

MEDIA RELEASE

UNICEF distributes text books for Roma children in the north of Kosovo

Monday, 22 December 2008, Prishtine/Pristina – UNICEF distributed text book for 20 Roma primary school children in *Leposavic* school in the town of Leposavic, located in the northern part of Kosovo.

The 35 Roma families are displaced as a consequence of the '99 Kosovo conflict and they live in a Roma settlement in very poor living conditions. Children from Roma communities in Kosovo are most at risk to drop out school, main reasons being poverty and discrimination. Very often due to displacement and lack of birth registration or other relevant documentation, Roma children do not always benefit from the services provided by authorities both in the north and the south of Kosovo. Lack of text books remains one of the challenges which continuously effects Roma enrolment in primary schools.

UNICEF Deputy Head Ms. Tania Goldner said, *This is a happy and a sad occasion at the same time. We are happy that children finally receive their books and they can continue to go to school. On the other hand it's a sad moment, because it has been four months since the school year started and many of these children could have dropped out because families were not able to buy books for them.*

UNICEF continues to work with Roma communities to increase the level of awareness on the importance of education by involving Parent - Teacher Associations and School Administrations at the municipal level. UNICEF at the same time supports the education authorities at the municipal and central level to find a sustainable solution so that no child is left outside the school and basic text books are available for every child.

For further information please contact:

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