



## EVERY LAST CHILD DESERVES A GOOD START



**Save the Children**

Children in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B-H) are far behind their peers from EU countries when it comes to enrolment to pre-school education. Namely, according to official figures, only 14.6% of children in B-H attend some form of pre-school education, while the EU enrolment rate is as high as 93%.

To tackle this issue, Save the Children in North West Balkans (SCNWB) has been supporting access to quality Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programs in B-H for the past 11 years. Significant progress has been made in several administrative areas of the country, where we contributed to reaching the goal of including all children of pre-school age in some form of pre-school education. On another side, complex and fragmented state structure made this goal out of the reach in several other administrative areas of the country. SCNWB remains persistent on the path we set over a decade ago, forging strategic partnerships with governmental institutions at all levels in

order to enable greater access to and improve quality of preschool education.

„The approach is unique because it brings together us as an international organization, municipal authorities and cantonal educational authorities in a partnership, where each one of us commits to contribute to the establishment and functioning of these ECCD units,“ emphasizes Andrea Zeravcic, director of Save the Children in North West Balkans.

And indeed, the municipalities provided space and covered the running costs of the ECCD units/centres, Save the Children equipped the space and provided didactic materials and supplies, while at the same time building the capacities of pre-school teachers to implement a three-month obligatory pre-school program (150 hours), while the Cantonal authorities committed to fund the salaries of the teaching staff. Moreover, specialised training programs were organized for education professionals in order to improve quality in the execution of the preschool programs.



SCNWB also contributed to passing the framework (national-level) law that requires every child to attend at least three months of pre-school education prior to entering first grade, in the attempt to increase access to pre-school education. And when that law was finally passed, it took more than seven years for all administrative areas to harmonize their legislation in order to accommodate this requirement, and this has not yet happened everywhere.

Working on several fronts and exploring what works best, we opted for a cost-efficient and hardest-to-reach approach in which we bring

preschool program to the most remote areas, reaching every last child.

Furthermore, in 2017, we expanded ECCD program to Montenegro using the best practices from B-H.

“Just a few months ago, my husband and I were thinking to leave the current place of residence and to move to the city in order to be able to afford things to our children. This project has given us hope to stay in our present place of residence, village of Svojat, because our children will now have at least approximately equal conditions for proper growth and development as the children in the city, which is the ultimate goal of every parent.” - mother of students from village of Svojat, Zivinice Municipality, Tuzla Canton.

Save the Children is committed to increasing access to pre-school education for all children, especially those most marginalized, thus our Every Last Child Campaign focuses on bridging the gap between mainstream and vulnerable children in accessing pre-school education.

### Save the Children investment in Early Childhood Care and Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro:



**229**

ECCD units\*  
established

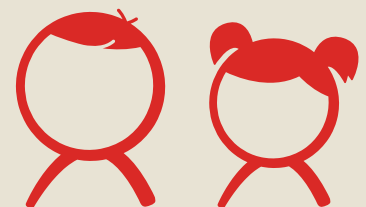
**19**

ECCD centres\*  
established



**590**

education professionals with  
improved skills and knowledge



**6850**

children beneficiaries on  
annual basis

\*ECCD centres are established in larger communities, with several roles – providing preschool education, workshops for preschool children and being the resource centres for parental support. ECCD units are the classrooms established only for provision of preschool education.