and pitfalls of attempting to include a paid related foster care scheme into a kinship care practice based on tradition

19.40 The practice and experience of the Child Protection Units as they develop across Albania will demonstrate to the Albanian judiciary the absolute necessity of introducing a unified legal instrument to give immediate protection to children who are subject to violence, abuse, neglect,

trafficking and exploitation. The law needs to provide emergency protection to such children irrespective of the wishes of parents. It is not possible to have child protection services on a voluntary basis – there is a need for methodologies, resources, standards, laws and regulations

19.41 Whilst the Evaluation Team did not directly experience this, there must be a danger in communities and families seeing the Child Protection Units as international ventures which could lead to indigenous initiatives taking second place

19.42 Legislation not only needs to be accompanied by Regulations governing implementation, but family-based resources need to be created in order to place these children in places of safety which is in their best interests and in accordance with the requirements of international conventions. Institutions for children should be used only as a measure of last resort or if a child has extraordinary needs that a family cannot meet

19.43 Correspondingly, natural justice will demand that where children are removed from unfit parents, the State must provide such parents with resources to give them the opportunity to improve their parenting skills, before the provisions of the Family Code are employed to remove parental rights

## **Chapter 20**

### **Further Proposals**

#### **The Evaluation Team would like to add the following considerations and proposals:-**

20.1 As will be gathered from the content of our Report, the Evaluation Team is very positive about the Child Protection Units. We feel that they have made an impact on both a humanitarian and on a strategic level. They occupy an important position in a country in transition. We have suggested several areas for improvement, suggested windows of opportunity and pinpointed their considerable potential for wider reach

20.2 It is of vital importance that the experience and lessons learned to date by the presence of the Child Protection Units in Albania are not lost and they are not restricted to monitoring families who are beneficiaries of the economic aid Department – they need to deepen and widen. Building upon lessons already learned, the Evaluation Team heard that spin-offs already exist, such as the application from Korça Municipality for funding to build upon the multidisciplinary approach towards tackling child protection and promoting social inclusion by the extension of cross-sectoral cooperation

20.3 Child Protection Units should be helped to develop indicators to determine which children are at risk of being trafficked, exploited, abused, and abandoned

20.4 The cause of future development of the Child Protection Units would be greatly served if the job remits of the social administrators were altered to ensure that they were responsible for the identification of families and children at risk of social exclusion- working closely with the Child Protection Units and participating in new training programmes

20.5 Round Tables need to be formalised by regulation or bye-law, in order to ensure consistency of attendance and committment

20.6 Article 44 of the Draft Law concerning the Protection of the Rights of the Child could create Commissions for Child Protection for individual decisions concerning children and a proactive – social policy-planning mechanism at 44 (a) and 44 (d)- closely involving the Child Protection Units

20.7 The Evaluation Team believes that there is considerable potential for further joint work with staff from other sectors in work with vulnerable children and families- for example, with psychologists, with public health nurses and with Albania's and classroom mentor system. The classroom mentors are the first-hand workers who are in direct contact with the families – such initiatives could maximize the use of scarce resources

20.8 We believe that Regional State Social Services could be given a wider task as part of their inspection/monitoring role- they could coordinate the following as part of a nationwide mapping exercise, to create a data base of children in need in Albania, involving :-

Social administrators who would not only identify recipients for cash benefit but identify need in a range of family and social situations

Mayors' offices

All Non Governmental Organisations in the social sector

Primary and secondary schools

Police

Health services – particularly nurses

Traffic to the courts – especially cases of domestic violence and divorce

Prosecutors' Office – cases concerning the Family Code – such as removal of parental rights

20.9 The Evaluation Team was made aware that in Albanian domestic adoption- the demand exceeds supply. There may be a window of opportunity for children for whom a birth family or related family solution does not exist – only once all family supports have been exhausted – to use the provisions of the Family Code concerning assumption of Parental Rights. In such cases, domestic adoption would provide the ultimate form of child protection to those children for whom a return to birth families or placement with relatives is not possible

20.10 As well as the need to introduce law in Albania to ensure that there are compulsory measures to remove children quickly from dangerous settings and to make them safe, there is also potential for a review of Guardianship, to include, for example, emergency guardianship

## Chapter 21

### Appendix Tables

#### APPENDIX 1

##### Documents consulted in the Desk Review- with commentary

#### 1 The Albanian state has adopted the following policy documents which affect the direct and indirect rights of children :

\* "National Strategy for Integration and Development 2008-2013". This document replaced the previous National Strategy for Social and Economic Development (NSSD). This strategy includes priorities and objectives of the integration of Albania into the EU and NATO, and provides a vision for the country's development and its integration in these structures. NSDI refers to sectoral strategies as more detailed documents for strategic intervention in certain areas or sectors. Among these strategies is the sectoral strategy for children or strategy against child trafficking.

\* National Strategy for Children and its Plan of Action (2005-2010), this strategy is an important document, which sets strategic goals of the policy of the government and the Albanian state in this regard. This document describes the totality of measures to be undertaken by different ministries for the realization of children's rights.

\* "Social Protection Strategy and its Action Plan" (2008-2013) (Decree No. 80 dated 28.01.2008) establishes a clear policy for reforming the system of payments and social services, not only for groups in need, but the whole society. Children outside parental care and those with disabilities are included explicitly in the strategy, while the objectives it contains are designed to impact directly on the enforcement of human rights of the child under the CRC.

\* The strategy for social inclusion (2007-2013) (Decree No. 218 dated 3.2.2008, and COM with no changes. 1104, dated 30.07.2008). This strategy is inter-sectoral and focuses on poverty and social exclusion, threats that remain even after economic growth and more specifically refers to children at risk of being affected by violence, abuse and neglect, Roma children and those with disabilities. This strategy, in relation to children at risk, aims at developing an integrated policy and an institutional structure to ensure early intervention towards child development and their protection from all kinds of abuse, violence and exploitation.

\* "National Strategy for improving conditions of the Roma community" (Decree no. 633, dated 18.09.2003) is based on critical analysis and evaluation of problems of the Roma community. Drafting is done in the framework of efforts to improve the living conditions of the Roma minority through concrete policies and programs for poverty alleviation, their involvement in public life, the preservation and development of their ethnic identity. Concerning the Roma children, the strategy refers specifically to this category, especially in the first part which relates to education and awareness.

\* "National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities and its Plan of Action" (Decree no. 8, dated 7.01.2005) determines a platform for measures to improve livelihoods of persons with disabilities in general. The objectives of this strategy and measures predict specifically the rights of children with disabilities, such as the right of the child to be heard, the right to education, healthcare, entertainment, and the right to information. However, this strategy lacks a particular focus on children and lesser focus is dedicated to their protection from phenomena such as abuse, violence, neglect or exploitation as the basic principles of protecting the rights of children in the context of the CRC.

- "National Strategy against trafficking in human beings" (2008-2010) as well as additional document "National Strategy against child trafficking and protection of trafficked

children" (Decree 1083, dated 23.07.2008). National Strategy against trafficking of human beings is aimed at increasing access of children to education and increasing school enrollment rates by improving the system of registration with the civil registration offices, the elimination of child labor and building systems for child integration and defense, networks and security for children and their families at regional and local level to respond to a greater range of abuses against children, including trafficking

- The "National Strategy and Action Plan for Combating Child Trafficking and Protection of Trafficked Children" 2008-2010 does not overlap with the above-mentioned Strategy. However, it treats of the issue of child trafficking in a more comprehensive and inclusive way, within the context the National Strategy, by stressing the approach and specific measures that are needed in the case of minors. The Strategy aims at accelerating the current initiatives to reduce and to eradicate child trafficking in Albania by strengthening and coordinating the activities of all institutions involved: government, international organizations, and local and international NGOs. It gives priority to identifying potential victims of trafficking, as well as the actual victims, through a better functioning of the entire child protection system in Albania.
  - \* "National Education Strategy" (2004-2015) identifies the priority areas in the development of pre-university education in Albania, functions in governance and management of education, towards improvement of the quality of learning, greater efficiency of education financing and development of capacity to implement the national strategy on education.
  - \* "Strategy of social services" (2005-2010) (Decision of the Council of Ministers, Nr.265, date 28.04.2005) specifies the provision of a clear policy for the medium-term reform of the social services system and refers specifically to orphan children or children with social problems placed in social care institutions; abandoned children or street children; trafficked children and working children.
- <sup>1</sup> Law No. 9936, dated 26.06.2008 "Concerning the Management of the Budgetary System in the Republic of Albania"

## 2 The political and legal framework sanctioning the rights of children in Albania

The Constitution of the Republic of Albania, adopted under Law no. 8417, dated 21 October 1998, and promulgated by Decree no. 2260, dated 28 November 1998, is the fundamental law sanctioning the protection of the rights of children in general, and of those without parental care, in particular. The new Constitution of the Republic of Albania contains a special chapter on the economic, social and cultural rights of citizens, and a chapter on social objectives. These chapters sanction the State's obligation to provide children without parental care with care and help throughout the process of their upbringing, development and education (Article 59/e). In furtherance of the Constitution, several laws and decisions underlying the social care policy for protection of children without parental care have been adopted, or are under consideration.

The international Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ratified by the Albanian Government in February 1992, entered into force in March of 1992. The obligations deriving from the current Convention with regard to respect for the rights of the child are guided by the principle of respect for "the child's best interests." Under the CRC, a child is entitled to enjoy an acceptable standard of living, the provision of which is the responsibility of the State and the parents. Ratification of the CRC was an initial step in setting up institutional systems to ensure the protection of the rights of children without parental care. CRC implementation calls for the

enactment of specific laws and by-laws, as well as the establishment of institutions at the political, executive, and auditing/monitoring level.

Further to Decision no. 134, dated 5 May 2000, of the Council of Ministers, a permanent group of experts was set up, entrusted with the task of “preparing country reports on the implementation of Conventions in Albania.” The group was also tasked with preparing a report on CRC implementation, which was completed in June 2005 and submitted to the UN Children’s Rights Committee. The Committee considered it an achievement that such progress had been made on legislative reform relating to human rights in Albania in general, and children’s rights, in particular.

Revised with Decision no. 458, dated 27 April 1998, of the Council of Ministers, the European Social Charter<sup>4</sup> recognises and protects the right of people to enjoy social services. However, it should be pointed out that citizens know little about what their benefits are. It should also be noted that ratification must be associated with the enactment of several laws and instructions enabling implementation.

The Convention of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)<sup>5</sup> no.138 “Concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment,” was ratified in 1998, and the Convention no. 182 “Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour,” was ratified in 2001.

The Hague Convention (1993) “On Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption,” was ratified by Law no. 8624, dated 15 June 2000.

The new Family Code (Law no. 9062, dated 8 May 2003) specifies the State’s institutional obligations towards children without parental care, and the manner in which they are met. Under the Family Code, “children without parental care”<sup>6</sup> considered all those children:

- Whose parents are dead,
- Whose parents are declared unknown,
- Whose parents are declared missing,
- Who are abandoned by parents,
- Whose parents have by final court decision been deprived of their parental rights

In these circumstances, the State fulfils its obligation through a court of law, which decides on the form of care to be applied:

- Blood-related families, with one member of the family being the guardian
- A foster family
- A person appointed as guardian
- A family appointed as guardian
- A social care institution (state-run or private)

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<sup>4</sup> DCM

<sup>5</sup> ILO convention

<sup>6</sup> Here and after will be used the term “Children”

In making a decision, the court takes into account the recommendation and advice of the Department for Social Assistance and Social Services in the relevant municipality or commune, and any other information on the child's development and personality, as well as consideration of which form of care is best for the child. The court of law makes a decision to place the child in custody. As well as being entitled to assign a qualified guardian, the Custody Board can also place the child in a special institution.

Articles 351/1 and 352 of the Civil Procedure Code, adopted by Law no. 8116, dated 29 March 1996, stipulate that: "The application for the allocation of custody is filed with the court of law by the relatives of the young children, and by whoever receives notice of a child remaining parentless, of a child being born to unknown parents, and under any other circumstance where the law provides for the establishment of custody, and the exercise of this right by the child when he attains the age of sixteen years." Likewise, under Article 356/1, "Before proceeding with the nomination of a guardian, the court should also seek the opinion of the child when he is ten years old."

Law no. 7650, dated 17 December 1992, "For the Adoption of Minors by Foreign Citizens and Several Amendments to the Family Code." This anticipated Albania's adherence to the Hague Convention "On Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption." Under this law, adoption is only allowed when it is in the best interests of the child. The law specifies the procedures whereby a child is legally declared abandoned. This law states that a child is declared abandoned when his parents have not taken any obvious interest in him over a period of one year preceding the submission of request for a court of law to declare the act of abandonment. For children placed in institutions at birth, the period preceding declaration of abandonment is six months. As per legislation, the court of law takes a decision on the basis of a full examination of the circumstances leading to abandonment. As well as declaring the child abandoned, the court of law decides on accommodation. (It chiefly decides to place the child in an institution).

Law no. 8153, dated 31 October 1996, "For the Status of the Orphan," sets out the criteria for placing children in the social care institutions. This status is conferred on certain categories of children as defined under the Family Code (Law no. 9062, dated 8 May 2003)

The status is granted by a specially established committee at the State Social Service, of which a member is a representative from the orphaned children's association. The legislation also governs the manner in which children without parental care who are placed in the social care institutions, are handled. Under the provisions of the current law and the normative acts issued by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, these children may stay in state or private social care institutions until the age of 14 years, and in special cases, until the age of 17 years.

Law no. 9355, dated 10 March 2005, "For Economic Assistance and Social Services," was drafted on the basis of Law no. 7710, dated 18 May 1993, "For Social Assistance and Care," amended by Law no. 7886, dated 8 December 1994, and Law no. 8008, dated 5 October 1995, as well as the by-laws promulgated in furtherance of them (Decision no. 307 of the Council of Ministers, Decision no. 510 of the Council of Ministers). This law (9355) supersedes these previous laws (7710, 7886 and 8008), and determines the system for the economic assistance and social care of Albanian citizens, including children without parental care. The law prescribes:

- The structure and typology of the social care services;
- Their organisation, functioning, and funding;

- The categories of beneficiaries of institutional services;
- The criteria for benefits entitlement;
- The rules for acceptance/placement in institutions, and the relevant documentation;
- The monitoring and evaluation of the services.

This law (no. 9355) defines the social service system and sanctions that “Social services cover all the services offered to individuals and groups in need, and in accordance with their nature, fall into social care services and social and medical care services.” Under this law, while social care services cover services offered to individuals, families, groups in need, and communities to help them meet their vital needs, the social and medical care services encompass those services that are offered by specialised personnel, and are intended for health rehabilitation.

This law also defines certain terms that are important for the performance of the social care system, including orphan,<sup>7</sup> person with disabilities,<sup>8</sup> social services,<sup>9</sup> and foster family.<sup>10</sup> The law further specifies the categories of beneficiaries in accordance with the type of assistance or care offered. Among the categories are children (including children without parental care), youths until the age of 25 years, persons with disabilities, and those who are likely to belong to groups in need.

This law prescribes the types of services, in terms of their organisation and functioning, and groups them under residential care services and community-based services. While the service in residential institutions is offered to individuals for whom in-home care is impossible, community-based services are offered in day care centres, individuals’ homes or foster families, in accordance with the specific need of the beneficiary

With respect to funding, social care services are grouped under public and private services. Public services are funded from the central government budget and local government budgets. They are managed by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, where services are offered through national institutions,<sup>11</sup> by the municipalities/communes, where they are offered through institutions serving a town or a commune; and by the Region, where they are extended to individuals coming from several local units in that Region. Private social services do not differ by nature or typology from public services, but they are funded privately.

Under legislation, juridical, public and private persons are entitled to manage social services after having been licensed by Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. The contract between the state institution and the non-state institution determines the legal relationship between them. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

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<sup>7</sup> As per definition applied in the “Status for the Orphan”, the term “orphan” implies a parentless child until the age of 25 years.

<sup>8</sup> The term “person with disabilities” refers to an individual whose ability is limited through physical, sense, intellect, and psychic-mental damage, congenital or suffered during a lifetime due to accidents, temporary or permanent illnesses, which are not contracted from causes related to employment.

<sup>9</sup> The term “social services” implies all the services offered to individuals and groups in need, who, with the resources available to them, are not able to cope with their vital needs for maintaining, developing, and rehabilitating their individual chances to meet their emergent or chronic needs.

<sup>10</sup> The term “foster family” implies an alternative family, in compliance with the definition given in Article 266 of Law no. 9062, dated 8 May 2003, “For the Family Code.”

<sup>11</sup> Institutions designated for more than one “region.”

drafts a model contract, registers the status of the managing institution, and stipulates what reporting and oversight will be required and provided. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities is responsible for developing the social service standards.

Legislation provides for disability payments in accordance with the decision of the responsible committee. It provides for economic assistance for families looking after one or more family members who are unable to look after themselves on account of their physical or mental disability. The legislation also stipulates the conditions whereby a family, including children without parental care, may benefit from economic assistance. For the purposes of economic assistance benefits, legislation does not consider children deprived of parental care as a separate category, but as “grown-up children.”

The law 9355 provides for important changes with respect to the decentralisation and modernisation of special social services. In particular:

This law provides for social services to be decentralised, thus enhancing the participation of local government and social society in planning, funding and delivery. This is specified in the article addressing the “manner of funding”:

“Economic assistance and social care programmes are funded from the State budget and the local government budget. The financial resources allocated for the social care services provided by public and non-public institutions, both at a Region and a municipality/commune level, in residential institutions, day care centres, families, or the mobile services offered in the communities, are made up of:

- State budget delegated funds
- Funds allocated from local taxes and fees
- Income allotted from assets and other activities carried out by the municipality or commune, as well as donations, and sponsoring”

- It establishes the Social Fund to finance the social assistance and service system. It is funded with public monies allocated for social care services; extra-budgetary financing from organisations, physical or juridical persons, or other individuals; other income obtained from the implementation of bilateral or multilateral agreements; as well as from the resources and assets of the Ministry.

- It transfers residential social care services to the local government; establishes new social services determined by the local government, using the assets transferred from the ownership of the central government to the ownership of the local government; and transfers in-home care to community-based services, or if impossible, to improved in-home social care.

The Law no. 8652, dated 31 July 2000, for the organisation and functioning of local government, creates the necessary conditions for the decentralisation of social services. It should however be highlighted that, on account of limited local financial resources, financial decentralisation has not yet been realised in each and every unit of local government.

The Decision no. 307, dated 24 May 1994, of the Council of Ministers<sup>12</sup> “For the Social Care Services,” was drafted and adopted in furtherance of Law no. 7710. It provided for social care services to be funded from the state budget, as follows:

- “Extra institutional” services, including those offered in day care centres (for street children and disabled individuals), homes, and emergency services
- Institutional services delivered in residential institutions

In institutions, services are extended to orphaned and abandoned children, as well as to children with disabilities. Central government, local government, non-governmental organisations, and private persons provide childcare services. Local authorities offer “extra institutional services,” while central departments, including the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, offer institutional services. The same Decision provides for how social care services are to be organised and function, its hierarchy, and the tasks of each and every institution. The Decision also establishes the manner for the management of the social care institutions and their functioning, as well as the manner for their funding. The said Decision provides for the transfer of the social care institutions from under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Ministry of Health, to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. This Decision also introduces the model for the status of the institutions, and the model for the contract governing inter-institutional relationships.

The Decision no. 510, dated 24 November 1997, of the Council of Ministers,<sup>13</sup> “The Criteria for the Establishment of the Social Care Residential Institutions and the Required Documentation for Acceptance,” sets the rules for admission into institutions, by age-group, and the need for rehabilitation. Hence, all categories of children without parental care, as defined under the Family Code, are to be admitted to infant and child homes (point 1.A.6 of this Chapter).

Children whose parents are temporarily unable to provide for them on account of their economic situation (for which relevant documentation must be adduced in proof), or their health, may also be placed in institutions for up to six months.

These institutions may also accommodate children from families that are experiencing a crisis, as well as children whose parents have emigrated.

On 25 May 2001, the State Social Service prepared the Rules of Procedure of the social care institutions for children with social problems.<sup>14</sup> The Rules of Procedure contains several chapters, including: General Provisions, Administration and Organisation, Acceptance of Children into and their Removal from the Institution, Programmes, the Environment, as well as the Final Provisions. The Rules of Procedure were drafted in furtherance of Law no. 7710 and its by-laws. The Rules of Procedure is the normative act governing the conduct of the social care institutions for children with social problems. The Rules of Procedure enable the institutions to perform the following functions:

- Child rearing,
- Health care,

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<sup>12</sup> Once the sub-laws are drafted in furtherance of the new law 9355 for economic assistance and social services, this Decision will become invalid. However, for now this Decision is still in force.

<sup>13</sup> The same proviso applies as in the previous footnote.

<sup>14</sup> The same proviso applies as in the previous footnote.

- Education,
- Psycho-social remedy by creating a home-like environment,
- Integration of children into society,
- Finding a temporary family for children, with a view to returning them to their biological families.

The Rules of Procedure is binding for all social care institutions for children with social problems, regardless of their status.

On 25 May 2001, the State Social Service prepared the Rules of Procedure of the Development Centres.<sup>15</sup>

The Rules of Procedure is made up of several chapters, including General Provisions, Administration and Organisation, Acceptance of Children into and Their Removal from the Institution, Programmes, the Environment, and the Final Provisions. The Rules of Procedure were drafted in furtherance of the current legal framework. As well as guiding service provision in the social care institutions, the Rules of Procedure is the normative act governing the conduct of the social care institutions for children with physical and mental disabilities.

The development and implementation of the following national strategies are relevant.

**3 The midterm National Strategy for Social Services outlines a radical reform in the policy for the protection and development of children without parental care, which aims at enhancing the effectiveness of social policies. Compared to the current policy, this Strategy aims to guide the reform in the following directions:**

- Offering integrated services to children, both in the community and the family.
- Introducing coordination and cooperation among the central government, local government, and the non-profit organisation network.
- Assigning a core role to local government, that is, to identify persons “in need” or “at risk”, and to decide on the best services option.
- Setting up child social care departments at the local government level (the current departments are called Economic Assistance and Social Services Departments, and are responsible for addressing all categories of persons in need).
- Establishing social service centres in the major cities and towns of Albania.
- Improving Social Services legislation with a view to ensuring the protection and respect of the rights of children in need.
- Adopting and monitoring social service standards for children in all public and non-public institutions.

The Strategy contains several concrete targets, and important expectations with regard to preventing children without parental care from being placed in institutions. These reflect the new focus on prevention of social care policies towards these children, including better family support and reduced periods of stay in residential centres. See Strategy: pp. 41-42.

2. The National Strategy for Social and Economic Development (NSSD), which was adopted in November 2001, and is revisited on a yearly basis, points out that the harmonisation of services ensuring economic assistance and other social services is the only way to ensure improved quality of social services. The recommendations contained in the NSSD comply with the priority

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<sup>15</sup> The same proviso applies as in the previous footnote.

policies laid down in the Strategy for Social Services. Further, the NSSD emphasises greater participation of non-state organisations in funding and service delivery as important to an enhanced sustainability, continuity, and quality of social services.

The Strategy contains several concrete targets, and important expectations with regard to preventing children without parental care from being placed in institutions. These reflect the new focus on prevention of social care policies towards these children, including better family support and reduced periods of stay in residential centres.

#### 4 Legislation concerning the rights of the child

The following is a summary of legislation concerning minors in Albania:

- The Constitution of the Republic of Albania. The constitution was enacted by Law no. 8417, dated 10/21/1998. The Constitution contains specific provisions concerning the protection of children, youth, pregnant women and young mothers. As part of the economic, social and cultural rights and freedoms, the Constitution acknowledges the child's right to protection from violence, abuse, exploitation and labor until such time as the child reaches the minimum working age recognized by law. Children born out of wedlock are entitled to equal rights and freedom with children of wedlock. The Constitution's Chapter on Personal Freedoms and Rights, includes, among other things, the rights of individuals involved in penal processes. Applicable to adults as well as minors, these rights include:
  1. The person under arrest has the right to be notified promptly in the language s/he understands, of the reason of arrest and the alleged charges;
  2. The arrested individual has the right to immediate access to an attorney of personal choice.
  3. Every person under accusation has the right to be judged within the reasonable time limits prescribed by law, or be bailed out and judged in freedom.
  4. Every person deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.

During criminal proceeding, the defendant is entitled:

- a) To be notified immediately and in detail about the charges brought on him/her and of his/her rights in a penal lawsuit. S/he is entitled to the right to immediately notify his family or closest relatives of his arrest.
  - b) to be provided sufficient time and access to the necessary facilities to prepare his/her defense;
  - c) to have the free assistance of an interpreter if s/he does not speak Albanian;
  - d) to defend himself or chose his/her own attorney;
  - e) to communicate freely and privately with his attorney; should s/he not be able to afford one, s/he will be provided with one, etc.
- Family Code. Approved by law No. 9062, dated 05/08/2003 the Code incorporates a good part of the provisions of the international law on the child's entitlement to special

protection, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Family Code preamble enshrines the principle of the child's best interest. Also, in accordance with the Code, the parents, authorities and courts should be guided in their actions and judgment by the child's best interests. The new Family Code dedicates a special section to the rights of the child. Thus, the third section of the Code sets the general rules for determining the child's motherhood and fatherhood. It provides for the obligation of the parents to share their child's sustenance and defines parental duties and rights in relation to the child. The section also sets forth adoption rules and procedures, and introduces new elements with regards to the legality of adoptions, probation period, and adoption by Albanian citizens living abroad. Section Three of the Family Code enshrines the principles of assigning child guardianship. The present Family Code was designed with local and foreign experts. The French and Italian experiences were explored as part of the comparative research. The final review of the draft code was supported by UNICEF.

- Civil Code. Enacted by Law Nr. 7850, dated 07/29/1994, the Civil Code defines that a person is considered to have reached maturity at the age of 18. However, 14 year-old minors may become legal subjects upon the prior consent of his legal representative. Minors enjoy the right to association and may become members of civic organizations. They may possess the earnings of their own labor, deposit their savings and administer their money deposits. Minors under 14 years of age have no right to act in a legal capacity. They may take legal steps proportionate to their maturity level. Such steps involve applications that are immediately granted, or requests that derive no contestations. Other acts are instituted on minor's behalf by his/her legal representative. Article 7 of the Civil Code provides: "... Minors enjoy the right to association. They may administer the earnings of their own labor, deposit their savings and handle these deposits." Article 6/1 says: "Upon reaching 18 years, the individual is considered to have attained maturity. S/he may undertake acts and proceeding to win over rights and implement civic obligations."
- Civil Code procedure. The Civil Code Procedure was approved by Law No. 8116, dated 03/29/1996. Articles 351/1 and 352 provide: "Applications to guardianship may be submitted to the courts by the relatives of the child. Application may also be submitted by whoever receives notice of the loss of a child's parents; of the birth of a child by unknown parents and of any other circumstance required by law to assign child guardianship. The right to address the courts may be exercised by the child himself when s/he has reached 16 years of age. In accordance with article 356/1 "prior to proceeding to assign guardianship, the court should ask the opinion of the child, should s/he be at least 10 years old.
- Labor Code. Approved by Law No. 7961, dated 07/12/1995, the Labor Code sets 16 years of age as the minimum age for children to be admitted to employment. The Labor Code provides that children may be employed even at 14 years old. However, it may be only during school vacations and in such jobs that do not cause harm to their physical wellbeing. Jobs that may employ 14 year olds are defined by special decision of the Council of Ministers.
- Decision No. 384 dated 05/20/1996, "Concerning the rights of working minors", defines the minimum working conditions, appropriate and inappropriate jobs for the child, leave of absence for working children, etc. The Law was amended by Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 205, dated 05/09/2002 "Concerning some changes in the Decision of the

Council of Ministers No. 384, dated 05.20.1996 “Concerning the rights of working minors”. These two important by-laws define the terms of employment for individuals less than 18 years of age.

- Law No. 7986, dated 09/13/1995 “Concerning the state’s labour inspectorate”. The law defines the rights and duties of the labor inspectorate. Of importance is to mention that the law includes such tasks as enforcement of the labor legislation with regard to working hours, salaries, security and wellbeing, employment of minors and related issues. The law vests the Inspectorate with the power to inspect child employment, child working conditions, child safety at work as part of the enforcement of legal provisions safeguarding the rights of the child.
- Law Nr. 7650, dated 12/.17/1992 “Concerning inter-country adoptions and some changes in the Family Code”. The law provides for the establishment and operations of the Adoption State Committee as a collegial body. The membership of the Committee is made up of representatives from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Public Order, the Ministry of Finances, the Law School (expert on the Family Right) as well as one representative from the Orphans Association. Formulation and approval of Law No. 7650, dated 12/17/1992 preceded Albania’s signature of the Hague Convention on the Protection of the Child and Inter Country Adoptions. The law stipulates that inter-country adoptions will be led by ultimate consideration of the child’s best interest. The law also defines the main powers and duties of the State Adoption Committee, among which mention can be made of:
  1. Reviewing adoption applications submitted by Albanian and foreign couples. Providing technical assistance to these couples to complete the required documentation.
  2. Compiling lists of minors who may be adopted domestically or abroad.
  3. Establishing cooperation with the public and private authorities, domestic or foreign, to secure child’s safety.
  4. Selecting the private foreign or domestic authorities with which cooperation will be established with regard to ensuring adoption safeguards; Keeping these subject informed and updated with the relevant Albanian adoption law and by-laws.
  5. The irrevocability of the Committee’s approval of an adoption application.

Based on the rights provided by the New Family Code, specifically by paragraph 2 of article 252 which says “... the State Adoption Committee is a central independent body whose activity is regulated by special law” the State Adoption Committee with UNICEF support has established a working group with expertise from various fields to formulate the draft law: “Concerning the organization and operations of the State Adoption Committee”.

- Law No. 8950, dated 10.10.2002 “Concerning Civil Status”, with changes. This law contains protection and regulatory provisions on the registration of the newborn and the personality of the child. The law has been formulated by a working group with representatives from concerned Ministries and various other institutions involved with child protection. Consultations were held with Council of Europe experts and exchanges have been conducted with governmental and non-governmental agencies. The Ministry of

Justice has been particularly involved throughout the formulation until the finalisation and approval of the law.

The Law concerns the entirety of personal information relating to the birth, existence and individuality of citizens, as well as relations between/among individuals. In this light, the law recognizes and protects the rights of citizens in the ways that they relate to the society and the Albanian government. It also designates enforcement institutions and vests them with the necessary powers to implement these rights.

The law stipulates the right of the parents to name their child. In case of disagreement, the issue should be taken to the court. The decision of the court is then taken to the civil registrar.

However, to protect the identity of the child, the law vests the civil registrar with the right and authority to not accept to register the new born under inappropriate, offending, immoral and racist names.

As regards surname, the law stipulates that the child takes on his parent's surname. Should parents have separate surnames, the child may take on both.

The law also sets time limits with regard to the registration of newborns. These time limits range from 15 days to 30 days in exceptional circumstances.

The law provides for the assignment of the child nationality in cases of parents with different nationalities. The parents should decide in agreement between them. With regard to children born out of wedlock when the father's identity is not known, the child takes on the mother's nationality; in the case of abandoned babies, the child is presumed to be Albanian. The law also provides for ways to settle the nationality of adopted children.

- Law, No. 7635, dated 11/11/1992 "Concerning the new educational system". Given the special importance of child education for both the present and future times, the law provides for sanctions in cases of child's non-attendance of compulsory education. It is of importance that this age-cohort be prepared for the future in ways consistent with their needs and capabilities. Thus, when children from 6-16 years miss school without a justifiable cause, or altogether drop out of school, their biological parents, adoptive parents or guardians are punished for administrative infringement of the educational law, which is punishable by fines. The laws provides for manner of calculating these fines according to percentage of lessons missed without justifiable grounds, especially in repetitive cases within the same academic year. Such decisions are made by the school principal and are submitted to local authorities in the jurisdictions where the parent, adoptive family or guardian of the child lives. These authorities are responsible to collect the fine and put it in the state budget.

The law also prohibits the employment of children who have not completed compulsory education. Should the jurisdictional authorities mentioned above receive note that the child is employed while s/he is still bound to complete compulsory education, they have the power to punish the employer, public or private, for administrative infringement of the law. The labor offices are entitled to administer fines up to 10.000 leks, and in repetitive cases the fine may go up to 20.000 leks.

- Law No. 8092, dated 03/21/1996 “Concerning mental health”. This law deals primarily with the rights of mentally afflicted children below 18 years of age. The law provides, also, for the protection of minors placed in private mental institutions. In such cases, the government covers the portion of expenses that equals cost of treatment in public institutions.

The law demands that the Ministry of Health in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, should work out the basic principles of education and rehabilitation policies for children and youth afflicted by various degrees of mental retardation.

In consideration of the child’s best interest, as part of the safeguards for child wellbeing, the law stipulates that the prior written consent of the legal guardian of the child is required to enable his/her treatment in a psychiatric hospital.

- The Penal Code of the Republic of Albania, approved by Law 7895, dated 01/27/1995; changed by law No. 8204, dated 04/10/1997; changed by Law No. 8279, dated 01/15/1998; changed by law No. 8733, dated 01/24/2001; and lastly changed in February 2004. The law was modeled after the Italian and French Codes. Special importance has been paid to improvement of the penal law from the perspective of juvenile justice. The Penal Code now contains important safeguards for children involved in situations and phenomena that may rise due to trafficking, sexual and homosexual exploitation, prostitution, pornography, abandonment of the child, etc. The Code contains such provisions that protect the life, wellbeing and dignity of the child. The latest changes of the provision “Concerning child trafficking” have modified the notion of trafficked children. Presently, the provision contains the specifications for additional criminal deeds, strengthens coercion and punishment and raises the amounts of prescribed fines. Thus, the latest changes to article three, define child slavery or similar forms of exploitative use, the taking advantage of minor’s status, his/her exploitation for organ transplants, and any other form of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child’s welfare, to be ways of “child trafficking”.

The Penal Code sets 14 years as the minimum age for penal responsibility should the child commit a serious crime. For penal infringements, responsibility starts at 16 years. Article 33, paragraph 3 of the Code stipulates that minors deprived of liberty should be separated from adults. Minors below 18 years condemned to imprisonment may only be given half the time prescribed for adults (article 51). The law provides greater space to resort to alternative punishment for children than for adults. According to article 52 of the Penal Code, based on the low risk posed by child’s lack of physical and mental maturity, on the concrete circumstances of penal infringement, etc. the court may exempt the minor from punishment. In these cases, the court mandates the placement of the child in a correction institute.

- The Code of Penal Procedure enacted by Law No. 7905, dated 03/21/1995. This code is in line with the most advanced European codes. The Italian Code has served as the model for the Albanian Code of Penal Procedure. The present Albanian Code provides for procedures that guarantee the protection of the child before and during the court proceedings. It also provides for improvements in the institutional landscape by mandating the establishment and functioning of special court sections to deal with minors. Article 35 of the Code of Penal Procedure contains the legal and psychological

safeguards to which minors are entitled in each of the levels of proceedings. They are entitled to be judged in the presence of their parents or in the presence of individuals designated by the child himself. The Code of Penal Procedure mandates that the services of an attorney should be made available free of charge should the defendant be below 18 years of age. The Code contains specific provisions with regard to the care that the court should make when defining the correct age and personality of the minor. These provisions are made in article 41 of the Code. In addition, article 42 stipulates that the court should obtain information on the living conditions, family and social background of the minor defendant to the end of determining the level of maturity and sanity and the social gravity of the infringement in order to administer proportionate punishment. The Code of Penal Procedure contains a number of safeguards to protect the child and his/her personality, specifically:

- a) Child interrogation in closed doors sessions;
- b) The right of the child's legal representative to defend the child's interest;
- c) The free services of an attorney for children below 18 years;
- d) Prohibition of the publishing of personal information and pictures of the minor defendants and minor witnesses, as well as minors damaged by the penal offence;
- e) Non arrest for a penal offence that qualifies as penal contravention.

These safeguards complete the procedural legal framework in penal proceedings and provide minors with the necessary safeguards they are entitled to due to their mental and physical immaturity.

- Law No. 8331, dated 04/21/1998, "Concerning the execution of penal decisions". This law also contains provisions with regard to implementation of article 63 of the Penal Code concerning labor for public benefit. The law on execution of penal decisions specifies that the Bailiff's Office is responsible for enforcing labor to the benefit of the public. The local government units should provide the Bailiff's Office with the list of legal persons, public or private, punished to do labor in the interest of the public. It then proceeds to enforce the execution of the punishment.
- Law No. 8328, dated) 04/16/1998, "Concerning the Rights and Treatment of Incarcerated Persons" with pertinent changes. The law defines its mission as one according to which the condemned should be awarded such treatment as to enable his/her correction to the end of re-integrating them into mainstream society (article 9).

The law defines the manner of conceptualisation and implementation of treatment, customisation of treatment in accordance with the individual's situation and characteristics of each of the imprisoned individual, the types of institutions that should execute penal punishment, type of medical care provided in the prisons, etc.

Minors, in particular, are subject of the following provisions:

Article 15 of the law determines the priority of confining minors in low security prisons.

Article 17 stipulates that minors should serve time in institutions established specifically for minors. In the impossibility of separate institutions, special sections should be created for minors in other institutions in accordance with the provisions of this law.

Article 37 addresses the education of incarcerated minors. Thus, the law obligates the provision of access to schooling for minors, as well as to professional courses, in accordance with the system in effect. Special emphasis is placed on the education and cultural and professional formation of the incarcerated individuals below 25 years of age.

Article 40 of the law regulates relations with the family. It mandates the design of a special programme favoring relations of the minor with his/her family.

Article 53 provides for disciplinary measures for minors who breach rules in the prisons. These measures are as follows:

- a- individual reprimanding;
- b- apprehension in the presence of in-mates;
- c- exclusion from participation in special group activities for up to 5 days;
- d- suspension of the right to stay in open air with in mates for no more than 10 days;
- e- exclusion from all kinds of group activities for up to 10 days.

Based on the above mentioned law, the General Regulation of Prisons has been made effective by Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 63, dated 03/09/200.

The UN and Hague Conventions which Albania is party to:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child ratified by the Albanian Government on 27 February 1992. Article 44 of this Convention, among other things says: State Parties undertake to submit to the Child Committee, through the Secretary-General of the UN, reports on the measures they have adopted which give effect to the rights recognised herein and on the progress made on the enjoyment of those rights: (a) within two years of the entry into force of the Convention for the State Party concerned; (b) thereafter every five years. The working group set up under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and working under the leadership of the Ministry of Justice submitted a detailed report in Geneva on 21 February 2005 on the institutional and legal measures adopted by the Republic of Albania to enforce the Convention's implementation.
- The Hague Convention "Concerning the Protection of the Child and Inter-Country Adoptions" ratified in June 2000 by law No. 8624, dated 06/15/2000.
- Convention No. 182 "Concerning the worst forms of child labor" and recommendation No. 190: "The Worst forms of child labor" approved in September 2000.
- The European Convention on the Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms approved by Law No. 8137, dated 07/31/1996.

##### 5 Other documents consulted in the in Desk Review

Children's Alliance The Rights of the Child are Human Rights- Alternative Report on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (2005 – 2009) page 7

Child Protection Office, Kukës October 2004-December 2006 Evaluation Report  
Albanian National Training and Technical Assistance Resource Center (antarc) January 2007

Excerpts from National Plan of Action - National Child Strategy—practical steps

Analysis of the Child Protection System in Albania – Carolyn Hamilton, Steven Malby, Gwen Ross – April, 2007

Child Protection Worker Guidelines- Revision 4 – 2007 Ingrid Jones

List of Forms used by the Child Protection Units- Terre des hommes – reviewed 2009

National Strategy for the Fight against Child Trafficking and the Protection of Child Victims of Trafficking- 2008-2010

Social Inclusion and Social Protection in Albania - European Commission September 2008

**APPENDIX 2**

**Questionnaires – Key Players, Families, Children- formats**

**QUESTIONNAIRE No 1**

**Relevance – Key players in Child Protection<sup>16</sup>**

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name and Residence of your Institution)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name, surname and your position in the Institution)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Place)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

**You are invited to write out answers on questions below in this Questionnaire. Try to be concrete and terse, please.**

<b>1. Internal issues – scope of work, internal organization, job description, procedures</b>		
1.1. Key points from scope of work of your Institution (in line with child protection)		
1.2. Is there a shared definition of what constitutes risk to children?	Yes	No
1.3. If “Yes”, please describe it.		
1.4. Internal organisation (in brief, with focus on child protection roles &		

<sup>16</sup> *Representative of municipal CPU; Representative of NGO Residential and Community-based Social Service Care Providers (Director and/or Staff); Social Administrator; Representatives of municipal Child Labor Monitoring Committee; Representatives of municipal Police; Primary Health Centre Staff; Primary School and Secondary School Staff (Director, Teacher and School Psychologist); Public Children’s Homes (Director and Specialists); Representative regional office of State Social Services*

responsibilities)		
1.5. Job description of head and main staff, in brief		
1.6. Is the staffing and work conditions adequate and what should be improved?	Yes	No
1.6.1. If "No" please describe it in brief		
1.7. Internal procedures relative to child protection: What happens inside of your Institution in cases of child need a service or protection?		
1.8. Your comment, recommendation etc. on topics from 1.1 to 1.7.		
<b>2. Internal issues – paperwork</b>		
2.1. Do you/your organisation use forms?	Yes	No
2.2. Which type of forms? <i>Please describe in brief.</i>		
2.3. Forms are established by internal rules.	Yes	No
2.4. If forms are given by external authority, write what is the authority (e.g. local government, central government etc.)		

2.5. Your comment, recommendation etc. on paperwork		
<b>3. Internal issues – database</b>		
3.1. Database on child protection existing in your Institution.	Yes	No
3.2. What type of database (e.g. electronic, in hard copies)		
3.3. Describe in brief how it functioning.		
3.4. Your comment, recommendation etc. on database		
<b>4. Internal issues – reporting</b>		
4.1. To whom does your organisation report?		
4.2. Dynamics of reporting (monthly, yearly, something else)	a) monthly b) quarterly	c) yearly d) something else _____ _____
4.3. Does your organisation receive reports and from whom?		
4.4. Dynamics of reports (monthly, yearly, something else)	a) monthly b) quarterly	c) yearly d) something else _____ _____
4.5. Your comment, recommendation etc. on reporting		

<b>5. Financing</b>		
5.1. Financing sources	a) national budget b) local budget	c) donations d) something else _____ _____

5.2. Please describe in brief a sustainability of your Institution	
5.3. Your comment, recommendation etc. on financing issues	

6. Relations		
6.1. Relations with other key/important player(s) relative to child protection		
6.1.1. How is it under formal/official rules and procedures		
6.1.2. Does there exist any formal document e.g. protocol; partnership agreement etc.		
6.1.3. How it functions in practice		
6.2. How effectively do agencies and professionals work together to share and record information, assess and manage needs and plan effectively for children and young people?		
6.3. Is there agreement on recognising and assessing risk and need?	Yes	No
6.4. How effective is individual and collective leadership? ( <i>Please describe in brief</i> )		
6.5. Your comment, recommendation etc. on relations issues		

7. Referral	
7.1. Who refers children in need to your organisation?	

7.2. To whom does your organisation refer children in need?		
7.3. Referral methodology	a) formal paper b) phone call	c) emailing d) something else <hr/>
7.4. Referral methodology is formalised (regulated by norms)	Yes	No
7.5. If "Yes", who formalised it?		
7.6. Your comment, recommendation etc. on referral		

<b>8. Protection of Children</b>		
8.1. How actively are children and young people and their families involved in decision-making?		
8.2. Has the decentralisation process simply confused matters and blurred boundaries of responsibilities?	Yes	No
8.2.1. If "Yes", please describe it in brief.		
8.3. The advantages and disadvantages of the Unit's mandate, should it be different and why- are there different bodies which have similar mandate and do not coordinate their work with the CPU's?		
8.4. Which groups at risk should be included in the work of the CPU and are not at present?		
8.5. Are there clear standards on how the needs of the children and families are assessed and who is doing it within the CPU, does it need		

improvement or additional profiles of staff?	
8.6. About which entitlements the CPU decides, which ones the Unit staff directly implement and in which cases the Unit recommends measures (ie to the Court or other state agencies) or refers to other service providers?	
8.7. Which difficulties exist in the division of labour between the CPU and their NGO partners and others involved?	
8.8. Is the training staff receives adequate for the tasks - what is missing?	
8.9. Is the local government supportive to the work of the CPU and other service providers and what could be done for greater efficiency (local planning, budgetary support from local revenues, matching grants from central level)?	
8.10. Are the NGOs included formally in the system (outsourcing of services) or do they function separately ; what is needed for their real partnership with the government agencies; what are NGOs strengths and weaknesses, what should be done to overcome weaknesses?	
8.11. What are the three things that the respondent considers crucial for improvement of child protection services in the locality and in the country as a whole?	
8.12. What form does supervision take- how regularly and is it an	



## QUESTIONNAIRE No 2

**Relevance – Families**

\_\_\_\_\_ (Place)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

***You are invited to write out answers on questions below in this Questionnaire.  
Your answers are going to help Albanian Government and UNICEF to improve  
Child Protection System in your country.  
This inquiry is anonymous.***

***Thank you for assisting us!***

<b>1. General knowledge on Child Protection Units</b>		
1.1. Do you know what the Child Protection Unit (CPU) is?	Yes	No
1.2. If “Yes”, please can you describe what CPU means for you and your family?		
<b>2. Entrance into the System</b>		
2.1. Did you get assistance for your children and family from the Municipal services before the CPU became involved?	Yes	No
2.2. If “Yes” what kind of assistance was it ?		
2.3. Who afforded the assistance to your child?	a) CPU  b) Social Administrator	c) Non-governmental Organization  d) Someone else, Who _____
2.4. Did the organisation providing the assistance to your child, find your family?	Yes	No
2.5. Did you find them?	Yes	No
2.6. How did the organisation provide the assistance to your child find		

your family, or how did you find them?		
<b>3. Referral to Child Protection Unit</b> <i>(For families that have experience with Child Protection Units)</i>		
3.1. Did the CPU find your family?	Yes	No
3.2. Did you find them?	Yes	No
3.3. How did the CPU find your family or did you find them.		
3.4. How did you first make contact?		
3.5. Were you happy to accept help from the CPU?	Yes	No
3.6. If "Yes" as well as "No", please describe why?		
3.7. Were you a bit reluctant?	Yes	No
3.8. If "Yes", why?		
<b>4. The way that the Child Protection Unit has made a difference to you and your family</b> <i>(For families that have experience with Child Protection Units)</i>		
4.1. Can you tell us what difference has been made to your family after CPU's intervention? Can you describe what the difference has been?		
4.2. What happens if you need to have other services or if you move localities?		
4.3. How can you get the service of the CPU in an emergency or at weekends?		
4.4. What have been the main problems causing difficulty for your family – what do you think are the causes of these problems?		
4.5. What part of the service offered by the Child Protection Unit did you find most helpful		
4.6. Are you satisfied with	Yes	No

the service?		
4.7. Why you are or not satisfied with the service?		
4.8. Was there any part of the offered by the Child Protection Unit service that you found unhelpful or that you didn't like?	Yes	No
4.9. If "Yes" please describe what and why.		
<b>5. Your suggestions</b>		
5.1. Do you have any suggestions for the Child Protection Unit that they might do things differently?	Yes	No
5.2. If "Yes", what things?		

### QUESTIONNAIRE No 3

**Relevance** – Children

Age: \_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Place)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

1.1. Do you know what the Child Protection Unit (CPU) is? What does it do?	Yes	No
1.2. If "Yes", please can you describe what CPU is for you?		
1.3. How did you feel when the lady or man from the CPU came to your house?		
1.4 Were you happy?	Yes	No
1.5 Why you were happy or unhappy? The visits have made you happy, very happy or less happy? Why ?		
1:6 Did the lady or man from CPU help your mum, dad, brothers and sisters?	Yes	No
1.7 What did she/he do?		

1.8 Is there anything you think she should have done but didn't?		
1:9 Were things different at home after the lady/man from the CPU came to see your family?	Yes	No
1.10 What was different?		
1.11 What was it like when the worker from CPU came to see your family?		
1.12 How was your relationship with your mum, dad, brothers and sisters before the worker came?		
1.13 How was your relationship with your mum, dad, brothers and sisters after the worker came?		
1:14 What do you think she did that made a difference?		
1.15. Is there anything else she could have done?		