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Gurban Amirov, deputy director of the Science, Culture, Education and Social Affairs Department of the Cabinet of Ministers, MP's Hadi Rajabli and Ganira Pashayeva, Mark Hereward, head of UNICEF office in Azerbaijan, officials of Social Services and Child Protection Agency of Turkey, Social Services Department of the Ministry of Labor and Social Services of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, and the Labor, Health and Social Affairs Ministry of Georgia, as well as international experts of UNICEF took part in the conference.

Speaking at the opening, Education Minister, Misir Mardanov, noted the government has always paid more attention to the children's welfare improvement. He underlined that, traditions started by the national leader Heydar Aliyev at the children protection area, today successfully continued by the President Ilham Aliyev and first lady Mehriban Aliyeva. According to the Minister, the rapid economic growth of the country has created favorable conditions for poverty reduction, improvement of social welfare of every family, and implementation of programs on child rights' protection.

Further, the Minister gave information on work done in the frame of "State Program on Deinstitutionalization and Alternative care." He noted in the frame of the State Program projects of "Development of the Foster Care Co-operative model and family type's services between local authorities and nongovernmental organizations" and "Deinstitutionalization and Alternative care" is being implemented. He also added that, the President approved Memorandum of Understanding on "Alternative care" signed between Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population, State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs and UNICEF.

It was noted that, three officials of the Ministry of Education have coordinated measures within the execution of projects at Khazar and Sabunchu districts with the local institutions. Despite preventing the ingress of children to orphanages, within the project, the alternative family care system and community social services were organized as well. Moreover, the databank is planning to be established in order to gather information on children, and foster families. Further, was given information on the goal of the project of Development of the Foster Care Co-operative model and family type's services between local authorities and nongovernmental organizations.

The Minister, noted Coordinating Committees were established in Khazar and Surakhani districts to provide the execution of projects. According to him, one of the main future challenges is to train staff of orphanages as social workers, as well as conduct the relevant training courses. He informed that from this viewpoint the 9-month course on "Social work" specialty was organized at Baku Skill improvement and Retraining Institute of Pedagogical Cadres. Furthermore, 16 workers of orphanages have attracted to this course. Noting the database has been created at the state children institutions, the Minister, informed that, currently, 9874 teachers are working, as well as 3860 children studying and living at these orphanages. Moreover, 2592 teachers are working at 12 Boarding schools for disabled children.

In conclusion, the Minister highlighted that despite works done in order to implement the execution of State Program, there are still challenges that must be resolved.

Gurban Amirov, deputy director of the Science, Culture, Education and Social Affairs Department of the Cabinet of Ministers, Mark Hereward, Head of UNICEF office in Azerbaijan, MP's Hadi Rajabli and Ganira Pashayeva highly valued works done within the program.

Presentations on the Deinstitutionalization's process and organization of social services were given at the end of the conference.