



Hope & Homes
for Children

www.hopeandhomes.org.ua

Reform of the child protection system – what Ukrainian children need



Halyna Postoliuk,
Regional Director

Hope and Homes for Children Ukraine

The activities of HHC Ukraine (working in Ukraine since 1998) are aimed at the prevention of child abandonment, reintegration of the child into his family, the closure of institutions and development of family-based care and services to support vulnerable children and families in communities



Hope & Homes
for Children

Consequences of institutional care

- Families remain vulnerable and the root causes which led to children's separation are not resolved
- Economic costs. Long term expenditure, indirect costs of institutionalisation with very poor outcomes for children
- Social costs. Marginalisation, isolation, lack of opportunities, increased risk for the cycle to be repeated



Ukraine situation and trends

The population - 43 million people, of which 7.6 million children under 18

Current situation

- The number of vulnerable children is growing due to the economic and humanitarian crisis
- 83,800 children are without parental care (22,500 are orphans)
- Each year 10,000 children lose parental care
- 151,000 children with disabilities
- 624 institutions for children with 16 types (housing 72,000 children)
- 1.6 million IPD's including 194,000 children
- Around 14,000 children placed in institutions due to conflict during 2014

Positive trends

- The scale of the problem of street children has dramatically decreased
- The sustainable development of foster care
- Development of a united database of children in difficult life circumstances
- Creation of agencies responsible for child protection
- Prevention of abandonment of babies
- Decrease in the number of institutions



Why does this obsolete system of institutions continue to exist?

At family level

- Poverty, poor parental capacity
- Lack of family support services at community level, inclusive education

At society level

- Stereotypes and stigmas in society
- Lack of awareness of the harm of institutional care

At government level

- No political will, no priority in reforms list
- Conflict of interest, corruption at local level

At the level of the system

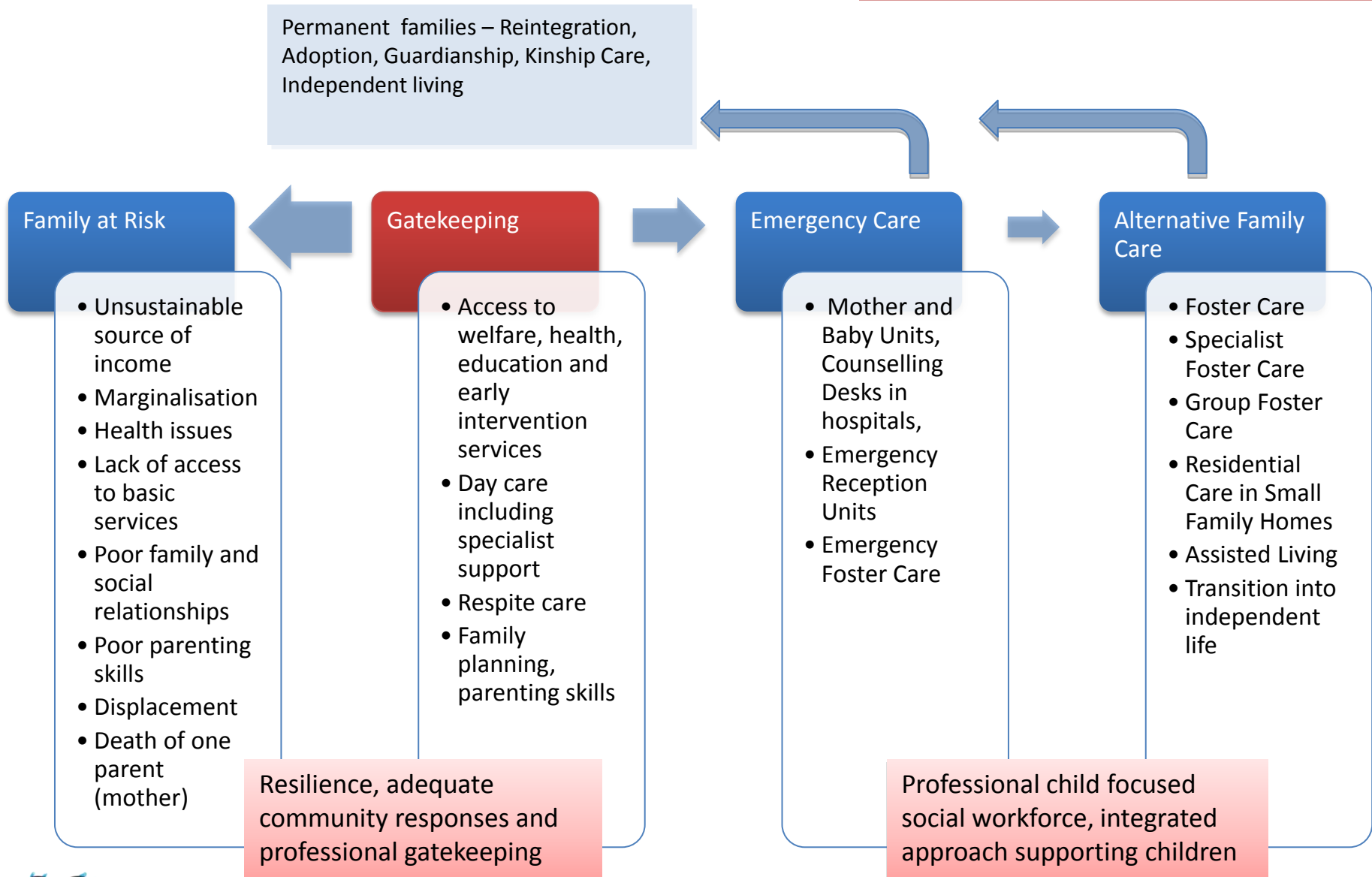
- Lack of professional capacity, resistance of personnel
- Pseudo reforms, re-naming without changes in the type of care



There is a great need for a comprehensive reform of the child protection system with a focus on the transition from institutional to family-based care, with the CHILD at the centre of the reform



The model of a new child protection system



Child protection reform at rayon level (HHC pilot model)

Dnipropetrovsk rayon of Dnipropetrovsk oblast

- 88 000 citizens, 14 000 children
- implemented during 2012 – 2014



Steps in implementation

Preparational / organisational stage (work with stakeholders, signing the agreement, development of the implementation plan, creation of working group)

Analysis at rayon level (gathering the statistics, analysis of existing resources / services, the needs assessment)

Assessment of the institution (individual needs of every child, flow of children, personnel capacity, financial and other resources)

Design of services (services' capacity and specifications, financial calculations, development of regulations)

Closure of the institution and implementation of services (transfer of children, training of personnel, repair / construction of premises, changes in regulations)

Opening of the Centre of social support for children and families



Created services

Emergency
Reception
Unit

Mother and
Baby Unit

Social
apartment

Small Group
Home

Residential Services

Family
Support
Service

Early
Intervention
Service

Mobile team

*Day Care services and
services provided at the place of residence*



Main results



Over 10 months: 546 beneficiaries – 63 in residential services, 483 in family support services

Prevented separation of 66 children

Prevention of risk through active family support and early intervention for 245 children (207 families)

The sustainability of work of the implemented services, the regulations approved and evidence base is formed

Since the services were developed, **no child from a rayon was placed in an institution**

Financial expenses for one beneficiary **is 10 times less** expensive than for 1 child in an institution

The responsibility of local authorities is increased



Achieved changes in child protection system

Before

- Work with the family only in situations of major risk
- Agencies work separately, no coordination or relevant data
- The only solution is to separate the child and place in institution; child's rights and interests are not considered properly
- The child can be moved from one institution to another about 3-4 times
- The lack of family support, prevention services and work on reintegration

After

- Established mechanisms for inter-agency interaction on detection and rapid response to child's needs
- Created complex of services based on assessment that meets the needs of communities
- The child's best interests are considered during decision-making
- Closure of the institutions in the pilot areas
- Developed standards for the services that have been created



Opportunities and challenges for nation-wide reform

Opportunities

- The existence of national legislation in child protection area oriented on family based care
- The introduction of the Ombudsman on Childs Rights
- The extensive development of family based care
- The introduction of a network of social workers in communities
- The positive experience of the pilot projects implemented by non-governmental organizations
- Agreement on association with EU and international support to Ukraine

Challenges

- The lack of a common vision for reform in the child protection area, fragmentation of initiatives
- Conservative and centralized budget legislation, lack of flexibility to finance family-oriented services
- Lack of standards of social services
- Disparity of stakeholders in child protection area, lack of coordination
- Creating new services in communities takes place in parallel with the continuation of the operation of large institutions

Decentralisation



Role of NGO's in reform provision



First necessary steps



Audit of child protection system



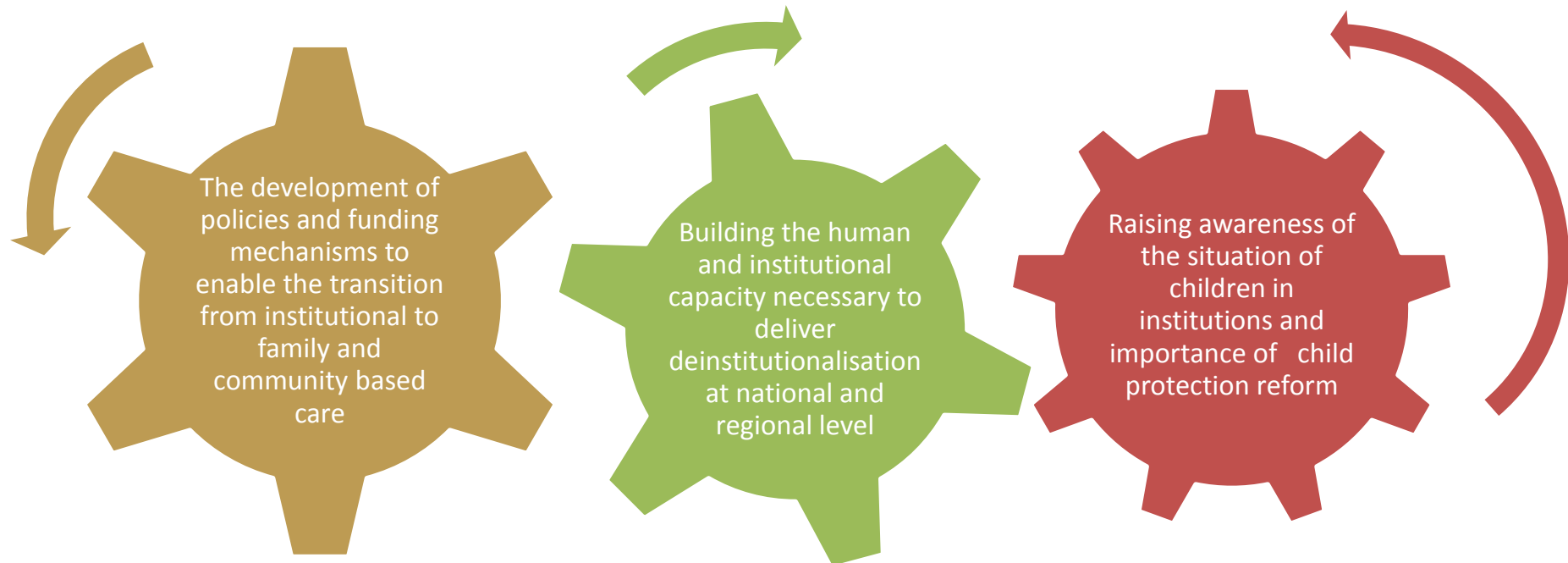
Development of strategy paper and action plan. Discussion with relevant state agencies, civil society, representatives of target groups



Capacity building of professionals

'Opening doors for children' Campaign

Consolidation of understanding and support for deinstitutionalisation (DI) and child protection system reform in Ukraine

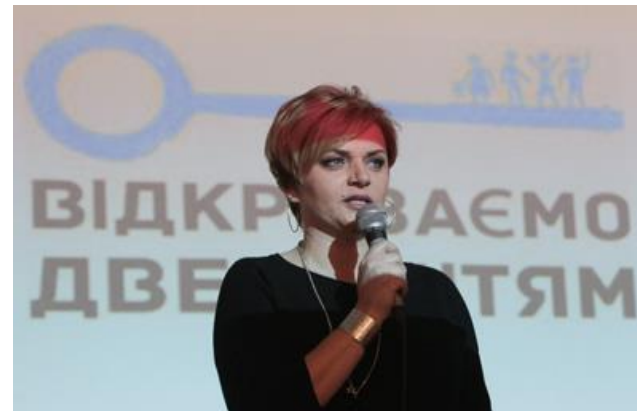


OPENING DOORS
FOR EUROPE'S CHILDREN

www.openingdoors.org.ua



Awareness campaign



Advocacy activities



Work with media



Partnership & networking



Hope & Homes
for Children

Thank you!

