

UNICEF Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS)

Social Inclusion – Regional Thematic Report

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Prepared by the UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS, Social & Economic Policy Unit

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This report covers the work undertaken by the UNICEF Regional Office Social & Economic Policy Unit in 2016, and highlights results achieved by selected Country Offices in the region whose work in Social Inclusion was directly supported by Thematic Funds for Social Inclusion (global and regional).

Table of Contents

| | Page |
|--|-----------|
| Executive Summary | 3 |
| 1. Strategic Context | 4 |
| 2. Progress Made and Results Achieved in 2016 | 5 |
| a. Social Protection and Child Poverty | |
| b. Social Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups | |
| c. Public Finance for Children | |
| d. Realizing Child Rights at Local Level | |
| 3. Resources for Social Inclusion | 9 |
| 4. Plans for 2017 | 12 |
| 5. Expression of Thanks | 13 |

Annex 1. Performance indicators from the Regional Office Management Plan: 2016 update

Annex 2. Revised performance indicators from the Regional Office Management Plan for 2016-17

Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| CEE/CIS | Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States |
| CRC | Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| ECE | Early Childhood Education |
| EU | European Union |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| MICS | Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey |
| MICs | Middle Income Countries |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OR | Other Resources |
| RKLA | Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda |
| ROMP | Regional Office Management Plan |
| RTF-SI | Regional Thematic Fund – Social Inclusion |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| TSA | Targeted Social Assistance |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Fund |
| UNDG-R ECA | Regional United Nations Development Group Team for Europe and Central Asia |

Executive Summary

All of UNICEF's work in the CEE/CIS region is guided by the continued importance of strategically addressing the unfinished child rights agenda, in particular, the social exclusion of the most vulnerable group of children. UNICEF works on social inclusion on behalf of the poorest and most marginalized children to assist countries in understanding the patterns and drivers of child poverty and exclusion and in developing effective responses. UNICEF's priority areas of focus for the region are Social Protection and Child Poverty, Social Inclusion of Vulnerable groups, Public Finances for Children, and Realizing Child rights at local level.

During 2016, UNICEF advanced regional knowledge and capacity on children's right to social protection and supported improvements at country level. A major regional research study on social protection – *Social Monitor 2015: Social Protection for Child Rights and Wellbeing in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia*, was launched publicly via social media in April 2016, with local events held in five countries. The report finds that despite continued child poverty and social vulnerability in the region and the existence of social protection systems, social protection in this region is not ensuring an adequate living standard for children or relieving their deprivations and vulnerabilities, and often fails to reach the most marginalized children and those most in need of assistance.

The results of UNICEF's work in this area are also more visible at country level. In Georgia, an additional 70,000 children are now benefiting from child grants based on UNICEF's support to policy reform. In Kyrgyzstan, 2,000 additional children were able to access child benefits after a revaluation of minimum incomes, while in Uzbekistan, local level monitoring and advocacy led to an extension of social protection to vulnerable children of single parents. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia together with Serbia have also continued to record progress in outreach and facilitating access of excluded groups to social protection, for example the extension of health insurance cover to excluded Roma families in FYROM.

Two thematic policy briefs, on access to education and access to healthcare for refugee and migrant children in Europe, were produced, based on desk review of legal entitlements. The findings of the review and policy briefs have informed UNICEF advocacy and programme support related to migration and the rights of children on the move, visible in publications such as "Uprooted: The Growing Crisis for refugee and migrant children"¹, in connection with children's rights to essential services, regardless of their migration status.

Total resources allocated under Thematic Funds for Social Inclusion for CEE/CIS (shared between CEE/CIS Regional Office and four country offices) during 2016 were \$308,733.71. A significant proportion of resources was received towards the end of the year and has been allocated to 2017 activities. The region received no new regional thematic funding during 2016.

For 2016, the region intends to build upon the international commitments to ending extreme poverty, extend social protection, and track public finance for social services under the SDG and related human rights frameworks, to step up advocacy and knowledge generation around social protection, child poverty, and public finance for children, while extending thematic support to country level work to eight countries.

¹ 'Uprooted: The Growing Crisis for Refugee and Migrant Children' (UNICEF, 2016)

1. Strategic context

The CEE/CIS² is a region of great diversity among and within countries. 20 of the 21 countries where UNICEF maintains in-country presence are classified by the World Bank as Middle Income Countries (MICs), 12 of which Upper MICs. However, in most CEE/CIS countries, entrenched exclusion of specific population groups leads to high disparities and to increasing equity gaps. These gaps in rights realisation are compounded by income inequality.

Children continue to live in poverty, with significant equity gaps affecting families with four or more children, those from rural areas, children with disabilities and those from ethnic minorities, such as the Roma in South Eastern Europe. Gender inequality continues to manifest itself throughout the region as evidenced in the unequal access for girls and boys to upper secondary and tertiary education, gender-based and domestic violence, and, in some countries, sex-selective abortions and adolescent suicide (higher for boys and men).

Deep-set social attitudes, discrimination and prejudice towards excluded groups and weak institutional capacity at sub-national levels limit the pace and effectiveness of progressive and inclusive reforms to tackle child rights violations in the social sector. Progress in reducing child poverty in the region has been patchy, with falling poverty rates in some countries and increases in others, and the overall level of investment in social protection for children has fallen. Although less than 50 per cent of countries currently measure child poverty on a regular basis, the latest estimates suggest there are at least 15 million children across the region living below national poverty lines. Cash and social care are not adequately working together to prevent family separation, social exclusion, vulnerability and inequity. Despite the persistence of child poverty across the region, countries are not yet allocating sufficient resources towards social protection for children. Coverage of benefits among the poorest is low, the value of benefits is not adequate, and vulnerable and excluded beneficiaries face numerous obstacles to access support.³

A key consideration for all UNICEF's work in the region is the continued importance of strategically addressing the unfinished child rights agenda, in particular, the social exclusion of the most vulnerable group of children. Social inclusion and inequities are the focus of the Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda (RKLA) in the Region, which is based on the UNICEF Strategic Plan, contextualised for the Region. The RKLA established a set of ten priority result areas⁴ in the region, a framework for action and knowledge and for reinforced collaboration among CEE/CIS Offices, and facilitated a stronger 'compact' between UNICEF Country Offices, the Regional Office and HQ, aiming to accelerate results for the most disadvantaged children who are excluded. Reference Groups (RGs), one per RKLA area, which are chaired by a Representative and supported by the relevant Regional Advisor, are charged with advancing the RKLA and, in particular, finding the nexus between capacity development, effective advocacy, strategic partnerships and knowledge management.

UNICEF works on social inclusion on behalf of the poorest and most marginalized children to assist countries in understanding the patterns and drivers of child poverty and exclusion and in developing

² Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo (UNSRC 1244), Kyrgyzstan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation (no UNICEF country office), Serbia, Ukraine, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

³ UNICEF, Social Monitor 2015: Social Protection for child rights and wellbeing in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

⁴ The 10 Results Areas are: (1) A child's right to a family environment; (2) Justice for children: enabling justice systems to respect and protect child rights; (3) A child's right to education: early learning and school readiness; (4) A child's right to education: Including all children out of school in quality learning; (5) A child's right to be born HIV free; (6) A child's right to health: infant and U5 mortality; (7) Young child wellbeing; (8) A child's right to social protection; (9) Disaster Risk Reduction; (10) Adolescents: second decade, second chance.

effective responses. Priority areas of focus in the region, guided by the UNICEF Strategic Plan, the 2014-2017 Regional Office Management Plan, and the Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda, are:

- **Social protection and child poverty**, to ensure countries measure both monetary and multi-dimensional child poverty and address it through policies, programmes and budgets, and to help strengthen social protection systems for greater impact on child wellbeing.
- **Social inclusion of vulnerable groups**, to address the structural causes of exclusion and poverty, including discrimination and stigma, particularly for children with disabilities, children from ethnic and linguistic minorities, and children affected by migration.
- **Public Finances for Children**, to influence government decisions about spending on children and social services and reduce spending disparities among different population groups.
- **Realizing child rights at local level**, to support local government capacity to plan consultatively, organise services, prepare for emergencies, budget equitably and monitor the impact of what they do on children.

Economic growth slightly accelerated to 1.6% for the region as a whole during 2016, in spite of continued low oil prices, banking sector vulnerabilities and ongoing challenges associated with the refugee crisis in Europe. In the Balkans growth averaged 2.7%, while Ukraine's economy returned to growth, and growth in Turkey remained steady in spite of political turmoil and reduced tourist earnings. Central Asian countries especially oil exporters were hit however, and remained affected by the contracting Russian economy and the effects of reduced remittances.

Numerous political crises affected countries in the region during 2016: Turkey experienced an attempted coup; several Balkan countries experienced ongoing political instability and polarisation; there were renewed tensions and intensified fighting in Eastern Ukraine. Increasing dissatisfaction with job opportunities, stagnant incomes, and increasing mistrust of institutions are contributing to rising political and social tension across most of the region⁵. Turkey continues to host over 3 million refugees, and several of the countries in the Balkans continued to be affected by migration into the EU, although numbers were fewer than in 2015.

During 2016 a new General Comment to the CRC on Public Budgeting for Children was launched, which will assist countries in the implementation of Article 4 of the CRC covering budgets for children. The General Comment identifies States' obligations and makes recommendations on how to realize all the rights under the Convention, especially those of children in vulnerable situations, through effective, efficient, equitable, transparent and sustainable public budget decision-making. This is a strong platform for advocacy around public investment for children.

2. Progress made and results achieved in 2016

a. Social protection & child poverty

During 2016, UNICEF CEE/CIS made continued progress under the common framework for our work on social protection, which includes three levels: (a) the situation of social protection systems in the region and responsiveness to children, across all programme countries; (b) specific work towards six

⁵ World Bank, 'Polarization and populism' Europe and Central Asia Economic Update, November 2016

key outcome level results, with a focus on eight countries within the RKLA; (c) the work of the CEE/CIS Regional office in supporting country offices through technical support, knowledge generation, facilitating horizontal cooperation, policy analysis and resource mobilisation.

During 2016 several countries in the region, and within the RKLA core group, reported important developments in children's right to social protection, ranging from increases in coverage of cash programmes and approval of new legal frameworks to provision of sustainable funding for social care services, expanded outreach to excluded families and children, and expansion of approaches to adapt social protection in humanitarian situations.

Among the countries that received thematic funding in 2015 and 2016, the following progress was achieved:

Albania: secured adoption of the new Law on Social Care Services, along with the Strategy for Social Protection. Albania CO has been a driving force in these reforms and is backing up the work on legal and strategic frameworks with instruments and capacity building for implementation, including support for local social care planning, financial mechanisms to integrate the priorities into planning and budgeting at national and local levels, professionalization of the social protection sector workforce, and improving the social protection MIS to improve data collection and management.

Croatia: the CO continued its focus on supporting the most vulnerable groups of children and facilitating their social inclusion. A broad set of programmatic interventions were applied in cooperation with the City of Sisak, where key service providers were supported to provide a variety of integrative inter-sectoral and inclusive community services to marginalized groups of children and their families - Roma children, children facing poverty and children with disabilities. UNICEF also facilitated a broad national discussion on child well-being monitoring mechanisms, which resulted in a comprehensive document on national child wellbeing indicators that includes all key indicators regarding poverty and social inclusion/exclusion of children.

Serbia: Piloted family outreach services on social protection to Roma families, and has now been invited to develop national service standards for measures to be taken by social workers to prevent vulnerable children from being taken into care when this is not in their best interest.

Tajikistan: UNICEF facilitated a joint development partner narrative on the implications of reduced remittance flows from labour migrants to Russia, for the most vulnerable groups of population, in particular women and children, and developed a real time monitoring mechanism through a partnership with the World Bank on the Listening to Tajikistan survey, providing monthly information on child well-being indicators such as: households' ability to buy enough food for their children, their capacity to afford medical care for their children, the number of daily meals children received and the number of working children. As of December 2016, four two-pager papers were produced describing the situation. The findings of the survey are being used in UNICEF's policy discussions with donors and the Government to advocate for programmatic and policy action.

Georgia: UNICEF continued to achieve impressive results through the revised methodology for the Targeted Social Assistance programme. Over 70,000 additional children received cash benefits as a result of the revised methodology. UNICEF also presented the main findings of its Welfare Monitoring Survey from 2015 showing a further fall in absolute and extreme poverty, although children remain the poorest group. A full report on the work "Continuous Improvement: Strengthening Georgia's Targeted Social Assistance Programme", was published jointly with the World Bank.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: UNICEF supported capacity building and expansion of social protection services in response to the Refugee and Migrant crisis, including case management training for staff of Centres for Social Work. A study examining access to health insurance by the Roma population highlighted key obstacles preventing Roma children from accessing health insurance, which is informing the development of future actions to address bottlenecks and barriers. An assessment on the country's cash benefits system revealed decreasing numbers of children receiving benefits in part due to misinformation about eligibility and application processes. This is informing a public awareness campaign on accessing child benefits for Roma families.

Kazakhstan: UNICEF conducted research and produced a policy brief detailing the potential impact of revised legislation and targeting of social assistance programmes, together with the barriers to access for vulnerable families and children. The CO has also worked on evidence for a revised minimum food basket to inform calculation of the poverty line and eligibility criteria for social benefits.

In terms of **knowledge generation**, a major regional research study on social protection – *Social Monitor 2015: Social Protection for Child Rights and Wellbeing in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia*, was launched on 20th April through a Twitter chat with press release and advocacy briefs in English and in Russian. Five country offices (Albania, Bosnia, FYROM, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova) also publicised the launch through local events and press releases concluded.

In partnerships, the first virtual meeting was held of the **UN Working Group on Social Protection Floors for the Europe and Central Asia Region** under the UNDG-R ECA (Regional Directors' Team), thanks to the leadership and cooperation between UNICEF, ILO and UNDP. The group commenced work in sharing various tools for application in analysis of social protection systems at country level, joint discussions on social protection in Ukraine, and with the drafting of a regional advocacy paper on social protection as part of regional SDG agenda. The Regional Office also participated along with other UN agencies in the drafting of a **regional guide to Poverty measurement**, coordinated by UNECE. The guide addresses methodological issues in poverty measurement in the Europe and Central Asia region and provides some guidance on common standards, including on age ranges for reporting on poverty in line with the SDGs.

There were also a number of **capacity building** initiatives on social protection within the region, targeting initially UNICEF staff. Two webinars were completed covering *Social Protection, Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction*; and *Impact Evaluation*. The region also co-hosted a global UNICEF meeting of specialists working on social protection and humanitarian emergencies, in Kiev. The meeting explored how UNICEF can strengthen its role in linking social protection and humanitarian systems; and trained participants in aspects of social protection as a humanitarian response mechanism.

Annex 1 provides a report on progress made against the Regional Office targets set in the ROMP 2014-2017, covering the areas of social protection, child poverty and social inclusion of vulnerable groups.

b. Social inclusion of vulnerable groups

A key bottleneck affecting the rights of children from ethnic and linguistic minorities in the region is the lack of clear definitions and reliable and disaggregated data on minority communities, especially children, young people and women. This hinders the development of effective social inclusion policies. It is to be noted that, due to the historical trajectories of many countries in the CEE/CIS region, inter-ethnic conflicts and tensions have characterised the period of political and economic transition up to

date, and issues related to collection of data disaggregated by ethnicity or proxy measures remain a particularly complex and sensitive policy issue. To contribute to addressing this problem, in 2016 the Regional Office continued the work begun in 2015 to analyse the reports provided by National Statistical Offices (NSOs) that **review the experience of the country data collection systems in collecting and disaggregating data by ethnicity or proxy measures such as nationality, language and religion**. The analysis and associated desk review of best practices in collecting and disaggregating data by ethnicity or proxy measures will be used for discussion with National Statistical Office representatives during the TransMonEE annual meeting in 2017. This work is expected to contribute to improved data gathering tools and methods, the collection of data, and monitoring of the situation of children from ethnic and linguistic minorities. More disaggregated data collected by national administrative and statistical systems will allow better documentation and analysis of the situation and equity gaps affecting particular groups of children, feeding into evidence-based policies to advance the realisation of rights for all children, especially those that are currently most marginalised and, often, invisible.

In response to the refugee and migrant crisis in Europe the Regional Office conducted a **desk review of current legal entitlements of children with different migratory status, and of capacities of countries to deliver on their international and national child rights obligations, in the countries of final destination and transit**. The review informed the publication of two thematic policy briefs, on access to education and access to healthcare for refugee and migrant children in Europe. Furthermore the study was influential in overall messaging related to migration and the rights of children on the move for UNICEF, visible in publications such as “Uprooted: The Growing Crisis for refugee and migrant children⁶”, in connection with children’s rights to essential services, regardless of their migration status.

Social inclusion of children with disabilities, ethnic minorities and children affected by migration is also a feature of much of UNICEF’s work at country level throughout the region. Within countries receiving thematic Social Inclusion funding during 2016, **Croatia** continued its support to the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities to develop the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Strategy for Roma Inclusion for the period 2016 – 2018 and consequently to improve the position and foster social inclusion of the children and youth belonging to Roma national minority in the Republic of Croatia.

c. Public finance for children

Leveraging domestic resources in particular public budgets for children is a core role for UNICEF in the region and one in which there has been significant effort over the past years. During 2016 the region undertook a **Public Finance for Children Stocktake**, to map out interventions, learn lessons and identify opportunities to strengthen our effectiveness in this area. The Stocktake identified several county level initiatives that have successfully contributed to expanding budgets for children, including securing commitments to scale up resources and expanding access to early childhood education in Albania, Georgia and Montenegro; increasing resources for decentralisation provision of social services to vulnerable children in Armenia and Romania; and analysis and advocacy on financial resources for nutrition related programmes in Tajikistan. The region plans to build on lessons learned from our engagement with public finance for children, and to develop a strategy building on new opportunities from the SDG targets related to means of implementation; the CRC General Comment on Public Budgets for Children, and other opportunities within the region, during 2017.

⁶ ‘Uprooted: The Growing Crisis for Refugee and Migrant Children’ (UNICEF, 2016)

d. Realizing child rights at local level

The Regional Office commenced a multi-country study of decentralisation in the region, focusing on one area which is frequently placed under the responsibility of local governments, that of Early Childhood Education. The study, conducted by Yale University experts, is undertaking detailed research around the functions, capacities, fiscal frameworks, and monitoring of service provision and service quality in four countries in the region.

3. Resources for Social Inclusion

In 2015, the Regional Office created the UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Thematic Funding for Social Inclusion (RTF-SI) as a pool of funds categorized as Other Resources (OR), soft-earmarked to support the achievement of the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2014-17 Outcome Area 7 (Social Inclusion), in the CEE/CIS region. The funding is set up for a three-year funding period that covers the remaining three years of the 2014-2017 UNICEF Strategic Plan, with the possibility of a one-year extension to ensure full utilization of the funds. The UNICEF Regional Office CEE/CIS manages the funding and, in consultation with Country Offices, determines which country programmes within the region will receive funding any given year. The Regional Office also implements directly small shares of these funds. Allocation of the RTF-SI is decided by the UNICEF Regional Director, upon recommendation by the Regional Social and Economic Policy Advisor in consultation with other colleagues and UNICEF offices in the region.

Any donor (public or private) that wishes to support work related to Social Inclusion in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (CEE/CIS) can contribute to the fund. Funds are pooled together with other contributions for the same theme. Instead of tracking expenditures by individual donor or project, consolidated expenditure is tracked for the pool. All donors to the pool receive an annual regional narrative result-oriented report, prepared by the Regional Office, and focused on results for children made possible with contributions from the partners. UNICEF also encourages an inclusive follow-up process where partners have a chance to provide feedback. The discussion focuses on moving forward the agenda of social inclusion in the region, bottlenecks and challenges and priorities for action based on experience and evidence. A cumulative consolidated annual certified financial statement per pool is provided to all contributors. The statement shows all contributions by donor and expenditures by country.

Outcome Area 7: Social Inclusion Planned and Funded for 2016 (in US Dollar)

| | Intermediate Results | Funding type¹ | Amounts allocated 2016 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| CEE/CIS Regional Office | 07 Social Inclusion | RR | \$ 275,684 |
| | | ORR | \$ 82,371 |
| Albania | 07 Social Inclusion | RR | \$0 |
| | | ORR | \$343,000 |
| Azerbaijan | 07 Social Inclusion | RR | \$0 |
| | | ORR | \$0 |
| Croatia | 07 Social Inclusion | RR | \$0 |
| | | ORR | \$19,046 |
| Serbia | 07 Social Inclusion | RR | \$138,000 |

| | | | |
|------------|---------------------|-----|-----------|
| | | ORR | \$107,500 |
| Tajikistan | 07 Social Inclusion | RR | \$0 |
| | | ORR | \$0 |

¹ RR: Regular Resources, ORR Other Resources – Regular

Outcome Area 7: Thematic contributions to outcome area received in 2016 (in US dollars)

| | Donors | Contribution Amount | Programmable Amount |
|-------------------------|--------|---------------------|---------------------|
| CEE/CIS Regional Office | | \$0 | \$0 |

Outcome Area 7: 2016 Expenditures by Key-Results Areas (in US Dollars)

| Organizational Targets | | Expenditure Amount | | | |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| | | Other Resources- Emergency | Other Resources - Regular | Regular Resources | All programme accounts |
| CEE/CIS Regional Office | 07-01 Social Exclusion data and evidence | \$5,702 | \$15,500 | \$3,663 | \$24,865 |
| | 07-02 Social protection and child poverty | \$18,436 | \$1,239 | \$123,689 | \$143,364 |
| | 07-03 Public Finance and local governance | \$9,065 | \$9,917 | \$39,519 | \$58,501 |
| Albania | 07-02 Social protection and child poverty | \$7,261 | \$570,837 | \$135,883 | \$713,981 |
| | 07-03 Public Finance and local governance | \$22 | \$1,826 | \$0 | \$1,848 |
| | 07-04 Policy advocacy urban, civil society | \$27 | \$1 | \$3,676 | \$3,704 |
| | 07-05 Human rights institutions | \$634 | \$25 | \$86,148 | \$86,907 |
| Azerbaijan | 07-01 Social Exclusion data and evidence | | \$3,676 | \$114,609 | \$118,285 |
| | 07-04 Policy advocacy urban, civil society, parliament | | \$1,074 | \$33,486 | \$34,560 |
| | 07-05 Human rights institutions | | \$205 | \$6,379 | \$6,584 |
| | 07-06 Economic and Social Policy General | | \$1,550 | \$48,335 | \$49,885 |
| Croatia | 07-01 Social Exclusion data and evidence | | \$346,166 | \$10,554 | \$356,720 |
| | 07-04 Policy advocacy urban, civil society | | \$108,927 | \$2,353 | \$111,280 |
| Serbia | 07-01 Social Exclusion data and evidence | | \$40,935 | \$6,407 | \$47,342 |
| | 07-02 Social protection and child poverty | | \$5,097 | \$719 | \$5,816 |
| | 07-03 Public Finance and local governance | | \$68 | \$2,372 | \$2,440 |
| | 07-04 Policy advocacy urban, civil society, parliament | | \$45,807 | \$125,119 | \$170,926 |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|---------|----------|----------|-----------|
| | 07-05 Human rights institutions | | \$41,379 | \$0 | \$41,379 |
| | 07-06 Economic and Social Policy General | | \$301 | \$10,514 | \$10,815 |
| Tajikistan | 07-01 Social Exclusion data and evidence | | \$11 | \$57,996 | \$58,007 |
| | 07-02 Social protection and child poverty | \$9,483 | \$80,239 | \$64,379 | \$154,091 |
| | 07-03 Public Finance and local governance | | \$0 | \$33 | \$33 |
| | 07-04 Policy advocacy urban, civil society, parliament | | \$3 | \$17,272 | \$17,275 |

Outcome Area 7: 2016 Thematic Expenses by Programme Area (in US Dollars)

| Organizational Targets | | Other Resources- Emergency | Other Resources - Regular | Total |
|----------------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------|----------|
| CEE/CIS Regional Office | 07-01 Social Exclusion data and evidence | | \$20,151 | |
| | 07-02 Social protection and child poverty | | \$16,277 | |
| | 07-03 Public Finance and local governance | | \$17,311 | |
| | | | | \$53,739 |
| Albania | 07-02 Social protection and child poverty | \$7,261 | \$1,350 | |
| | 07-03 Public Finance and local governance | \$22 | \$1 | |
| | 07-04 Policy advocacy urban, civil society | \$27 | \$1 | |
| | 07-05 Human rights institutions | \$634 | \$22 | |
| | | | | \$9,318 |
| Azerbaijan | 07-01 Social Exclusion data and evidence | | \$3,676 | |
| | 07-04 Policy advocacy urban, civil society, parliament | | \$1,074 | |
| | 07-05 Human rights institutions | | \$205 | |
| | 07-06 Economic and Social Policy General | | \$1,550 | |
| | | | | \$6,505 |
| Croatia | 07-01 Social Exclusion data and evidence | | \$67,592 | |
| | | | | \$67,592 |
| Serbia | 07-01 Social Exclusion data and evidence | | \$3,981 | |
| | 07-04 Policy advocacy urban, civil society, parliament | | \$3,087 | |
| | | | | \$7,068 |
| Tajikistan | 07-02 Social protection and child poverty | | \$54,183 | |
| | | | | \$54,183 |

Planned budget thematic funding to UNICEF CEE/CIS region in 2016/2017, for activities in 2017

| Countries | Amounts allocated 2017 | Main actions planned for 2017 |
|-----------|------------------------|---|
| Albania | \$85,071 | Expanding birth registration services for excluded children (see section 4 below) |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|---|
| Regional Office CEE/CIS | \$38,592 | Support to developing Azerbaijan's Social protection strategy |
| Georgia | \$85,071 | Support advocacy and dialogue, capacity building, and monitoring for inclusive and child sensitive social protection in the context of an increase in child poverty |
| Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | \$50,000 | See section 4 below |
| Montenegro | \$50,000 | Support outreach and mobilization for excluded beneficiaries particularly in the Roma community to claim their entitlements to social protection |

4. Plans for 2017

Social Protection & Child Poverty

The region will continue to facilitate a programmatic environment in the region that progressively enables all children and their family or carer, with priority to those marginalized because of gender, geographic location, ethnicity, poverty and disability, to access an adequate package of cash benefits and social support services. UNICEF will step up advocacy and dialogue on social protection for children with partners and governments on the basis of evidence in the Social Monitor and detailed analyses undertaken at country level. There will also be greater attention to the issue of child poverty in the region through the launch of global guidance on child poverty measurement, regional guidance on poverty measurement, and publication of a report on measurement and monitoring of child poverty in the region. This will be complemented by capacity building for National Statistics Office on child poverty measurement. UNICEF in the region continues to participate in the UN's Regional Working Group on Social Protection along with ILO and UNDP.

Country offices will continue with their work in support of more effective social protection systems for children. Thematic resources have been allocated towards countries that will contribute towards results of the regional strategy on social protection, working specifically on: assessing the impact of social protection policy changes on child wellbeing; conducting analysis and proposing alternative social protection mechanisms to benefit children; extending coordination and links between cash and services; and improving outreach and facilitating the access of excluded Roma children to cash benefits and care.

Social inclusion of vulnerable groups

During 2017 the Regional Office will host the annual TransMonEE meeting for National Statistical Offices in the region, with a focus on data disaggregation by ethnicity, nationality or proxies. This will be linked with capacity building on measurement of child poverty for National Statistical Offices.

Public Finance for Children

In 2017, the Regional Office will complete our analysis of the situation of public financing for children in the region as an input to regional and country level advocacy, and will develop a programme of capacity strengthening and advocacy building on the lessons learnt and new opportunities identified.

The region will also complete the study on Financial Options for child care for children with modelling options for policy change, and will use this in advocacy at regional and country levels.

5. Expression of thanks

UNICEF is grateful to Deutsche Telekom, the UNICEF National Committee for Germany, and other donors to Social Inclusion for their continued support and commitment to promoting social inclusion and equity for all children in the CEE/CIS region, particularly the most vulnerable.

Annex 1. Performance indicators from the Regional Office Management Plan: 2016 update

| CEE/CIS Planned Results 2014-2017 | Key Strategies | Key Performance Indicators | | | Progress to end 2016 |
|---|--|---|-----------|---------|---|
| | | Indicators | Baselines | Targets | |
| Output 703.10 Children's Right to Social Protection: elimination of child poverty and of financial barriers hampering the realization of other child rights (RKLA#8). The RO will facilitate a programmatic environment in the region that progressively enables all children and their family or carer, with priority to those marginalized because of geographic location, ethnicity, poverty and disability, to access an adequate package of cash benefits and social support services. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate consensus building around strategic objectives in social protection in the CEE/CIS region, , based on the principles articulated in UNICEF Strategic Framework, including the adoption of a common framework for monitoring and tracking progress in achieving the results for the most vulnerable children. Provide state-of-the-art advice on effective programme strategies and proven technical actions to partners at country level, including government and civil society stakeholders and development international cooperation partners. Document developments and trends in the region in economic and social conditions affecting children. Monitor the status of actions in the region to identify and promote awareness of good practices and advise on actions to address identified weaknesses. | # of supported countries that have actively shaped the national policy environment to become more child-sensitive by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adopting or revising policies, standards and action plans (including monitoring mechanisms) of child-sensitive social protection for all children through their life cycle, and developing mechanisms and tools to assess and improve the coverage and the effectiveness of social protection benefits and services, including through child-sensitive national budgets, and multi-sectoral and integrated approaches; adopting policies, standards and action plans (including monitoring mechanisms) to overcome discrimination and facilitate equal access to services and livelihoods for ethnic minorities, including the Roma. | 9 | 16 | 17 (Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo UNSCR 1244, Kyrgyzstan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan) |
| | | | 11 | 14 | 8 Roma (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia) 3 Children from ethnic minorities (Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) |

Annex 2. Revised performance indicators from the Regional Office Management Plan for 2016-17

| <i>Number of supported countries which are working to ensure that:</i> | Baseline end 2015 | Target end 2017 |
|---|--|------------------------|
| The share of total social protection budget spent on families and children (in the form of cash and social services) is adequate, compared to regional and OECD benchmarks. | 3 countries in 2015 (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) | At least 5 countries |
| The value of child/family benefits is adequate to make a substantive impact on children's material well-being. | 5 countries in 2015 (Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro) | At least 7 countries |
| Improved coordination, information, and integrated systems for social protection programmes and services for children, including: a) a functioning national systems for data collection and monitoring of social protection, and b) coordination and management of national and decentralized systems for case management and referrals. | 6 countries in 2015 (Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Tajikistan) | At least 8 countries |
| Legislation/policies on targeting of social assistance reduce exclusion errors for disadvantaged groups; reflect needs of children affected by migration; provide for parental benefits and parental leave and other gender-sensitive measures; include contingency plans to mitigate and respond to disasters. | 4 countries in 2015 (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Tajikistan) | At least 6 countries |
| General public, civil society, media and policy makers understand and support well designed social protection systems to deliver better outcomes for the poorest children and for society as a whole. | 4 countries in 2015 (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kyrgyzstan) | At least 6 countries |
| Parents and care givers, particularly from excluded groups, are aware of and exercise the right to claim social protection for themselves and their children. | 4 countries in 2015 (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro) | At least 6 countries |