



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
16 November 2020

Original: English

United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board

First regular session 2021

9–12 February 2021

Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Draft country programme document**

North Macedonia

Summary

The draft country programme document (CPD) for North Macedonia is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and comment. The draft CPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of \$4,270,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$11,150,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period March 2021 to December 2025.

* E/ICEF/2021/1.

** In accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1, country programme documents (CPDs) are considered and approved in one session, on a no-objection basis. This draft CPD, and a costed evaluation plan, will be presented to the Executive Board for review from 17 November to 7 December 2020. The final CPD will be posted to the Executive Board web page in English six weeks in advance of the 2021 first regular session and in the other designated languages four weeks in advance.

Programme rationale

1. North Macedonia is an upper middle-income country. Over the past five years, contentious political issues have been addressed, thus enabling the country to become a member state of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 2020, and to commence accession negotiations to become a member state of the European Union, following a change in its constitutional name in 2019.

2. Of the estimated population of 2.06 million in 2019, there were approximately 200,000 girls and 210,000 boys under the age of 18 years.¹ Population growth is slowing, with the rate of natural increase falling from 1.6 per thousand inhabitants in 2011 to minus 0.3 in 2019.²

3. Efforts of successive Governments have led to significant increases in recent years in the number of children and families accessing their entitlements. The Government has adopted legislation, policies and strategies on children's rights in line with international norms and standards, including an ambitious National Strategy on Deinstitutionalization (2018–2027). However, overall progress towards achieving children's rights remains slow and the country lacks an agreed national strategy for promoting and protecting child rights.

4. Significant advancements are still required to improve the human, technical and financial capacity needed to uphold the broad spectrum of children's rights in the country and to address the social and economic consequences of the crisis caused by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Although children seem to have been spared the brunt of the health crisis, their lives have been affected in many ways, including through school closures, confinements, reduced household incomes and exacerbated non-monetary deprivations. The recession related to the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting government revenues and is likely to have implications for spending on children.

5. The Government, both central and local, is the major guarantor of children's rights and the largest provider of services to children in North Macedonia. Despite improvements in processes and transparency, trust in public institutions is still developing. Systems remain centralized, with little delegation of decision-making or budgetary authority. Meanwhile, the decentralization process has yet to achieve a more responsive and effective local social service delivery system that considers the needs of vulnerable populations. Partner institutions have insufficient capacities to analyse data and use it for evidence-driven policy making. Staff morale is impeding effectiveness, efficiency and accountability within the public service, which hinders the full realization of children's rights. Professional development is not systematic and is underfunded. The reduced quality of professional training means that entrants into child-related professions, such as nursing, social work and teaching, are less knowledgeable and less professionally competent than their older peers.

6. The at-risk-of-poverty rate of children in North Macedonia has remained largely unchanged for five years and stands at 29.3 per cent,³ but social assistance coverage of the poorest quintile is lower than in other countries with similar spending levels.⁴ The new Law on Social Protection better targets benefits to expand the coverage of children. It maintains non-conditionality and creates further financial rights and

¹ State Statistical Office, population estimates (31 December 2019).

² State Statistical Office, MAKSTAT database.

³ State Statistical Office, Laeken poverty indicators, 2018. Available from www.stat.gov.mk/pdf/2019/4.1.19.116_mk.pdf.

⁴ UNICEF, An Analysis of the Situation of Women and Children in the Republic of North Macedonia, 2019.

integrates them with social services. Research on the impact of the benefits package on family poverty is insufficient, but the reform has streamlined benefits to children, families and persons with disabilities. The social assistance system aims to effectively address inequities, especially as benefits for the poorest families are declining.

7. Perinatal, infant and under-5 mortality rates in the country had been increasing, reaching a peak in 2016.⁵ Administrative data for 2018 showed a reversal in this trend, but it should be closely monitored, as causes for the higher rates were not fully explored. Worryingly, immunization coverage rates fell from 94.2 per cent in 2010 to 90.7 per cent in 2018; the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine coverage for children aged 1 to 2 years fell from 96 per cent in 2005 to 74.8 per cent in 2018. Most unvaccinated children (41.2 per cent) live in the capital, Skopje.⁶ Evidence suggests that this results from vaccine hesitancy among affluent parents accessing anti-vaccination debates on social media and a lack of overall confidence in the health system, which is amplified by policy flaws.

8. Overweight and obesity are increasing among school-age children, with 39.4 per cent of boys and 32.9 per cent of girls overweight in 2017.⁷ A 2019 study suggests that childhood obesity in North Macedonia arises from traditional concepts around which foods are considered “healthy”, further fuelled by the food and nutrition environment in schools and the regulatory framework.⁸

9. Violent forms of child disciplining remain widely accepted, with 73 per cent of children aged 1 to 14 years having experienced at least one violent method of discipline.⁹ These challenges are often intergenerational, with parents using the same parenting practices as those to which they were subjected as children. Over 60 per cent of parents who witnessed violence against a child did not report it.¹⁰ A similar pattern exists among professionals, despite a legal obligation to report and act. Forty per cent of parents or caregivers reported believing that physical punishment can effectively correct a child’s behaviour. Only 13 per cent of parents or caregivers are aware of programmes or materials on child discipline and parenting. Anecdotal data suggest that parents insufficiently understand children’s rights and their value in family life, have traditional attitudes towards gender roles and passively tolerate violence.

10. Support services for families and children remain limited and fragmented. Local services tend to develop sporadically, rather than as part of a comprehensive strategy that would enable a consistent rationalization, expansion and development of services for children and families. The groups requiring particular support include children living in poverty, who are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and family separation and are therefore most in need of preventive and protective services; Roma children, who need targeted services due to high levels of exposure to abuse, exploitation and separation from families, particularly as 328 of the 337 children having been reported begging on the streets in 2017 were Roma children;¹¹ and the

⁵ 16 per 1000, 11.9 per 1000 and 12.9 per 1000, respectively (Institute for Public Health).

⁶ Institute of Public Health data.

⁷ World Health Organization, “European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI) in the Republic of Macedonia 2015-2016” (Copenhagen, 2016).

⁸ UNICEF, “Applying behavioural insights to tackle childhood obesity” (Skopje, 2019).

⁹ State Statistical Office and UNICEF, “2018-2019 North Macedonia Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey and 2018-2019 North Macedonia Roma Settlements Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Survey Findings Report” (MICS) (Skopje, 2020).

¹⁰ UNICEF, “Follow up survey on parents’ and caregivers’ knowledge, attitudes, practices and social norms associated with violence against children”, (Skopje, 2019).

¹¹ European Commission, “North Macedonia 2019 report”, 29 May 2019, citing the Ombudsman’s Office.

estimated 20,000 children with disabilities,¹² most of whom are invisible to the system and receive limited specialized support or disability benefits.

11. Significant progress made in deinstitutionalization means that no children now reside in institutions. However, support services for families and caregivers are limited and mechanisms and capacities to prevent child abandonment and separation are inadequate. Health-care and social workers and other professionals lack the necessary skills to recognize parents and expectant parents who could potentially abandon, abuse or neglect their children and to support them to prevent such actions. North Macedonia has one of the lowest levels of foster care in the region,¹³ and an estimated 300 children in kinship care¹⁴ lack support mechanisms.

12. Children who are at risk of suffering from a lack of parental care, exclusion from education, violence, neglect or substance abuse, children on the streets and those in contact with the law are confronted with professionals who often stigmatize them and lack the adequate skills to meet their needs. The Government needs to ensure that professionals are trauma-informed and sensitive, that child protection services address the specific needs of each child and that services are restorative.

13. Although preschool enrolment increased from 21.8 per cent in 2007 to 39.9 per cent in 2019 for children aged 3 to 5 years,¹⁵ this is far behind the 95 per cent average among countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.¹⁶ Causes, including insufficient infrastructure and ineffective resource allocation, are being addressed by the Government. Other concerns include inadequate preschool teacher training and a lack of parental awareness of the importance of preschool.

14. The results of the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment indicate that North Macedonia had among the highest proportions of students (39 per cent) who failed to demonstrate basic proficiency in all three domains: science, mathematics and reading.¹⁷ The reasons include the weak use of evidence in policymaking; quality assurance used only for compliance; and teachers feeling underequipped, demotivated and disrespected. Ethnic Albanian and Roma children are less likely than ethnic Macedonians to successfully progress in education.¹⁸ Secondary school attendance is concerning among Roma children (60 per cent), while completion rates are 89.9 per cent for Albanian children and only 51.7 per cent for Roma children.

15. The effectiveness of current spending on child-related services requires continued improvements. In some instances, such as subventions for kindergartens, government funds appear to subsidize higher earners, rather than support families in need. This raises questions about planning, budgeting and decision-making, and the

¹² Based on the global prevalence of disability.

¹³ Minton SJ et al, "Prevention, identification, reporting and referral of cases of violence against children: overview of State response mechanisms", Report for the National Network to End Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Skopje, 2018).

¹⁴ Data obtained from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, not available in a public report.

¹⁵ According to data from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, approximately 28,000 children were enrolled in early childhood education in 2019 (39.9 per cent of children aged 3 to 5 years). According to the 2018–2019 MICS, attendance of early childhood education for this age group was 36.8 per cent.

¹⁶ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), "Republic of Macedonia - Teacher Education Programme on Early Numeracy and Literacy in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (2018).

¹⁷ OECD, "Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) – Results from PISA 2018. Country note: North Macedonia" (2019).

¹⁸ OECD, "OECD Review of Evaluation and Assessment in Education in North Macedonia", OECD Publishing (Paris, 2019).

quality of the data. Many municipalities are unable to finance their basic functions, and critical child-related services, like education, are underfunded. There are challenges that concern the grant distribution formulas, including questions related to the transparency of the calculations of transfers. The current transfer system does not address the social and economic disparities that exist between municipalities.

16. Perceived and actual social norms, discriminatory attitudes, misconceptions and harmful beliefs continue to allow poverty, exclusion and adversities to persist. A stronger children's lobby is needed to ensure that children are among the highest priorities within the country's broader reform agenda. At present, the demand for positive change for children is muted and there is insufficient pressure on duty bearers to meet their responsibilities towards children. Activism and volunteerism are not socially encouraged, and there are few spaces where adolescents can participate to express their opinions and influence decision-making. Adolescents' disengagement is further reinforced by traditional views on their perceived capacities to form opinions, engage and drive change. Meanwhile, a lack of opportunities to develop twenty-first-century skills for employment further hinders children's life chances.

17. Lessons learned from the previous country programme include:

(a) The initial focus on specific groups of children proved too narrow in a changing national context and considering the country's accelerated reform processes from mid-2017; a universal approach can be more effective if vulnerable groups are encompassed;

(b) Diversified services are needed for families and caregivers, emphasizing positive parenting practices.

Programme priorities and partnerships

18. The proposed country programme is aligned with national development priorities, including those contained in the Strategic Plan of the General Secretariat for 2020–2022, the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2009–2030, the National Strategy for Deinstitutionalization 2018–2027, the Education Strategy 2018–2025, the National Strategy on Prevention and Protection of Children against Violence 2020–2025 and the Mental Health Strategy 2018–2025 as well as the Government's sectoral policies and strategic plans in the areas of health, education, nutrition, childcare, justice and social protection. The programme will also support the Association Agreement between the Government and the European Union. It will contribute to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and it will support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. While the overall programme will cover the whole country, some elements will focus on remote, rural or poor municipalities that will be selected later.

19. The programme encompasses interconnected actions towards child-centred systems-strengthening that stem from a holistic approach to child survival and development. Its overarching vision is to enable families and enhance services to support children to flourish, and to protect them from poverty, adversity and exclusion, which are the main themes underpinning the conceptualization of the programme. To achieve this, the work of UNICEF will focus on three key changes that condition the fulfilment of the vision: (a) ensuring children's survival and their development in a nurturing, stimulating and safe family-like environment; (b) providing children with opportunities to learn, engage and build resilience, both through quality education and a diverse menu of specialized protection services that address, mitigate and respond to risks that negatively affect children; and (c) putting

in place a child-centred enabling environment that advances children's rights by bolstering key actors' technical competences and fostering positive beliefs and attitudes to shape the way children's rights are perceived.

20. Strategic partnerships with members of the United Nations system will continue to play a central role in advancing equitable results for children. The country programme derives from the 2021–2025 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and is fully aligned with two strategic priority areas of the UNSDCF — sustained and inclusive economic and social development; and transparent and accountable democratic governance — directly contributing to outcomes 2 and 4 of the framework and indirectly to the other two. UNICEF will engage in joint programming in such areas as social services, children's rights, justice, disability, violence against children, climate change and adolescents and youth.

21. Through an integrated approach encompassing communication efforts, advocacy, partnership-building and programmatic engagement, UNICEF will support the Government to ensure that all children can develop to their fullest potential. The main assumptions underpinning the programme include (a) the existence of political will to focus on child-related policies and increase investments in children; (b) the Government's commitment to allocate resources for the sustainability of services, including investing in staff and taking measures for staff retention; and (c) that the general public's views will mirror the views of most participants in the process of changing beliefs, attitudes and norms relevant to children's rights.

22. Critical enablers for programme implementation include communication and advocacy to win support for the rights of children; expanding partnerships to improve opportunities to promote and protect child rights; and enhancing programme coordination and cross-sectoral work, including in emergency preparedness and response, in innovation and in the application of gender and adolescent-centred approaches across all programme components. UNICEF will broaden its resource mobilization strategy to explore opportunities with emerging donors and the private sector, and to foster cross-border cooperation.

Nurturing and caregiving

23. This programme component seeks to ensure that children and families have equitable access to and utilize quality integrated social services that ensure survival, healthy living conditions, provision of nurturing care and protection from adversity.

24. UNICEF will work with the Ministry of Health and the e-Health Directorate to strengthen health-care systems to deliver integrated and quality maternal and child health, nutrition and well-being services, and empower families to utilize quality services. This will involve improving the capacities of health-care professionals at all levels of care, enhancing the health-care system to establish standards and mechanisms for control and accountability, and empowering communities to create demand for services. The interventions will target all levels of the health-care system that tend to mothers, newborns and children and that are critical to ensuring a child's survival and preventing children and mothers from dying or having ill health due to preventable causes. They will focus on antenatal and perinatal care, the introduction of standards, legislation development and investment in digitalization. UNICEF will also address behavioural barriers that contribute to poor health, particularly vaccine hesitancy and conduct further action-oriented research on the behavioural drivers and economic costs of obesity.

25. UNICEF will work with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and other partner organizations to facilitate the development of services that support parents and caregivers in stimulating child development, providing nurturing care and preventing abandonment, neglect and any other adversity, and to ensure that these

services are accessible to all families and caregivers, including those of children with disabilities. The menu of complementary quality services will provide holistic support to caregivers. The establishment of control mechanisms and standards will be supported to ensure functional and high-quality service delivery across sectors.

26. To help to address the varied needs of children at risk of being left and left without parental care, UNICEF will support the establishment of mechanisms that will guarantee the sustainability of the deinstitutionalization process and ensure that professionals have the capacities and tools to deliver targeted services. UNICEF will partner with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy to strengthen foster and kinship care, to ensure the development of longer-term plans and durable solutions for each child. UNICEF will support the development of community-based services for families finding themselves in difficulty or crisis. UNICEF will also invest in mechanisms to ensure that the care system is integrated and the quality of service provision is assured and to change attitudes and practices concerning the care and protection of children among the social services workforce.

Developing and flourishing

27. Building on actions developed under the first programme component, the main focus of this component is the optimal development of children through quality and trauma-informed inclusive education, protection and participation.

28. To improve the quality of education for preschool and school-age children, UNICEF will work with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Bureau for Development of Education to build the capacity and motivation of education professionals to create safe, healthy, gender-responsive, inclusive and adequately resourced environments that improve students' learning outcomes. UNICEF will support the development of a quality teacher training system that meets teachers' needs and interests. By improving the quality of teaching, which is the biggest factor in raising students' outcomes, teachers will be able to respond to the needs of all learners, especially vulnerable groups, such as Roma children and students with disabilities. UNICEF will continue to support the establishment of an analytical unit within the Ministry of Education and Science to enable the Ministry to monitor educational progress and performance, provide remedial or steering reform and keep track of disparities and the need for targeted support of vulnerable students.

29. UNICEF will leverage its long-standing collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Bureau for Development of Education to enable environmentally focused learning, skills-building and the empowerment of children, integrating environmental education into existing curricula. The work will focus on opportunities for experiential learning to supplement the regular education process and extracurricular activities and actively engage children in tackling environmental challenges.

30. With the Ministry of Education and Science and private sector partners, UNICEF will seek to increase the opportunities that adolescents and young people have to participate, be empowered and acquire skills to successfully enter the workforce and influence their communities, by continuing to support programmes such as UPSHIFT and the Generation Unlimited youth challenge. UNICEF will work to engage young people in defining the vision they want for their future and for future generations and to create social movement for engagement.

31. With the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior, UNICEF will work to ensure that children and young people at risk of abuse, violence and exploitation and those who are in contact with the law are supported with quality services to overcome adversity, build resilience and realize their rights in the justice system. UNICEF will first support the establishment and

functioning of specialized services, starting from the development of a comprehensive legislative framework, relevant standards to accompany such services and policies and resources as enablers for their effective delivery. UNICEF will support the design and establishment of community-level programmes to build resilience, develop community support and activate coping mechanisms as well as programmes addressing the needs of children, adolescents and families exposed to protection risks or traumatic events and children with complex emotional needs. To enable this, UNICEF will support capacity development that will ensure that professionals are trauma-informed and understand how adversities impact children.

Equity and empowerment

32. To complement the first two components, the third component seeks to ensure that all children benefit from a child-centred enabling environment that advances children's rights and addresses the effects of poverty, adversity and exclusion.

33. To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Government in providing this enabling environment, UNICEF will help to develop the capacity of national and local actors to plan, budget, monitor and track expenditures and will leverage resources to scale up evidence-based, innovative and risk-informed approaches to fulfil the rights of children and adolescents. UNICEF will expand its strategic partnership with the World Bank and social sector ministries to include the Ministry of Finance and local self-government bodies to ensure that fiscal space for child-related services is identified and efficiently used and that the methodology for fiscal transfers from the centralized to the local level is improved.

34. UNICEF will work to ensure that knowledge, attitudes and beliefs across communities advance child rights. The proven ability of UNICEF to convene and facilitate dialogue among a wide variety of partners will facilitate the establishment of strategic alliances between State entities, civil society, professional associations, the private sector, community influencers, the media and children and young people to drive this change.

35. UNICEF will support the Government to develop new structures to effectively measure, analyse and address social and economic vulnerabilities to poverty and deprivation through child-sensitive social protection. To better understand the status of deprivations in the country, address gaps in child-related data and generate data for several Sustainable Development Goal indicators monitored by the country, UNICEF will support the State Statistical Office to conduct a new multiple indicator cluster survey. UNICEF will work with partners in the Government, the World Bank, the Delegation of the European Union, United Nations agencies and other partners for the development and adoption of a new national social protection development strategy. UNICEF will engage with partners from Roma communities and remote areas to identify barriers to accessing social services and develop a road map for engagement and advocacy with the Government.

Programme effectiveness

36. The overall management, coordination and execution of the country programme will be delivered through the provision of technical guidance on programme planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting. Cross-cutting approaches and strategies will focus on programme coordination; external relations; programme planning, monitoring and evaluation; communications, advocacy and partnerships; communication for development; and cross-border cooperation.

37. UNICEF will work with the Government to ensure investment in innovative programming approaches, the use of new technologies and social media, and the promotion of volunteerism to ensure that adolescents are agents of change in the

country. UNICEF will continue its active membership in the United Nations country team and contribute to its work to ensure that results for children are enhanced through a coherent, effective One United Nations. UNICEF will work with line ministries and the State Statistical Office to enhance the administrative data system, with a particular emphasis on child-related data. Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF will play a stronger role in ensuring national emergency preparedness.

38. Communications and public advocacy activities will support all programme components to ensure that child rights are visible in the national agenda, and to drive knowledge dissemination, fundraising, private-sector alliances and public support. These efforts will build on child-related data and knowledge on policies which most affect children. UNICEF will expand its reach and engagement of audiences through traditional, digital and social-media strategies, publications, special initiatives and engagement with key actors from the Government, civil society and the private sector as well as high-profile influencers. Youth engagement will drive public advocacy activities and ensure integration with the programme's social mobilization and behavioural-change communication initiatives to reinforce messaging and actions needed to drive change for children.

39. Building on its role as a trusted voice for children, UNICEF will explore the possibility of developing shared-value partnerships that benefit children and adolescents and promote the adoption of child rights-related business principles. The organization will consider how the private sector can engage in knowledge leadership, advocacy and cooperation in education initiatives in North Macedonia.

Summary budget table

<i>Programme component</i>	<i>(In thousands of United States dollars)</i>		
	<i>Regular resources</i>	<i>Other resources</i>	<i>Total</i>
Nurturing and caregiving	950	2 203	3 153
Developing and flourishing	1 729	6 174	7 903
Equity and empowerment	1 147	2 689	3 836
Programme effectiveness	444	84	528
Total	4 270	11 150	15 420

Programme and risk management

40. This country programme document outlines the UNICEF contributions to national results and serves as the primary instrument of accountability to the Executive Board for results alignment and resources assigned to the programme at the country level. Accountabilities of managers at the country, regional and headquarters levels with respect to the country programme are prescribed in the organization's programme and operations policies and procedures.

41. The office will work towards strengthening the internal capacities and systems of governmental and non-governmental partners, with a focus on the use of the harmonized approach to cash transfers. The office's performance will be monitored through relevant management indicators, while regular reviews will serve to steer any necessary programme adjustments and improvements.

42. The main risks related to the expected programme outcomes include:

(a) Possible ethnic tensions, as segregation based on ethnicity still prevails in many spheres of societal life. UNICEF will address this risk by embedding messaging and programming on social cohesion in interventions;

(b) Donor withdrawal should be expected, particularly with the opening of negotiations for accession to the European Union. UNICEF will take a proactive role to advocate for higher and more efficient public expenditure on children, in line with the national development agenda;

(c) Frequent elections imply changes in leadership and technical staff in line ministries which, in turn, may delay or impede the implementation of actions. Closely related is the political patronage in public administration that fuels corruption and exacerbates the lack of transparency in decision-making. UNICEF will continue to invest in communication and the capacity development of appointed focal points at partner institutions;

(d) A climate and landscape analysis for children¹⁹ found that the country is prone to flash floods, mudslides, landslides, heatwaves and storms. Air pollution has reached concerning levels, particularly in certain urban areas. UNICEF will continue to work on emergency preparedness and building system resilience in the health, education and social service sectors.

Monitoring and evaluation

43. The results and resources framework is aligned with the UNSDCF and will be used to monitor and ensure timely and efficient progress towards the planned results for children. Under the cooperation framework, the main partner for planning and monitoring the UNICEF country programme is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Progress will be measured through the tracking of annual milestones, the generation of information through data collection and sector-specific national data systems and field visits. UNICEF will work to enhance the generation, analysis and use of data across the national statistical system.

44. Rolling workplans will be developed to monitor and navigate actions in collaboration with the Government. The integrated monitoring and evaluation plan will chart the course of evidence generation to be used to improve the delivery of results and the strategic positioning of UNICEF. Evaluations, as agreed in the costed evaluation plan, will be designed to develop national evaluation capacities and will centre on key results of the programme components. An end-term evaluation of the country programme will be undertaken.

45. As the chair of the United Nations monitoring and evaluation group, UNICEF will contribute to monitoring the UNSDCF achievements, providing analyses and making recommendations to steer actions. UNICEF will also support national efforts to monitor the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

¹⁹ Nicholas Molyneux, "Climate landscape analysis for children in Macedonia", Report prepared for UNICEF (Skopje, 2018).

Annex

Results and resources framework

North Macedonia – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, 2021–2025

<p>Convention on the Rights of the Child: articles 2, 5, 6, 9, 12, 13, 18–20, 23, 24, 26–29, 40</p> <p>National priorities: Sustainable Development Goals: 1–5, 16; Strategic Plan of the General Secretariat for 2020–2022</p>
<p>United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) outcomes involving UNICEF:</p> <p>Outcome 2: By 2025, people in North Macedonia have universal access to rights-based quality social services — health care, education, and necessary social and child protection — rooted in systems resilient to emergencies.</p> <p>Outcome 4: By 2025, people in North Macedonia benefit from improved rule of law; evidence-based, anticipatory and gender-responsive policies; greater social cohesion; and effective service delivery by transparent, accountable and responsive institutions.</p> <p>Outcome indicators measuring change that include UNICEF contribution are marked as UNSDCF indicators in the table below.</p>
<p>Related UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021 Goal Areas: 1–5</p>

UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
					RR	OR	Total
All boys, girls and families have equitable access to and utilize quality integrated social services that ensure survival and healthy living conditions, the provision of nurturing care and	<p>Percentage of live births weighing less than 2,500 grams B: 8.5% (2017) T: 5.9% (2025)</p> <p>Neonatal mortality rate B: 3.8 per 1000 (2019) T: 3.5 (2025)</p> <p>[UNSDCF outcome 2 indicator, Sustainable Development Goal 3.2.2]</p>	Administrative data (Institute of Public Health)	1.1 The health system is strengthened to deliver integrated and quality maternal and child health, nutrition and well-being services, and families are empowered to utilize quality services.	Ministry of Health, National Public Health Institute, National Institute for Mother and Child, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Centres for Social Work, Institute of Social Activities, World	950	2 203	3 153

<i>UNICEF outcomes</i>	<i>Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)</i>	<i>Means of verification</i>	<i>Indicative country programme outputs</i>	<i>Major partners, partnership frameworks</i>	<i>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)</i>		
					<i>RR</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>Total</i>
protection from adversity.	<p>Percentage of the target population covered by all vaccines included in their national programme:</p> <p>(a) Three doses of the diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis-containing vaccine</p> <p>(b) Measles-containing vaccine second dose</p> <p>(a) B: 92.5% (2018) T: 95% (2025)</p> <p>(b) B: 74.8% T: 95%</p> <p><i>[UNSDCF outcome 2 indicator, Sustainable Development Goal 3.b.1]</i></p>			Health Organization, United Nations Population Fund			
	<p>Percentage of children with disabilities aged 1 to 17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month is reported</p> <p>B: 73% (2019) T: 60% (2025)</p> <p><i>[UNSDCF output 2.4 indicator, Sustainable Development Goal 16.2.1]</i></p>	<p>Multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) / knowledge, attitudes and practices study</p>	<p>1.2 Services that support parents and caregivers to stimulate child development and nurturing care and prevent adversity are in place and accessible to all families and caregivers.</p>				

UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
					RR	OR	Total
	Children (0–17 years) living in formal foster care (rate per 100,000 population) B: 84.6 T: 100	Administrative data	1.3 The childcare system is strengthened to effectively address family separation, adversity and exclusion by establishing mechanisms and services and developing the capacity of the social service workforce.				
Children and young people develop and flourish through quality and trauma-informed, inclusive education, protection and participation.	Percentage of children aged 36 to 59 months attending an early childhood education programme (attendance rate) B: 39.9% (2019) T: 60% (2025) [UNSDCF outcome 2 indicator]	Administrative data	2.1 Education professionals are able and motivated to create safe, healthy, gender-responsive, inclusive and adequately resourced environments that improve student learning outcomes.	Ministry of Education and Science, Bureau for the Development of Education, Fund for Innovation and Technological Development, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, State Council for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency	1 729	6 174	7 903
	Percentage of children and young people (a) in grades 2 and 3; (b) at the end of primary school; and (c) at the end of lower secondary school achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, disaggregated by sex (a) B (2019): Reading: 45.3%	MICS; Programme for International Student Assessment of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development	2.2 Adolescents and young people are empowered and equipped with skills to successfully enter the workforce and influence their communities.				

UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
					RR	OR	Total
	<p>Numeracy: 25.5% T: Reading: 56% Numeracy: 36%</p> <p>(b) Currently not measured</p> <p>(c) B (2018): Reading: 45% Math: 39% T: Reading: 57% Math: 50%</p> <p>[UNSDCF outcome 2 indicator, Sustainable Development Goal 4.1.1]</p>						
	<p>Number of girls and boys who have experienced violence reached by health, social work or justice/law enforcement services</p> <p>B: 498 (2018) T: 800</p> <p>Percentage of girls and boys in conflict with the law who are subject to a diversion order or alternative measure as opposed to a custodial sentence</p> <p>B: 7.2% (2018) T: 15%</p> <p>[UNSDCF output 4.1 indicator]</p>	<p>Annual Report of the State Council for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency</p>	<p>2.3 Children and young people at risk of abuse, violence and exploitation are supported with quality services to overcome adversity, build resilience and access justice.</p>				

UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
					RR	OR	Total
All boys and girls benefit from a child-centred enabling environment that advances children's rights and addresses the effects of poverty, adversity and exclusion.	<p>Number of children living in poverty according to the (a) international extreme poverty line; (b) national monetary poverty lines or (c) national multidimensional poverty lines</p> <p>B: (a) N/A (b) 125,600²⁰ (c) 145,000²⁰</p> <p>T: (a) N/A (b) 100,000 (c) 115,000</p>	Survey on income and living conditions	<p>3.1 National and local actors can plan, budget, monitor and track expenditures, and leverage resources to scale up evidence-based, innovative and risk-informed approaches to fulfil the rights of children and adolescents.</p> <p>3.2 Knowledge, attitudes and beliefs across communities advance child rights.</p>	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Finance, units of local self-governance, Office of the Ombudsman, academia, United Nations Development Programme, World Bank, State Statistical Office	1 147	2 689	3 836
	<p>Level of establishment of a permanent, national child-rights coordinating mechanism</p> <p>B: Weak (Score 1) T: Established (Score 3)</p> <p>[UNSDCF outcome 4 indicator]</p>	<p>Periodic country report under the Convention on the Rights of the Child; alternative reports prepared by civil society organizations on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; UNICEF confidential Convention on the Rights of the Child report</p>	3.3: Duty bearers can effectively measure, analyse and address social and economic vulnerabilities to poverty and deprivation through child-sensitive social protection.				

²⁰ Data is for 2018. Data for 2019 was not yet available at the time of writing.

<i>UNICEF outcomes</i>	<i>Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)</i>	<i>Means of verification</i>	<i>Indicative country programme outputs</i>	<i>Major partners, partnership frameworks</i>	<i>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)</i>		
					<i>RR</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>Total</i>
Programme Effectiveness					444	84	528
Total resources					4 270	11 150	15 420