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EVALUATION OF THE UNICEF TURKEY COUNTRY PROGRAMME 2016 - 2020

Final Report

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Preface

This evaluation was commissioned by UNICEF's Turkey Country Office and managed by the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (ECARO). As the terms of reference state, Country Programme Evaluations (CPE) in UNICEF are '*strategic evaluations that provide an assessment of the totality of UNICEF's programme of work', with a 'strong focus on assessing the relevance of UNICEF's programmatic approaches, position and selected priority issues as these have evolved in response to emerging needs, government priorities, partner inputs and the often changing geopolitical and socioeconomic environment in which UNICEF operates'*. Such evaluations are mostly used to draw out lessons to inform current and future country programme design and implementation.

This is very much the approach adopted in the present evaluation. It covers the period from the start of the current country programme to the end of 2019, as set out in the 2016-2020 Country Programme Document and through its subsequent evolution. This has been a particularly turbulent period in Turkey's political history, related in part to the crisis in Syria and the mass influx of refugees, but also to major upheavals in Turkish domestic politics. While the evolution of the programme is traced over the whole evaluation period, most emphasis is placed on the more recent and current aspects of the programme and context, with a view to identifying potential future trajectories for UNICEF in Turkey. Just as the programme encompasses both the humanitarian (refugee-related) and development aspects of UNICEF's work within a single strategic framework, so the evaluation treats the programme as a strategic whole, while reviewing its core components and considering how well the specific needs and vulnerabilities of different groups (Turkish and other) have been met.

The evaluation is based on a review of relevant documentation; a short inception visit to the Country Office in Ankara in early July 2019; a three-week fact-finding mission to the country in September/October 2019; and follow-up discussions with staff in the Country and Regional offices. The evaluation team (ET) consists of four international and one Turkish member: James Darcy (Team Leader and report author); Francesca Ballarin (lead on education and child protection), Zarko Sunderic (social policy, child rights monitoring and data); Gurcharan Virdee (gender issues); and a Turkish expert, Gokce Baykal (social protection & social cohesion).

The ET would like to thank Malene Molding Nielsen, who managed the evaluation process for ECARO, and Silvia Mestroni, Chief of Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation in the Turkey Country Office. Both have provided much valuable input and guidance to the evaluation team. Particular thanks are due to Farhod Khamidov in the Country Office for his tireless organising of the inception and main field missions, amongst other support.

Finally, the ET is grateful to the UNICEF Representative in Turkey, Philippe Duamelle, to his deputy Nona Zicherman, and to the Section Chiefs in the country office, as well as to all the UNICEF staff and partners who engaged so constructively with the evaluation process. Their openness and willingness to reflect was essential to the process and is greatly appreciated.

Although it has been consultative in nature, the evaluation is an independent one. Responsibility for the contents of this report lies solely with the evaluation team.

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ANNEXES (separate file)

List of abbreviations

3RP	Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan for the Syria Crisis
ADAP	Adolescent Development and Participation
ALP	Accelerated Learning Programme
ASAM	Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers & Migrants
ASDEP	Turkish government family social support programme
CCTE	Conditional Cash Transfer Education
CPE	Country Programme Evaluation
CPD	Country Programme Document
CRM	Child Rights Monitoring
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CWD	Children with Disabilities
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ECARO	Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (of UNICEF)
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ET	Evaluation Team
EU	European Union
FRIT	EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GoT	Government of Turkey
INGO	International non-governmental organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IR	Inception Report
KII	Key Informant Interviews
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MoFLSS	Ministry of Family Labour and Social Services
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MoYS	Ministry of Youth and Sport
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHREI	National Human Rights and Equality Institution
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co--operation and Development
OI	Ombudsman Institution
PF4C	Public Finance for Children
PM&E	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
PSEA	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
PSS	Psychosocial support
SBP	Strategy and Budget Presidency
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-based violence
SVEP	Syrian Volunteer Education Personnel
TCO	Turkey Country Office
TDHS	Turkey Demographic and Health Survey

TEC	Temporary Education Centres
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TRC	Turkish Red Crescent
TurkStat	Turkish Statistical Institute
UMIC	Upper Middle-Income Country
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDCS	UN Development Cooperation Strategy
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population fund
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Programme
YOBIS	Foreign Student Education Information Management System

Figure 1 Map of Turkey

Executive Summary

Background to the evaluation

This evaluation was commissioned by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Turkey Country Office (TCO) and managed by the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (ECARO). Its objectives were threefold: (i) to provide an independent assessment of the performance of the Country Programme from 2016-2019; (ii) to assess UNICEF's strategic positioning and use of change strategies in Turkey; and (iii) to identify lessons and good practices to inform the future Turkey programme and UNICEF institutionally. The evaluation is intended to serve both accountability and learning purposes, with an emphasis on the latter; and to be of use to a range of stakeholders, both inside and outside UNICEF. Its focus is on issues of ***strategic*** significance for UNICEF, rather than on technical or operational issues. Part of the rationale is to help inform the writing of the new Country Programme Document (CPD) for 2021-2025, as well as the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Turkey. Thus, the evaluation has both summative and formative dimensions.

The overarching evaluation questions are whether UNICEF found the appropriate role(s) and forms of engagement for itself in Turkey over the course of the present country programme; and looking ahead, how UNICEF should now position itself, given the lessons of the past three years and the emerging context. To help answer these questions, three main criteria were used to evaluate the country programme: ***relevance to needs, performance effectiveness,*** and ***sustainability.*** In reviewing the programme against these criteria, greatest emphasis has been placed on the more recent and current programme.

As a basis for analysing the programme as a whole, the evaluation divides it into four main sub-components: (i) Child protection; (ii) Education; (iii) Social policy, social protection and social cohesion; and (iv) Child development policy, child rights monitoring and data generation. These categories cut across UNICEF's own defined outcomes and outputs but allow closely linked areas of work to be considered together, as well as consideration of how well these components have worked together to contribute to higher-level outcomes.

The evaluation covers the period from January 2016 to December 2019. The design is essentially theory-based (non-experimental) , reviewing interventions made by UNICEF against the underlying logic of the programme, the evolving context and available evidence about relevant change and outcomes. It is based on a review of relevant documentation; interviews with key informants inside and outside UNICEF together with selective site visits, during inception and fact-finding missions (four weeks between July and mid- October 2019); and subsequent follow-up interviews and data analysis. Not all aspects of the programme could be reviewed first-hand, though an attempt was made to include a reasonably representative sample of sites, staff and partners.

It was agreed with the TCO that, given the strategic nature of the evaluation and the commissioning of other more sector-specific evaluations, no attempt would be made to consult directly with the communities and social groups intended to benefit from UNICEF's programme. However, the Evaluation Team (ET) consulted with civil society organisations, municipal authorities and local partners concerning the assessed needs and priorities of vulnerable groups (Turkish and refugee) and the related programme responses, drawing on existing evaluations concerning the relevance and effectiveness of specific elements of UNICEF's programme. This was in addition to consultations with the relevant government authorities at central and provincial levels, as well as UN agencies and international donors.

Note that the evaluation covers only UNICEF's programme in Turkey; it does ***not*** cover UNICEF's cross-border support to relief operations in Syria, which it is anticipated will be covered in a Syria-specific evaluation in 2020.

Country Context

Turkey is a relatively highly developed upper middle-income country (UMIC) and a G-20 member. It remains a candidate for accession to the European Union (EU), although that process has stalled since 2016. Basic human development indicators have improved substantially over the past two decades; yet living standards are only around half the EU average, there are high levels of informal employment, and development is uneven across the country. As a result, there are persistent equity gaps, including regional and rural-urban disparities, as well as inequities related to gender, ethnicity and other factors.

After years of strong economic growth, Turkey has recently undergone an economic downturn, resulting in high inflation and currency devaluation, putting pressure on jobs, wages and household incomes. Beyond these economic factors, the development context has been affected by two factors over recent years: fundamental changes in Turkey's political and institutional landscape following the attempted coup in 2016; and the political, social and economic consequences of the country's hosting over four million (mainly Syrian) refugees. Turkey's strategic geopolitical position as a potential gateway to Europe for refugees has dominated recent relations with the EU, and its involvement in the Syrian conflict now sees it playing a direct military role within that country in efforts to secure a 'buffer zone' along its border – intended by the government in part to enable the large-scale return of Syrian refugees. Multiple uncertainties surround the potential outcomes.

The inequities noted above, largely related to poverty and social marginalisation, directly affect the security and development of Turkish children. The threats to children include violence and abuse, child labour, child marriage, adverse discrimination, lack of access to quality inclusive education, threats to early childhood development, and lack of opportunities for adolescent personal development. Among the various inequities in the country, those related to gender and the relative inequality of women and girls continue to stand out. Appropriate provision for juvenile offenders is only available in parts of the country, and pre-primary schooling is only available for some. Turkey has been making progress in many of these areas, and the policy environment (including the 11th National Development Plan for 2019-2023) is relatively favourable. Gender equality is an exception.

While the agenda of concern for Turkish children is extensive, that for refugee and migrant children (of whom there are around 1.7 million) involves particularly acute vulnerabilities. Despite Turkey's generous welcome of refugees, the politics surrounding the massive refugee influx – the largest in the world – have become increasingly challenging. Hardening social attitudes, particularly among host communities in areas of high refugee concentration, raise major issues about social cohesion and the potential for social conflict. Language and cultural differences compound political and social tensions, specifically around access to services and to the labour market. The Turkish government's policy to date has been largely to integrate Syrian refugees into (mainly urban) Turkish host communities and into mainstream public services, including the public-school system, rather than to 'contain' the refugee population and provide separate services. This remains the official policy, despite the tensions noted here, and despite recent government rhetoric about the large-scale return of refugees to Syria.

A high degree of medium-term uncertainty surrounds the forward planning agenda for UNICEF in Turkey. This is particularly true of the Syrian refugees and their status (political, social, economic); the effect of domestic and global political factors on Turkey's security and economic situation; and the scale and nature of future aid or loan financing to Turkey.

UNICEF's programme and the operating environment

The subject of this evaluation is UNICEF's response to the context outlined above, as set out in the 2016-2020 Country Programme Document and through its subsequent evolution. The country programme is wide-ranging, aiming to tackle both the country-wide issues described above and the specific needs and vulnerabilities of the refugee population. Education, child protection and social protection are the dominant elements, but the programme is framed around wider themes of social inclusion, child rights and gender equality. Implementation strategies have ranged from direct service delivery to policy advocacy, with an emphasis on system strengthening and technical support to other organisations. A decision was taken from the outset to integrate the humanitarian (refugee-related) work fully into the country programme framework, and to respond to children's needs and vulnerabilities wherever they arose. Social cohesion is an important related sub-theme.

For much of the period under review (until March 2018), the refugee response in Turkey constituted an L3 corporate emergency priority for UNICEF, as it did across the Syria region. This period saw more than three-fold growth of UNICEF programme expenditure, and an equivalent growth in staffing. The result is a UNICEF establishment that is much larger than it was originally envisaged in the 2016-2020 CPD and a programme.

Changes to government institutional structures following the 2016 attempted coup altered the operating environment within which UNICEF and international agencies work. This included the shift to a presidential system of government and a re-organisation of ministries, resulting in a rapid turnover of ministry staff that has made it challenging for the continuity of engagement. The space within which national and international civil society organisations (CSOs) can operate is highly restrictive, and many Turkish CSOs have been closed, including several actual and potential UNICEF partners. That being said, UNICEF has shifted the balance of its partner portfolio towards more local partnerships over the evaluation period, including newly formed partnerships with provincial and municipal authorities that provide an important platform for future collaboration. Meanwhile, it has maintained and deepened its working relationships with key ministries, including the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and the new Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS), along with some of large national Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) including the Turkish Red Crescent.

General findings: UNICEF's role, strategy and impact

The evaluation found that UNICEF had risen well to the challenges involved in working in Turkey over the past four years. It adopted the right overall strategy from the outset, including that of integrating its humanitarian and refugee-related work into its wider Turkey programme, and of working closely with government to help ensure that national and local systems are better able to meet the needs of ***all*** children, Turkish and refugee. The evaluation finds that UNICEF has successfully applied humanitarian-development 'nexus' thinking to its programme in Turkey – and that it has in the process designed some creative and innovative approaches to addressing the challenges involved. There are lessons here for others in UNICEF working in UMIC contexts.

Across the wider programme, UNICEF has enabled significant progress in key areas for children. The language of child protection now features in official language and policy (national and local) in ways it did not before UNICEF's involvement. Community-based child protection has significantly extended the scope of local child protection services, and UNICEF has worked well with MoFLSS to help extend the reach of social services. While much remains to be done to strengthen these systems, significant progress has been achieved despite major institutional upheaval. The humanitarian (refugee-focused) work has been essential in its own right and has also served to shed light on more general problems concerning national & local child protection systems.

The strategy outlined in the 2016-2020 CPD has remained essentially the right one over the intervening years, despite the changes and turbulence noted above. The role played by UNICEF in Turkey has appropriately reflected its mandate, policy priorities and comparative advantage in this context; and has been consistent with the wider UN approach to national resilience building under the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan for the Syria Crisis (the '3RP'). UNICEF has built on and deepened relationships with central government ministries while taking steps to strengthen relations with provincial and municipal authorities in key areas of the country. It has played a role that perhaps no other international organisation could play in working across sectors and ministries, and in helping bridge the gap between national, provincial and local layers of government. Much more remains to be done in this respect. UNICEF needs to continue to work beyond Ankara and to build on the existing working relationships with local authorities not just in the south east area of the country, but more widely across the most deprived areas of the country. That requires a consistency of engagement with local actors, including civil society networks, which is a challenging but necessary part of this 'outreach' approach. Given the potential scale of such work, this will require a targeted approach based on levels of child vulnerability and opportunities for progress.

UNICEF now faces some strategic choices. The humanitarian funding streams (particularly from the EU) that have allowed it to grow its overall programme must be expected to reduce significantly over the course of the next two to three years. Given the uncertain near-term future, particularly concerning refugees, UNICEF must retain flexibility to respond as necessary to urgent new needs. But the overall picture and likely resource constraints suggest that there is a need to consolidate and focus the programme around medium- to long-term priorities for all vulnerable children in Turkey. There has already been a substantial shift by UNICEF from service delivery to system strengthening. It now needs to continue the related shift from a reactive to a more proactive agenda, giving due weight to preventive measures, while retaining focused support to essential service delivery.

Specific programme findings

Child protection

Although analysis of the child protection needs and vulnerabilities in the country is seriously hampered by a lack of data and restrictions on evidence generation, UNICEF focused on what appears to be the most pressing issues for the protection of both Turkish and refugee children. It also achieved an appropriate balance between strengthening national systems and community-based protection services - the latter initially focused on refugee children. This was based on a strong underlying programme logic. Regarding effectiveness, the evaluation found that UNICEF had made a significant contribution to protecting children, notably through the work to strengthen protection systems at all levels, and the child-protection component of the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) scheme.

UNICEF's work on issues of child marriage and gender-based violence has been significant, particularly at the local and municipal levels. However, this was an area where the evaluation felt UNICEF could do more to help build and support coalitions combining local authorities and civil society actors, as well as to help to strengthen systems and develop new policy solutions. More generally, the crucial role of national and local civil society actors in child protection needs recognition and support.

UNICEF's work on children in contact with the law (enabling more child-friendly judicial process) is a good example of combining policy advocacy and advisory work with practical support to implementation. The evaluation suggests that this agenda could be more strongly linked with the wider child protection agenda, and that UNICEF could broaden the scope of its work in this area to include more on children in ***conflict*** with the law.

Some other questions surround the coherence of the child protection work. For example, the links between child welfare and justice for children, or community-based child protection and child rights monitoring mechanisms were not clear. Nor were the links between child protection and other elements of UNICEF's programme. With regards to child care, there are critical linkages between education, social policy, justice, health and other services. While UNICEF understandably focussed its efforts on foster care, case management and social work outreach (Turkish government family social support programme (ASDEP)), the evaluation suggests that in the next CPD, a more holistic approach needs to be taken that makes the appropriate links between these services.

Education

In its education work, UNICEF has had the twin aims of helping the government (and specifically the MoNE: (i) to address the immediate issue of access to formal education by refugee children; and (ii) to increase the capacity of the education system to provide quality and inclusive formal and non-formal education and lifelong learning opportunities for girls and boys, especially those with special needs. The evaluation concludes that this was the right approach, and that UNICEF made essential contributions particularly for the Syrian refugees. These included helping establish Temporary Education Centres (TEC) for Syrian girls and boys, recruiting and training Syrian Volunteer Education Personnel (SVEPs), and designing an education management information system Foreign Student Education Information Management System (YOBIS) for foreign students.

Subsequently, UNICEF has played an important role in dramatically increasing the number of refugee children enrolled in schools, in supporting the implementation of the Government's policy of integration of Syrian refugee children into the Turkish public school system, and in promoting school attendance through the extension to refugees of the national CCTE scheme. The policy of integrated schooling is challenging to implement – particularly regarding language barriers – and tension between ***inclusiveness*** and **quality** can be found in classes where Turkish children and Syrian refugees learn together. There is a risk that neither group receives the education they need.

UNICEF's contribution to the Turkish education system more generally has involved effective collaboration with MoNE and Ministry of Youth and Sports on a range of issues, including advancing girls' secondary education and non-formal education. The education programme was also found to have contributed significantly to three cross-sectoral priorities in the Country Programme: ending child marriage, addressing gender-based violence in emergencies, and combatting child labour; as well as making some contribution to social cohesion between Turkish and refugee children.

Social policy, social protection and social cohesion

UNICEF scaled up its work on child labour in 2017, targeting over 15,000 vulnerable children and their families with socio-economic, educational and psychosocial support to counter the negative coping strategies that lead children to work. It has worked with the MoFLSS, ILO and others to enforce child labour laws and promote child rights, while engaging more directly with NGO partners on related service provision (including child protection services). It has also supported research and data gathering on this agenda, notably on child labour in seasonal agricultural work. The evaluation concluded that child labour was a crucial area of work for UNICEF in Turkey, and that there is scope to expand this work, which overlaps with the agenda concerning children working on the street.

Public finance for children is an area that is acknowledged to need greater attention by UNICEF. However, through its Child Friendly Cities and Communities Initiative (CFCI), UNICEF has been instrumental in the adoption by over thirty municipalities of child-friendly budgeting. Municipal staff have been trained on incorporating child-friendly elements into their five-year plans. UNICEF has worked closely with the Union of Municipalities of Turkey to disseminate related guidelines to municipalities across the country.

UNICEF's work in the field of social protection has centred on social protection for refugees through the extended CCTE scheme and winterization support. While the extent of the incentive effect of the CCTE scheme on school attendance is due to be independently evaluated, monitoring evidence suggests that it has had a positive effect. It also represented both a significant policy and advocacy achievement, and an important example of cross-sector integration with the addition of a child protection element. The social protective value of the CCTE cash payments must be considered within the wider logic of the scheme and its link to the emergency social safety net scheme for refugees. Overall, the evaluation concludes that UNICEF has made a significant contribution to social protection for vulnerable groups and should continue to do so, modifying its approaches to take account of monitoring evidence, changes in context and an assessment of its own added value.

The effectiveness of UNICEF's work on social cohesion between host and refugee populations, an issue of increasing urgency, is hard to evaluate but is likely (on its own) to be only marginal. The evaluation concludes that this agenda requires a more inter-sectoral and better-defined approach than is seen at present and one that is better coordinated across government and with other UN agencies. Growing social and economic disparities across Turkey mean that the social cohesion agenda has relevance beyond the refugee-host issue, and it should form part of the rationale for all elements of UNICEF's work.

Child development policy, child rights monitoring and data generation

Systems for child rights monitoring in Turkey are not fully in line with international standards. According to sources such as the EU Progress Report on Turkey 2019, monitoring of performance in policy implementation needs to be improved. There is currently little independent oversight on child rights, something that has been compounded by the restrictions placed on civil society organisations. The quality of data for child rights monitoring in Turkey is dependent on government capacities to collect reliable and representative data on specific indicators – something that UNICEF has rightly been working to strengthen with ministries and other entities of the national statistical system, such as Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) and Hacettepe Institute of Population Studies. UNICEF has also sought to strengthen independent child rights monitoring through its partnership with the Ombudsman's Institution (OI) and its collaborations with NGO networks on Children with Disabilities and Violence Against Children.

The limitations of child rights monitoring are reflected in gaps in the available data about some of the most vulnerable groups of children, including both registered and unregistered refugees (Syrian and other), children from ethnic minorities, and children with disabilities. Gender-specific outcome data is also widely lacking. Evidence generation has remained a challenge for UNICEF's child protection programme, and lack of evidence has limited the options for preventing and responding in a targeted (and gendered) way to specific issues of vulnerability.

UNICEF has had significant influence on the legal and policy frameworks that affect children in Turkey. The successful promotion of child protection language in official policy, including the new 11th National Development Plan, has been matched by specific policy and systems achievements. These include important new protections for children in recent legislation on judicial practice; development of a new Child Rights Strategy adopted by the OI; and strengthening of the related oversight systems through technical advice and training. The establishment of the Parliament Subcommittee for the Child Rights, following advocacy by UNICEF with the OI and other counterparts, is an important step – although the effectiveness of that committee has yet to be demonstrated and will need to be monitored.

Sustainability, challenges and opportunities

With most humanitarian funding streams likely to dry up over the next two to three years, UNICEF faces imminent challenges relating to sustainability and transition of some of its largest programme components. These include the two large cash-based initiatives, the CCTE programme for refugees and the SVEP incentive scheme. The evaluation concludes that both deserve to be continued, but questions surround both their future funding and the schemes themselves. UNICEF should seek to secure future funding for both – but should look to handover the administration of the CCTE scheme in particular and should review issues of targeting (CCTE) and role (SVEPs). Regarding the SVEP scheme, UNICEF arguably has a moral obligation to try to achieve a sustainable transition, given the livelihood dependencies involved. Reducing humanitarian funding has implications for the wider country programme, which will require innovative approaches to resourcing.

The evaluation highlights several other challenges and obstacles to progressing the child rights agenda in Turkey, and a number of related opportunities. The first concerns a series of disconnects in the systems designed to protect children and support their development. These consist of both horizontal failures to connect policy and systems within and across the relevant Ministries in Ankara, and vertical disconnects between the national, provincial and local/municipal levels of government administration. UNICEF has played an essential part in helping to bridge some of those divides, and it should build on this 'broker' role. Perhaps the most important disconnect lies in the gap between intended outcomes and the 'real world' outcomes for children. Too often, the benefit delivered through services or protection systems (including child rights monitoring) does not appear to match the stated aim. UNICEF should be prepared to highlight such situations and make the case for necessary change.

Other challenges identified include the evidential challenge noted above; the challenge of working more effectively with civil society and helping protect the space for NGOs; and the urgent challenge of addressing threats to social cohesion between refugee and host communities. In each case, UNICEF has an opportunity to advance and protect the interests of children by finding new ways of working and building on the experience of the past four years of the country programme.

Cross-cutting issues and wider lessons

Humanitarian-development nexus. UNICEF's decision early in the refugee crisis response to focus primarily on system strengthening reflected the prevailing context and the kind of role it demanded. But it raised the question whether relatively acute needs could be met through an essentially developmental approach. The answer in this case appears to be that they can, but,(because of the time-lag involved, only if an interim provision is also made for meeting immediate needs through support to supplementary service delivery. In UNICEF's case, the nexus involved adopting a changing mix of implementation strategies over time. Its technical advisory role is particularly effective (and appreciated) in this context. Regarding funding, despite the Grand Bargain commitments of donors, it seems that the gradual withdrawal of humanitarian funding is not being matched by a commensurate increase in developmental funding to help smooth transitions. This adds to the sustainability challenges noted above and represents an advocacy priority for UNICEF in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other UN agencies.

UNICEF's approach to gender issues. The UNICEF Country Office has tried to address gender issues both through a set of specific gendered programme priorities, and through an integration approach and efforts to make systems gender responsive. While the gendered programme elements appear to the ET to have been appropriate and largely effective, it is less clear whether integration and mainstreaming efforts have worked, and UNICEF should review its own working practices and capacities in this regard. While UNICEF has generally done well in identifying and addressing the different needs and vulnerabilities of girls and boys in Turkey, more remains to be done to provide an evidential basis for gender-related outcomes.

UNICEF as a whole has much to learn from the Turkey experience. Continuity of engagement with government ministries has provided a basis of trust on which to build a platform of support that extends from policy formulation and technical advice to direct support to implementation – in a context where international organisations generally have struggled to find a clear role. UNICEF's comparative advantage here has been clear: it is a trusted partner of government, and its breadth of mandate and technical capacity has allowed it to work across sectors and ministries, while helping bridge the gap between national and sub-national layers of government. UNICEF's need to be careful to maintain its independence of judgment, but the evaluation concludes that the overall working relationship with government in this context has been a constructive and appropriate one, providing a strong basis for future collaboration as well as for further policy advocacy.

Recommendations

The evaluations recommendations are organised under nine main headings, each with a number of sub-recommendations. The top-line recommendations are as follows:

R1. Identify and help bridge disconnects within and across government systems. UNICEF should have a central part of its mission in Turkey to identify and help bridge horizontal and vertical disconnects (and potential linkages) in policy and systems designed to protect children and promote their development. This includes identifying and addressing failures of consistent translation of policy into local service delivery for the most vulnerable categories of children (a 'reality check' function). This in turn should be linked to a renewed focus on child rights monitoring. It should build on existing relationships of trust with national, provincial and local/municipal authorities, as well as the potential for working with community-based organisations and networks.

R2. Consolidate and ensure sustainable transition of current service delivery programmes in the education sector. UNICEF should seek to ensure the sustainability of its current cash-based and service delivery programmes in the education sector (CCTE, SVEP, Accelerated Learning Programme) while planning to hand over its own administration of those programmes to other actors by 2021 or sooner.

R3. Build stronger cross-sectoral linkages within UNICEF's own programme. In order to fulfil its ambition to work effectively across sectors and tackle multi-factor challenges to children's security and development, UNICEF needs to find better ways of bringing together agendas that are currently highly 'projectized' by donors, working to different timeframes and sometimes pursued in isolation from each other. The goal should be ***integrated programming*** at provincial and local/municipal levels, and highly coordinated policy and systems engagement at national level.

R4. Diversify the partner base and help build stronger coalitions at all levels. For the post-2020 country programme, UNICEF needs to review its partnership portfolio and collaborations. It should aim for stronger cross-UN collaboration on children's issues, greater diversity of civil society partnerships, and the fostering of local coalitions between municipal authorities and community-based actors.

R5. Evolve UNICEF's technical support, policy advisory and capacity development roles. Given that the provision of technical support and advice on specific child-related agendas is clearly a key part of UNICEF's added value in this context, UNICEF should maintain and further develop its technical capacities – including expertise on Early Childhood Development (ECD), gender and public finance for children and child rights monitoring. At the same time, it should continue to develop the capacities of both local authorities and non-governmental actors on child-related issues, and act as a catalyst in attempts to find locally appropriate solutions.

R6. Strengthen the evidence base for children. Given the gaps in the evidence base concerning the fulfilment of child rights in Turkey, and the serious weakness of child rights monitoring systems, UNICEF should invest more in this area of work both with government and other partners. This should include thorough analysis of current legislation, policies, regulations and the social welfare workforce to identify factors that hamper the realisation of children's rights and gender equality. It should also include the strengthening of monitoring systems (both outcome and programme-related) to better enable the reality check function identified above. Related to this, UNICEF needs to adapt its own results monitoring framework to better reconcile the demands of global reporting and national-level performance management.

R7. Strengthen UNICEF's work to influence social norms and social cohesion. In the new CPD UNICEF should devise a more coherent and consistent approach to influencing relevant social norms and to promoting social cohesion, in close collaboration with UN and other actors. It should broaden its use of C4D techniques in this regard, both in terms of evidence generation and influencing, as well as reviewing all relevant programme components with a social cohesion lens.

R8. Strengthen UNICEF's child rights advocacy. UNICEF should review its public and private influencing roles with a view to strengthening both. The TCO's ***Communication and Public Advocacy Strategy 2018-2021*** provides a sound, but UNICEF needs more specific influencing targets and related strategy to be built into each component of its programme. UNICEF's role as an advocate is particularly important at a time when civil society activities are constrained.

R9. Address neglected agendas. While UNICEF has put its emphasis on addressing systemic issues relating to child protection and development, the acid test of those systems is whether they effectively address the most pressing areas of child vulnerability. While UNICEF clearly needs to prioritise its efforts, it cannot hope to cover all the relevant agendas for children, the evaluation suggests a set of issues – including public finance for children – that should be reviewed by UNICEF in this light. Some of these are already acknowledged by the TCO as necessary areas of growth. At a minimum, UNICEF should seek to establish sound baseline information relating to each.

Introduction

1.1 Background to the evaluation: purpose, scope, focus [1]

This evaluation was commissioned by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Turkey Country Office (TCO) and managed by the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (ECARO). The objectives were threefold. The first was to provide an independent assessment of the performance of the Country Programme from 2016-2019. The second was to assess UNICEF's strategic positioning and use of change strategies in Turkey. The third was to identify lessons and good practices and to inform the future programme and UNICEF institutionally. The evaluation is intended to serve both accountability and learning purposes, with an emphasis on learning. Its main focus is on issues of strategic significance for UNICEF in Turkey, rather than on technical or operational issues; and part of the rationale is to help inform the writing of the new Country Programme Document 2021-2025.

The overarching guiding questions for the evaluation have been:

(i) Has UNICEF found the appropriate role and forms of engagement for itself in Turkey over the course of the present country programme (2016 to date)?

(ii) Given the lessons of the past three years and the emerging context, how should UNICEF now position itself through the new Country Programme Document (CPD)? What are the strategic choices facing it?

The analysis centres on whether UNICEF plays the role it should in Turkey given the priority needs of vulnerable children (Turkish and other) across the country; UNICEF's own mandate, its institutional priorities, and added value relative to other actors; and the potential operating space given the unique political / institutional context, the availability of funds and other relevant factors. [2]

Within the evaluation period (2016 to 2019), the evaluation has a particular focus on the more recent and current aspects of the programme, while charting its evolution and performance over the period as a whole. The emphasis is on identifying relevant lessons for UNICEF's future programme in Turkey and more generally for its work in countries that are relatively highly developed, nevertheless involve high degrees of inequality and unequal life chances for girls and boys. The massive influx of Syrian and other refugees over the evaluation period – a population that includes around 1.7 million children – raises issues of child vulnerability and potential social exclusion. Addressing refugee-related issues forms a very substantial part of UNICEF's programme and hence of this evaluation.

The intended users of the evaluation include a range of stakeholders both internal and external to UNICEF. [3] The internal audience includes (first) the Turkey Country Office, as well as those with related responsibilities in ECARO and UNICEF headquarters, and members of UNICEF's Executive Board. It is anticipated that staff at the Middle East and North Africa regional office (MENARO) will find the refugee-related analysis useful as part of the wider regional picture on Syrian refugees. More broadly, it is hoped that the findings will be useful to those in UNICEF working in other upper middle-income (UMIC) contexts.

The intended external audience includes, first, the Government of Turkey; and the line ministries with which UNICEF works most closely and the Strategy and Budget Presidency.

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[1] The terms of reference for the evaluation are included in Annex A. The evaluation team's interpretation of those ToR, as agreed with the country and regional offices, is contained in an inception report dated 30th September 2019.

[2] This is the second of two major review processes intended to inform the writing of the new County Programme Document for 2021-25. The results of the first such process, a Programme Review conducted by the TCO in 2018/19, are taken into consideration in the present evaluation; as are the results of several recent sub-programme evaluations.

[3] For a description of key stakeholder categories and roles, see the evaluation ToR in Annex A.

Much of UNICEF's programme has involved working with government bodies (nationally and locally) to help define policy, strengthen systems, develop capacity and generate data relevant to the protection and development of children in Turkey. Correspondingly, much of the evaluation is concerned with UNICEF's role in this regard.

The external audience also includes:

- UNICEF's bilateral and multilateral donors in Turkey, without whom the programme would not have been possible. The accountability aspect of the evaluation relates to a significant degree to the use of the donor funds provided.
- Other UN agencies working in Turkey, some of which collaborate closely with UNICEF;
- Non-governmental Organization (NGO) and other civil society partners of UNICEF (national and local) with whom it has worked to deliver complementary services and to generate child-related data.

More generally, it is anticipated that the evaluation will be of use and value to all those concerned with the security and well-being of children in Turkey. While the lessons identified primarily concern UNICEF, it is hoped that the related learning will have wider application.

1.2 Design, approach, process and methodology

The design of the evaluation is essentially a theory-based (non-experimental) one, reviewing interventions made by UNICEF against the underlying logic of the programme, the context, and available evidence about relevant change and outcomes. Looking at the specific outputs of the programme, it asks whether the inferences drawn by UNICEF about the causal link between its interventions and observed changes in policy, practice and outcomes are reasonable ones. In that sense, it aims to test UNICEF's own 'narrative' concerning the programme, as articulated in its reporting and otherwise.

It was agreed at the inception phase that the evaluation would not involve a reconstruction of the Theory of Change (ToC) that underpins the CPD for 2016-2020. A new ToC is being created for the new CPD 2021-2025, and this evaluation is intended to help inform that design without pre-empting it. The evaluation uses the logic of the programme as articulated both in the overarching ToC in the CPD and in the ToCs relating to specific programme components.

The team's approach to the evaluation has been a consultative one, looking to identify lessons and ways forward in collaboration with the staff and partners involved in the programme. In doing so, the confidentiality of consultations with informants has been respected: interview notes were anonymised, and views expressed have not been attributed to the individuals or organisations concerned, other than to distinguish views expressed by internal (UNICEF) sources from those expressed by external sources. Recommendations were formulated based on these discussions and on the judgment of the evaluators. These were subsequently revised following consultation with country and regional office staff on earlier drafts of this report. An Evaluation Reference Group was also established and consulted over the course of the evaluation.

While the approach has been consultative, the evaluation is an independent one, and the team has sought throughout to maintain objectivity, impartiality and independence of judgment. No conflicts of interest existed regarding team members. Care has been taken to conform with United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation as well as UNICEF ethical standards for the conduct of evaluations. Ethical approval was sought and obtained from UNICEF's external ethical review board for the approach and protocols set out in the inception report (IR) (see Annex E).

Some of the challenges of evaluating the ***effectiveness*** of UNICEF's programme are explored in section 3 below. This question involves consideration not just of ***what*** UNICEF has achieved (based primarily on UNICEF's own reporting and the Results Assessment Module (RAM) framework), but ***how*** it achieved it and ***why*** it appears to have succeeded or failed in particular areas. These explanatory questions are explored in this evaluation largely on the basis of key informant interviews (internal and external to UNICEF), supplementing the available documentation. Throughout, the evaluators have drawn on their professional experience and their knowledge of good practice and relevant standards in making judgments about the merits of UNICEF's approach in the Turkey context.

The evaluation has adopted a mixed methods approach. The primary methods used have been documentary review, using mainly UNICEF materials; and key informant interviews (KIIs), both with UNICEF staff and those from other organisations.[4] The review of secondary data and evidence from documentary sources allowed questions to be identified that were subsequently tested through informant interviews, site visits and field observations. The rationale for the choice of interviewees and site visits is set out fully in the IR, the methodological elements of which are included in the Annex. [5] Here we simply note that the sampling method (of people, organisations and places) was purposive rather than randomised, and was closely informed by discussion with staff in the TCO. The sample included representatives of the key stakeholder groups listed above. The intention was to gather a reasonably representative cross-section of contexts and of views from a diversity of organisations (government and other) based either on their direct collaboration with UNICEF or on agendas of shared concern.

The evaluation has involved four main phases: (i) an inception phase, in which an initial four-day visit was made to the UNICEF Turkey Country Office in Ankara in July 2019, followed by a period of documentary review; (ii) a three-week data gathering mission to Turkey in September/October 2019, which involved visits to Ankara, Gaziantep, Kilis, Adana, Izmir and Istanbul; (iii) an analysis phase, which involved further documentary review, remote interviews and the writing of the draft report; and (iv) a consultation and revision phase.

In total, over 120 interviews were conducted for the evaluation. [6]On the UNICEF side, this entailed talking with those involved with the UNICEF programme, from the Country Office in Ankara and the Gaziantep field office; and the Regional Office in Geneva. Externally, it included UNICEF counterparts in the relevant Ministries and government departments, including provincial and municipal level authorities; other UN agencies and the UN Resident Coordinator; national and international NGOs; and some of UNICEF's key donors in Turkey.

Given the strategic nature of the evaluation, and the fact that a number of more specific evaluations have been conducted (or are forthcoming) concerning particular elements of the programme, it was agreed with UNICEF not to consult formally with community groups, or to conduct focus group discussions with programme beneficiaries. From an ethical point of view, it was felt that doing so might raise false expectations concerning the intended purpose of this evaluation. Instead, the evaluation has relied on surveys and other consultations previously conducted, as well as on consultations with those who have day to day contact with the most vulnerable communities. Programme site visits did include limited informal conversations with beneficiaries and community members (Turkish and refugee/migrant) as well as with staff and partners.

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[4] An attempt was made to gather further data through online surveys of UNICEF staff and a limited sample of partners. However, the response rate was so low in both cases that it was decided not to include the data in the evaluation.
[5] See Annex B.
[6] A full list of those interviewed is contained in Annex C.

1.3 Scope and limitations of the evaluation

Conducted towards the end of 2019, the evaluation covers only the first four years of the five-year country programme. The terms of reference (ToR) for the evaluation set an ambitious agenda, requiring an evaluation of both strategy and performance across a four year timeframe, including both summative and formative elements and using the full set of Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD) (DAC) evaluation criteria. [7]In order to make the task manageable, it was agreed with UNICEF to focus on three particular DAC evaluation criteria – those of ***relevance, effectiveness and sustainability.*** It was also agreed to focus on the more recent aspects of the programme, as a basis for identifying appropriate future options for UNICEF.

The evaluation deals with programme and strategy issues, but it does not constitute a technical evaluation of the individual programme components. That said, some assessment of the technical merit of those components inevitably forms part of the analysis of relevance and effectiveness, and the evaluation draws on the findings of other more specialised reviews and evaluations.

Just as this is not a technical evaluation of the programme components, so it does not cover the more managerial and structural aspects of the programme, including the way the country office is managed, resourced and configured. One consequence of this approach is that no attempt is made to gauge the efficiency of UNICEF's programme, or to evaluate the resource mobilisation strategy. We note here that funding has not generally been a significant constraint on the programme, the issue being rather how to spend the available funds effectively and accountably. References to UNICEF staffing are made only to the extent that issues appear to arise from the programme's (actual or potential) performance.

Although country office and regional staff were asked about interactions between country office, regional office and headquarters, and the quality of support provided to the country office, no major issues were raised in this regard. From the country office perspective, the consensus appeared to be that the level and nature of support from the RO and HQ was generally appropriate. Regional office staff felt that the country office had done well to locate the Turkey programme within the regional and global framework of priorities and accountabilities (including for the L3 emergency response) while addressing the specific challenges of the Turkey context.

The timetable for the evaluation meant that the sample of key informants and programme sites to be visited was fairly small (i.e. highly selective), running the risk that conclusions would be drawn that were not valid for the whole programme. To counter this, the Evaluation Team (ET) attempted, in discussion with the TCO and based on a review of documentation, to ensure a reasonably representative sample of informants and site visits. In its consultation on the first draft report, in cases where findings arose from notably limited or uncertain evidence, feedback has been sought from TCO colleagues as to whether the findings in question were valid, and whether other evidence could be adduced to confirm or contradict those findings.

Another challenge has been the availability of relevant contextual data. Although Turkey is a relatively data-rich environment, there are significant gaps in child-related data, particularly with the refugee and migrant population. This is a reflection in part of the political sensitivity surrounding data collection on refugee issues. Although this limitation is not as severe as noted by the 2015 evaluation of UNICEF's refugee response in Turkey, it remains a significant constraint. We consider in section 4 below the strength of the evidence base on which UNICEF has been working.

[7]Evaluation criteria established by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (2019). These are Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability.

With regard to programme data, given the limited scope to generate primary data during the evaluation, or to test the validity of existing data, the ET has been heavily reliant on UNICEF and its partners' own reported results (including UNICEF's RAM system) for the performance review component of the evaluation.

Finally, it should be noted that the evaluation covers only Outcomes 1-3 of the four outcomes identified in the country programme strategy (see Figure 2 below). This reflects the fact that the fourth outcome – involving UNICEF working with the Turkish Government to validate and share good child-related practices with other countries – has received relatively little programme attention.

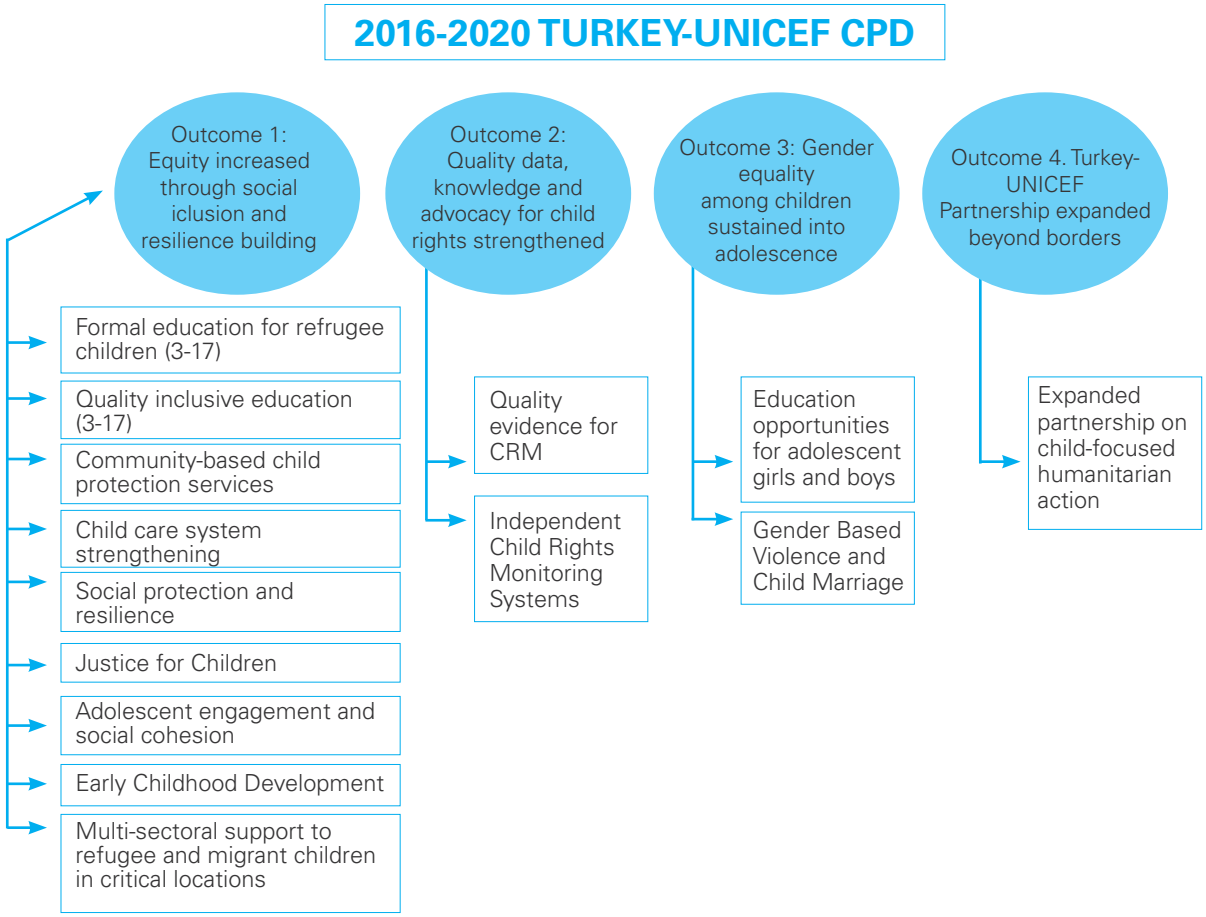

Figure 2 Schematic representation of the UNICEF Turkey Country Programme 2016-2020[8]

1.4 Analytical framework for the evaluation

The evaluation uses an analytical framework that is set out in an evaluation matrix of guiding questions, sub-questions, criteria and information sources. That matrix is contained in Annex B of this report. The questions and criteria in the matrix were used as a basis for structuring key informant interviews as well as for analysing written sources.

The four main pillars of the analytical framework are as follows:

A. Programme relevance and appropriateness to context
B. UNICEF strategy, programme coherence and compliance
C. Programme performance, results, effectiveness and quality
D. Sustainability, resourcing and partnerships

[8] Diagram taken from the CPE ToR, UNICEF 2019. The structure of the programme is considered in Section 3 below.

This framework informs the structure of this report. Section 3 looks at relevance, strategy and effectiveness. Section 4 considers at cross-cutting issues, while Section 5 looks at the sustainability of UNICEF's programme and the challenges it faces. Section 6 summarises the conclusions of the evaluation and sets out a series of related recommendations.

The basic framework of the programme is shown in schematic form in Figure 2 above, which is the form it is presented in documents supporting the CPD. While this provides an indication of the overall shape and content of the country programme – including the integration of Turkish and refugee children components – it masks the complexity of the programme. Multiple 'outputs' are designed to contribute to define the outcomes and are interrelated in complex ways. Outcome 1, under which the majority of outputs are grouped, depends for its achievement on the interaction of a wide range of different agendas. We say more about this structure and the related theory of change in section 3 below, in the context of a discussion about gauging the effectiveness of the programme.

The complexity noted above poses a challenge for the evaluation. For the purposes of structuring our analysis, and for ease of reference, we divide the programme into four main components. These combine elements that cut across the defined programme 'outputs' but which are thematically linked.

The four components are as follows:

(i) Child Protection
(ii) Education
(iii) Social policy, social protection and social cohesion
(iv) Child development policy, child rights monitoring and data generation

While there is some overlap between these categories[9], they are distinct enough to provide a solid basis for evaluative analysis within and between the components. The next section provides a short summary of the issues arising under each component, to provide a narrative counterpart to the outcome baselines set out in the RAM. It also provides a wider account of the context within which UNICEF has been operating, and a brief account of the evolution and shape of UNICEF's response.

Box 1: Definition of terms as used in this report

Social policy: this term is used in a specialised sense by UNICEF in Turkey to encompass its strands of work on child labour, child friendly cities and the (extended) CCTE. Outside of this context, it tends to be used in a much broader sense, to describe governmental policy and legal frameworks relating to social issues and the welfare of individuals. The two meanings are distinguished in this report.

Social protection: a set of policies and programmes aimed at protecting vulnerable children and their families against poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. UNICEF Turkey's social protection programme supports governmental social protection systems, notably through the CTTE programme.

Social cohesion: the extent to which individuals and groups in society engage with each other and cooperate for their mutual benefit. In the context of this evaluation, we use the term particularly (though not exclusively) to refer to relations between Turkish host communities and refugee communities.

[9]See Box 1 for definition of terms used here.

Social inclusion: the goal of improving the terms on which individuals or groups take part in society while improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity. It is related to, but distinct from, social cohesion.

Child development policy: the combination of national and local government policies relating to the full development and well-being of children, from infants to adolescents. This includes the subject matter of UNICEF's work on ECD and adolescent development and participation (ADAP).

Child Rights Monitoring: the range of processes and mechanisms by which the effective achievement of and respect for the rights of children (as defined in international law) are monitored and enforced. In the case of Turkey, this involves a wide range of independent as well as government bodies, some concerned with regulation, some with oversight and redress, some with data collection, and some (in the case of civil society actors) with evidence generation and advocacy.

2. The Turkey context and UNICEF's response

2.1 Turkey national context: economic, political and social development

Turkey's economic and development profile

Turkey is an UMIC [10] with high levels of urbanisation. State institutions provide services throughout the country, and basic development indicators continue to improve: absolute poverty has been eradicated, child mortality rates substantially reduced, and Turkey's human development index score has improved substantially over the past 15 years.[11] Turkey is an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member, a member of the G-20, and is a candidate for accession to the European Union (EU) as a member state (though that process has stalled since 2016). Despite this, average living standards are around half the EU average and there are high levels of informal employment - 35% overall, 82.3% in agriculture.[12] There are high levels of inequality[13] and persistent equity gaps, including socioeconomic, regional and rural-urban disparities in decent work, household income and infrastructure.

Roughly speaking, these disparities are most marked between the relatively wealthy western provinces of Turkey and the relatively poorer eastern provinces. The south-east, which now hosts a substantial refugee population, is the poorest part of the country.

[10] As defined by the World Bank. Turkey currently has a GNI per capita (PPP) of $24,804 (source: UNDP Human Development Report 2018 update)

[11] According to the 2016 UNDP Human Development Report, between 1990 and 2015, Turkey's HDI value increased from 0.576 to 0.767, an increase of 33.2 percent. Over the same period, Turkey's life expectancy at birth increased by 11.2 years, mean years of schooling increased by 3.4 years and expected years of schooling increased by 5.7 years.

[12] Turkstat, Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS), cited in the 2016-20 CPD

[13] Eurostat data shows that income inequality is particularly high – data from 2018 shows that the GINI coefficient was 43, the highest level among all European countries. See Link: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tessi180&plugin=1

With regard to children's vulnerability, levels of relative poverty are twice the OECD average: 7.4 million children (between one quarter and one third) live in relative poverty, in a population of around 80 million. [14] As described in the 2016-2020 CPD, particularly disadvantaged children who face multiple deprivations include children whose parents are poorly educated and have low-income, belong to large families, and live in rural areas, as well as children with disabilities (CWD).[15] Roma children also face exclusion and heightened risks. Gender inequalities persist, for women and girls. The risks faced by children include child labour, child marriage, violence and discrimination, lack of access to quality inclusive education, threats to early childhood development, protection from violence and abuse, and opportunities for self-development and expression.[16]

Despite strong growth in the past two years, Turkey is currently undergoing a recession. Following a pronounced deterioration in foreign financing conditions in the third quarter of 2018, domestic financial conditions sharply worsened with a substantial depreciation of the Turkish Lira. Though the economy is expected to recover,[17] the short to medium-term economic outlook is uncertain, particularly given international risk factors (tensions with the US, EU and others, compounded by the global economic slowdown). As a result, it is unclear what the government's fiscal headroom will be to finance the social programmes to which it is committed.[18]

High levels of informality in the Turkish economy have been exacerbated by the massive influx of refugees, particularly from Syria since 2012. This poses an additional challenge for the reduction in overall levels of informality in the Turkish labour market, while it also complicates the social integration of these refugees. The requirement to support some 4 million refugees has also put additional strains on the national budget, only partially off-set in the short term by the 6 billion Euro of funding made available by the EU under the EU-Turkey agreement signed in 2016 (see below). It is estimated that Turkey has invested more than US 30 billion to date on the overall refugee response through the provision of the support to refugees via public services.[19]

That strain has been felt both nationally and locally. In its study on the Syrian Refugees and Municipalities in Turkey, the Union of Municipalities of Turkey stresses that the sudden increase in population in many municipalities pose a great challenge to infrastructure and general lack of resources, in addition to problems of social integration and cohesion between Syrians and host municipalities.[20]

The political and security context

Turkey's politics have been highly volatile over the past four years, during which time the political landscape has changed considerably. As the UNICEF 2018 Programme Review describes: ***'Since 2015, Turkey has witnessed a series of terrorist attacks, although their incidence has declined in more recent years. In 2016, an attempted coup-d'état was followed by a declaration of a state of emergency, which remained in force until mid-2018. In 2017, a referendum approved changes to the constitution, shifting Turkey from a parliamentary to a presidential republic. This new presidential system of government came into effect after presidential and parliamentary elections in June 2018.'***

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[14] TurkStat, Children in Statistics 2014; OECD (2018), OECD Family Database.
[15] Eurostat report that 42.3% of disabled persons do not obtain education even at a primary school level. See https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/
[16] UNICEF Country Programme Document 2016-20
[17] See Government's Economic Reform Programme: link
[18] As set out in the 11th Development Plan for Turkey (2019-23)
[19] UNICEF Turkey 2018 Humanitarian Situation Report. See https://reliefweb.int/report/turkey/unicef-turkey-2018-humanitarian-results
[20] Marmara Union of Municipalities, M. Erdogan (2017), Urban Refugees from "Detachment" to "Harmonization", Syrian Refugees and Process Management of Municipalities: the case of Istanbul.

The shift to a presidential system of governance and a subsequent re-structuring of government, with major turnover of government officials at all levels, has made consistency of engagement with government challenging. One of the most significant changes saw the Ministry of Family and Social Policies merged with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to create a new Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS). The Ministry of Development was abolished and the Strategy and Budget Presidency (SBP) was established.

Changes to governmental policies and structures have altered the environment within which UNICEF and other international agencies work, as well as substantially constricting the space within which civil society organisations (including a number of actual and potential UNICEF partners) can operate. Reflecting this, but also for programmatic and strategic reasons, the TCO has signed new partnerships in 2017 with a range of organizations (including the private sector) and municipalities. These factors, and particularly the turbulence of 2016 and subsequent state of emergency, must be taken into account in evaluating the 2016-2020 programme, as well in assessing the prospects for future programming. Turkey's more recent involvement inside Syria raises multiple issues and uncertainties that are beyond the scope of this evaluation to analyse further. Here we note it as one of the areas of future uncertainty concerning the situation of the Syrian refugees and the regional geopolitical situation.

The state of emergency that was imposed following the attempted coup in 2016 saw an escalation of restrictions on the media and civil society. The European Commission – Turkey 2019 Report [23] warns that ***'severe restriction of the freedoms of expression and media continued, including the imprisonment of scores of journalists, the closure of media outlets, the criminalization of criticism of government policies or officials, and the blocking of websites and content.'*** This was accompanied by the expulsion of thousands of academics from their posts, mirroring the mass purge (on security grounds) of the judiciary and other civil servants.

Civil society more widely has come under extreme pressure since 2016. The European Commission noted that more than 1,400 associations were closed based on emergency decrees.[24] These associations were active in a wide spectrum of activities, such as children's rights, women's rights, cultural rights, and victims' rights, among others. In 2019, civil society continued to face increasing pressure, following the high number of detentions and arrests of activists and human rights defenders[25]. INGOs also faced difficulties in their work in Turkey, including those providing humanitarian aid to refugees[26]. Apart from the wider human rights concerns that all this raises, one practical result from a UNICEF perspective is a shortage of specialized NGO and Civil Society Organization (CSO) partners. This issue is discussed further in the following sections.

[21] 2018 UNICEF Turkey COAR
[22] Interviews with UNICEF staff in Ankara
[23] https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-turkey-report.pdf
[24] European Commission (2018). Turkey 2018 Report.
[25] Ibid
[26] Ibid

2.2 The refugee context

Since 2011, the mass influx of Syrian and other refugees has made Turkey the country with the largest registered refugee population in the world. It is also a key country of transit for asylum seekers and migrants attempting to reach Europe, something that has largely shaped recent relations with the EU. As the 2018/19 Programme Review describes, ***'Turkey has invested heavily to provide refugees from Syria and refugees and asylum-seekers from other countries – about 4 million individuals in all – with services and opportunities, but the children among them remain particularly vulnerable. Turkey is also a main transit country for Syrians and other refugees moving towards Europe. A peak in migration towards Europe in 2015-2016 led to the signature of the EU-Turkey Statement in 2016, which contributed to an increase in the provision of international support for refugees. In parallel, it has contributed to a significant reduction in the flow of irregular migration from Turkey to Europe.'*** [27] The number of refugee children in Turkey is estimated at 1.7 million, of whom 1.6 million are Syrians.[28]

Since the earlier years of the response, when provision was made for refugees in camps ('temporary accommodation centres'), numbers escalated to the point where this became impracticable. As a 2015 evaluation of UNICEF's refugee response noted,[29] most refugees were in any case 'self-settled' in host communities rather than in camps, raising urgent questions about access to services. Since that time, the Turkish government's policy has increasingly been to integrate the Syrian refugee response into mainstream public service provision, including the public-school system, rather than to 'contain' the refugee population and provide separate services. This mirrors the de ***facto*** geographic integration (albeit in pockets of high concentration) of refugees into Turkish communities. The highest concentrations are found in Istanbul and in the south-eastern provinces bordering Syria (see Figure 3 below). Meanwhile, the significance of refugee camps and temporary education centres (TECs) has diminished over the evaluation period.[30]

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[27] The EU's refugee agreement with Turkey was signed on March 18, 2016, in an attempt to solve one of Europe's most pressing problems: the mass influx of refugees into Europe. Under the deal, migrants arriving in Greece are now expected to be sent back to Turkey if they do not apply for asylum or if their claim is rejected. In return, Turkey receives aid and potential concessions on EU visa requirements. Under the agreement, Turkey was promised €6 billion in financial aid, to be used by the Turkish government to finance projects for Syrian refugees. The EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT) has been established, managing a total of €6 billion (€3 billion for 2016-2017 and €3 billion for 2018-2019), provides for a joint coordination mechanism, designed to ensure that the needs of refugees and host communities in Turkey are addressed in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. The Facility focuses on humanitarian assistance, education, migration management, health, municipal infrastructure, and socio-economic support.

[28] UNICEF TCO 2018 Humanitarian Results, December 2018

[29] Evaluation of UNICEF's response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey (2015) (Darcy et al.). https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_86620.html

[30] ***'Currently, over 98 per cent of Syrians under temporary protection live in urban and rural areas, with only less than 2 per cent residing in the seven remaining Temporary Accommodation Centres (TACs). Since 2018, 12 of the 19 TACs have been closed with residents relocating***

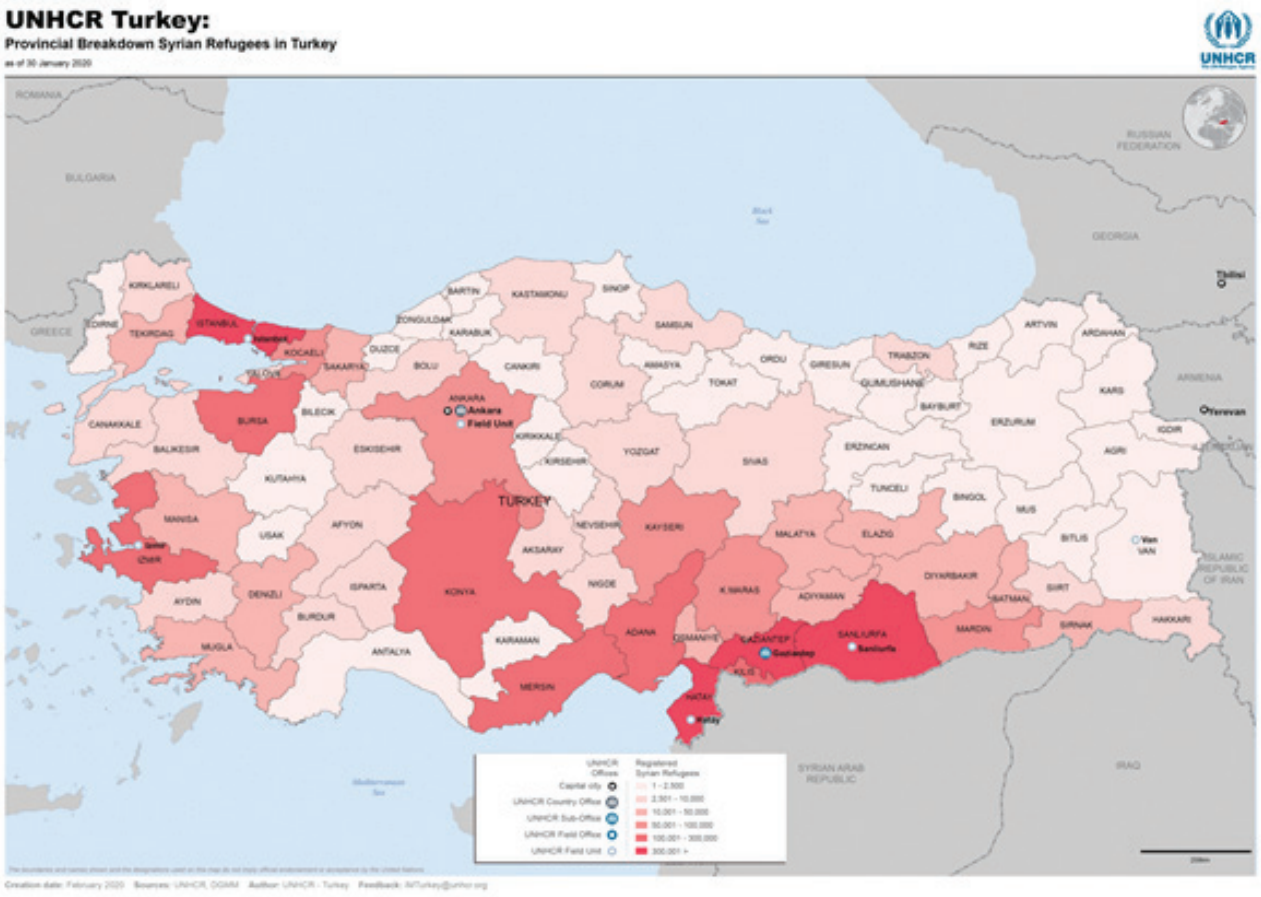

Figure 3: UNHCR map of distribution of Syrian refugees in Turkey (as of January 2020)

As the 2015 evaluation noted, the Turkish government's response – and that of wider Turkish society – has been generous and was initially welcoming. Since, then, numbers of refugees have doubled and the politics and related social attitudes surrounding the refugee influx have become gradually more challenging, even to the point of outright hostility in some quarters. [31] While the status and right to remain of Syrian refugees is protected under the temporary protection legislation,[32] they remain vulnerable in socio-economic terms, especially given their reliance on jobs in the (unregulated) informal economy. Despite the de ***facto*** moves towards integration mentioned above, the general political rhetoric still assumes that Syrians will eventually return home – and indeed the most recent pronouncements by the Government suggest an ambition to promote that process. Meanwhile for the significant numbers of unregistered Syrian refugees (and for other migrants) the climate has become particularly difficult, as evidenced by recent government edicts concerning unregistered refugees and migrants in Istanbul.[33] There appears to be little short to medium-term prospect for the majority of Syrians or other refugee groups of being granted Turkish citizenship,[34] raising questions about their longer-term status in relation to the wider Turkish population.

These factors and indications, of hardening social attitudes in areas of high refugee concentration, raise major issues about social cohesion and the potential for social conflict. As with ethnic minority groups in the Turkish population, issues relating to language and cultural differences compound political tensions, specifically for the refugees around access to services and to the labour market.

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to urban and rural areas or other temporary accommodation centres.' (Source: Strategic Overview Chapter of 2020 / 2021 Turkey Chapter of the 3RP)

[31] Foreign Policy, "Turkey can't host Syrian Refugees forever", August 2019

[32] ***The Law of Foreigners and International Protection (2013), and the Temporary Protection Regulation (2014)***

[33] Reuters New Agency, "Turkey says about 100,000 Syrians left Istanbul since early July", November 20, 2019. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-syria-security-turkey-refugees/turkey-says-about-100000-syrians-left-istanbul-since-early-july-idUSKBN1XU1CV

[34] Interview with UNHCR. While over 100,000 Syrian refugees have reportedly been granted citizenship (see e.g. The Economist, Sept 5 2019- https://www.economist.com/briefing/2019/09/05/turkey-tightens-restrictions-on-syrian-refugees, official figures on this are not available.

2.3 The situation for children in Turkey

Below we present a summary outline of the situation for children in Turkey in relation to the four main components of UNICEF's programme as grouped for the purposes of this evaluation: (i) Child Protection; (ii) Education; (iii) Social Policy, Social Protection and Social Cohesion; and (iv), Child development policy, Child Rights Monitoring and Data Generation. These are intended to provide a summary 'problem statement' to gauge UNICEF's programme interventions over the evaluation period, which are assessed in the following sections of the report.[35]

Child protection

The child protection agenda in Turkey encompasses a range of topics that include care for unaccompanied children, violence against children, child labour, child marriage, gender-based violence and juvenile justice. It also concerns policy and systems as they concern the security and well-being of children, including national child protection and care systems. Refugee children face exceptionally severe threats, (different for boys and girls) including high levels of abuse, child labour and early marriage.

As the CPD 2016-2020 describes, elements of a coordinated national child protection system are in place, including a national strategy and inter-sectoral provincial mechanisms. This includes a National Strategy for the Prevention of Violence against Children. But the CPD (written in 2015) identified weaknesses in the system and the need for remedial action, both regarding Turkish and Syrian children.

Childcare

On the childcare system, the CPD identified the need for ***'further professionalisation in the childcare system and improvements in arrangements for all groups of children living permanently or temporarily without parental care'.*** Despite some progress in this area, significant gaps were identified, including ***'an effective legal guardianship system, a national Best Interest Determination mechanism, more capacity for children with additional needs such as children with disabilities and refugee children, and increased monitoring.'*** Many of those gaps persist in 2019/20.

For children taken into care, the issues identified included legal guardianship, non-residential care options and the shortage of foster families. More generally, in the CPD a lack of professional capacity in the system was identified. For irregular migrants, there were concerns about the lack of alternatives to administrative detention for children and their families and the rights and services for those in detention, and the need for proper age assessment.

Violence against / abuse of children

Cases of missing children, abductions, child rape, child murders, gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual abuse have prompted widespread concern and public condemnation. In July 2018, political parties agreed to support a bill on sexual harassment and abuse. In dialogue with policymakers, concerned UN agencies in Turkey have pointed to the need for more preventive and rehabilitative measures together with awareness-raising. The extent of the problem is unclear: nationally representative survey data to complement administrative statistics are not available.[36] The European Commission Turkey 2019 Report warns that ***'the 2013-2017 national children's rights strategy and action plan has not been renewed, and its implementation is not being closely monitored. A national strategy to prevent violence against children was in place until 2018 but has yet to be updated or renewed. Despite reports of increased sexual abuse and ill-treatment of children, systematic monitoring and research on these issues remain inadequate'.***

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[35] These provide a narrative complement to the outcome baselines in the UNICEF Results Analysis framework (RAM), which are referenced in the following sections.

[36] TurkStat figures show that a total of 122,209 children were received into secure units as victims of crimes or other incidents in 2017, of whom 62.4% were allegedly victims of (non-sexual) assaults and 10.4% of sexual offences.

Justice for children: Children in contact with or in conflict with the law

About half of all children who went on trial over the evaluation period were tried in specialised courts, as a result of the gradual establishment of child courts across the country. But this is very much unfinished business: the majority of children who go on trial – 51.2% in 2016 – are still being tried in non-specialised (i.e., adult) courts. A 2019 report from the European Commission [37] notes that ***"Juvenile courts are still not in place in all provinces, despite the clear wording of the law. The quality of legal aid for juveniles, and rehabilitation activities in prisons are a matter of concern. Closure by the authorities of several civil society organisations dealing with juvenile rights after the state of emergency led to a decrease in civil society support to victims".*** To enhance the use of alternatives to imprisonment, a new risk evaluation system for children on probation was developed and was expected to be rolled-out nationally in 2019.[38]

The 11th National Development Plan (2019-2023), adopted in July 2019, puts significant emphasis on strengthening the juvenile justice system in Turkey. The plan includes preventive and rehabilitative measures, child-specific reconciliation procedures, child-specific judicial protections and alternative procedures, including child-friendly interview procedures.

With regard to children in conflict with the law ('Juvenile Justice' as defined in the related ToC[39]) , few measures are currently in place to try to ensure that juvenile offenders are given a second chance, or indeed to try to divert them from criminal activity in the first place. As noted by UNICEF in 2016[40] ***'While average detention periods have been shortening, detention is not always used as a last resort. Alternatives to trial and detention are not sufficiently available and/or effective, and arrangements for victims are not always child-friendly'. The passing of the new Law on the Amendment of the Criminal Procedural Law and Some Other Laws*** (No: 7188) – something that UNICEF advocated for – the legal and policy framework is now stronger. Yet significant policy and systems gaps remain, and points to a potential expanded agenda for UNICEF, particularly in monitoring implementation.

Child marriage and gender-based violence

Child marriage in Turkey is known to be sufficiently prevalent, particularly among the refugee population, to be of major concern. The recent Turkey Demographic and Health Survey (2018) (TDHS 2018)[41] provides relevant quantitative evidence. Case studies and qualitative research indicate that key drivers of child marriage are socio-economic conditions of refugee children, compounded by social norms and legal loopholes in Turkey and Syria. Other factors include lack of education, and the belief that child marriage is a protection against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The prevalence of SGBV is itself hard to quantify, largely due to under-reporting.[42]

Child marriage is observed to be practised more among refugees, particularly as a coping strategy. The recent TDHS 2018 states that among women in the 20-24 age group, 44.8% marry by age 18 and 9.2% enter marriage before their 15th birthday.[43] In the case of asylum seekers and migrants, there appear to be links to trafficking, polygamy and/or sexual abuse and forced labour.[44]

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[37] EC Turkey 2019 Report https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-turkey-report.pdf
[38] UNICEF Country Office Annual Report 2018
[39] See Annex 4B to the Turkey CPD for 2016-20
[40] In the Country Programme Implementation Strategy drawn up to complement the 2016-20 CPD (as of June 2016)
[41] Turkey: Demographic and Health Survey 2018, Hacettepe University (2019).
[42] In 2015, a total of 24,983 sexual abuse cases were filed by authorities. CPP Updated Note (2017-2010), page 19.
[43] The comparable data for the Turkish population (20-24 age group) are that 14.7% marry by the age of 18, and 2% 'marry' before their 15th birthday. See http://www.hips.hacettepe.edu.tr/tnsa2018/analiz.shtml
[44] Based on a literature review and consultations with experts, stakeholders and NGOs conducted by UNICEF, in collaboration with the Country Result Group of Gender (RG-G). In a survey conducted in 2018 by UN Women and Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM), with 1,291 Syrian women and girls across seven cities, more than half of the participants' age at first marriage was below 18 years old. UN Women & ASAM, (June 2018) "Needs Assessment of Syrian Women & Girls Under Temporary Protection in Turkey."

Government institutions led by the MoFLSS have begun to work more systematically to combat child marriage among refugee and non-refugee children under a strategy drafted for 2018-2023. A UN joint programme led by UNICEF is ongoing to support these efforts.

Child Labour

The Country Programme Document for 2016-2020, drawing on a Child Labour Survey conducted by Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat),[45] describes the persistence of child labour in Turkey, including children working on the street and in small industrial and service enterprises, as well as migratory and seasonal agricultural workers: ***"in 2012, a total of 893,000 children (614,000 boys, 279,000 girls) were engaged in economic activity. This represents 5.9 per cent of children (15.6 per cent of children 15-17 and 2.6 per cent of children 6-14) and shows little sign of improvement since 2006".***[46] Key drivers include the informal economy, household poverty and poor adoption of child-sensitive business principles. It should be noted here that much of the labour undertaken within the household, particularly by girls (e.g. care of elderly/childcare, housework, etc.), goes unrecorded.

With regard to refugee children, although there is little available data, several sources confirm that child labour is widespread among refugee children in Turkey [47]. A monitoring exercise conducted by UNICEF and partners among over 5,000 families (11,444 children, 5-17 years old) in 8 provinces between February and April 2017 suggests that approximately 15% of refugee children are involved in economic activities.[48]

Legislation against child labour still has significant gaps (notably with regards to seasonal agricultural labour [49]) and enforcement of existing laws has been very uneven. In early 2017, a new 'National Programme for Combating Child Labour 2017-2023' was published by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security together with a related Action Plan, and 2018 was declared as a year of struggle against child labour. The plan does not propose specific actions for refugee children, although they are referred to as one of a few vulnerable groups.

Education

The Turkey national education system was restructured in 2012. The duration of compulsory education was extended to twelve years, consisting of four years in primary school, four years in lower secondary (middle school) and four years in upper secondary school (high school) [50]. The normal maximum primary school starting age was lowered to 69 months. Public finance investment on education has increased consequently, per-pupil expenditure increasing in real terms between 2010 and 2015 by more than 50% for secondary education and 25-30% in primary and preschool education. [51] A recent national policy of the Ministry of National Education made at least one year of preschool education compulsory by 2020.

A World Bank policy note of 2011 commented that ***"Turkey's educational system is currently of low quality relative to the growth and competitiveness ambitions of the country and is also significantly more inequitable than most other OECD countries."*** [52]

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[45] 2012 Child Labour Survey by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat). Updated data is expected with the new child labour survey scheduled by TurkStat for the last quarter of 2019

[46] UNICEF Country Programme Document (2016-20)

[47] Key informant interviews Istanbul, Ankara, Gaziantep, Kilis and Adana.

[48] UNICEF Turkey (internal document), Overview of the Situation of Refugee Children in Turkey, January 2019

[49] Seasonal migratory agricultural workers fall outside the coverage of Turkish Labour Law, since the rights and responsibilities in the law only apply to agricultural enterprises that employ more than 50 workers. Turkey lacks labour laws that protect children working in smaller agricultural enterprises.

[50] This is known as the 4+4+4 system.

[51] Education Monitoring Report 2015-16

[52] World Bank. 2011. Improving the quality and equity of basic education in Turkey: challenges and options (English). Washington D.C.: The World Bank.

Despite subsequent investment, the 2016-2020 CPD describes the continuing education challenges facing children in Turkey, including in particular the ***'uneven quality of teaching and shortcomings in school environments'.*** It also notes the uneven access for adolescents to the opportunities such as sports, recreation and social participation outside of school. While quantitative improvements show in enrolment, the length of schooling and teacher numbers are continuing, the Annual Programme of the Government for 2018 also highlighted continuing needs to increase the quality of education, including equal opportunity, teacher qualities, learning environments, curricula and institutional capacity.

In 2019, the education challenges for Turkish children remain largely as described in the CPD, though some progress has been made at least in policy terms. The strategy document ***"For a stronger tomorrow: Education Vision for 2023"*** unveiled by the Ministry of National Education in October 2018, aims to address key aspects related to the quality and inclusiveness of the education system, including addressing disparities in education, student assessment, challenges in vocational and technical high schools, and the need to reinforce learning of contemporary skills and foreign languages. The Vision 2023 document also foresees renewed attention and opportunities for children with disabilities.

The CPD noted that secondary enrolment among girls had increased rapidly but remained noticeably lower in some provinces than for boys. It also noted that enrolment did not necessarily translate into skills acquisition, social participation and empowerment for young women. According to OECD data for 2018, 21.0 percent of women aged 15-19 and 44.8 per cent of women aged 20-24 were not in employment, education or training, compared to 10.2 percent and 17.7 of men. [53]

The education situation for refugee children is considerably worse, though it has improved over the evaluation period. The CPD described Syrian children under temporary protection as being ***'at risk of becoming a lost generation. It is estimated that, as of March 2015, only about a third of the approximately 595,000 school-age Syrian children under temporary protection in Turkey were accessing educational opportunities.'*** That situation has since improved markedly. By the end of 2019, some 684,728 (336,722 girls; 348,006 boys) were enrolled in formal education, representing about 63% of the refugee population in school age.[54] However, despite this progress, about 400,000 refugee children were still out of school, a problem that also affects both Syrian refugees, asylum seekers and migrants of other nationalities.

Access to pre-primary education is still limited (33.9%),[55] and adolescents continue to face challenges in access to education, with a gross enrolment for refugee children in upper-secondary education of 26.8%.[56] Education opportunities for out-of-school refugee children, including Turkish language courses and Accelerated Learning Programmes, are being strengthened with UNICEF's help to respond to the diverse needs of those children.

Since 2016, the Ministry of National Education has adopted a policy of gradually moving refugee children from TEC to Turkish Public Schools.[57] As of end of 2019, about 95% of the Syrian refugee children enrolled in formal education were in Turkish public schools, as compared to 20% three years earlier. [58]

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[53] OECD Data: Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET). https://data.oecd.org/youthinac/youth-not-in-employment-education-or-training-neet.htm

[54] UNICEF Programme Review Report 2018. As at December 2019, according to data from MoNE, 684,728 children (336,722 girls; 348,006 boys) were enrolled in formal education, representing about 63.3% of the refugee population in school age.
These figures reflect the growth in overall refugee numbers over the period.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] UNICEF Programme Review Report 2018

[58] Ibid.

Social Policy, Social Protection and Social Cohesion

According to the recent OECD Family Database, more than 25% of children live in relative poverty in Turkey, compared to the OECD average of 13.4%.[59] This figure relates to the Turkish population; although official statistics are not available for refugee children, the relative poverty rates for refugee children living in Turkey are thought to be especially high. [60]

The Country Programme Document for 2016-2020 (written in 2015) describes the most socio-economically disadvantaged groups including ***children with disabilities, Roma children, as well as children living in locations and provinces most affected by the Syrian influx, child labour and low school participation'.*** The same document describes the challenges facing Syrian refugee children in Turkey as follows: 'Syrian children under temporary protection have an acute need for safe and friendly environments for recreation and socialization, and in many cases require psychosocial support to overcome traumatic experiences and ongoing hardship'. This is supported by independent research findings in the field of forced migration[61]: refugees and asylum seekers face a series of obstacles when it comes to social inclusion in host societies, including legal challenges, negative public opinion, lack of language, lack of information, labour market restrictions and bullying in schools.

An increasing part of the challenge of social cohesion concerns hardening social attitudes of host communities towards refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants. This was highlighted in the results of a survey conducted by World Food Programme (WFP) in July 2018.[62] The results of an earlier Ipsos survey suggested major public concerns about levels of immigration and suspicion concerning the refugee population related to a feared influx of terrorists posing as refugees.

In addition to these surveys, according to a little-publicized report from Turkey's Ombudsman, the Syrian presence is likely to become permanent. The study asserted that ***"it is necessary to produce policies based on [the expectation of] permanence."***[64] It appears that Turkey is at least unofficially aware that the refugee agenda will be a longstanding one. The 2017 Ipsos survey found that 64% of refugees wanted to stay in Turkey, that percentage increasing among young people. There is some anecdotal evidence that in the areas with a high percentage of refugees, significant numbers of Turkish children have been moved from regular public schools into private schools, underscoring fears about social cohesion. [65]

Language remains one of the biggest barriers to social integration between the host and refugee communities. Lack of Turkish language limits refugees' capacity to access help and information, and effectively interact and bond with members of the host community. Misinformation, competition and cultural tensions mean that host community members can be reluctant to interact with newcomers, which often results in the harassment of newly arrived migrants. The situation is likely to be compounded for girls and young women. In order to protect them, families may impose restrictions on their movement, thus limiting their wider participation and access to opportunities for education and work.

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[59] OECD (2018), OECD Family Database, https://www.oecd.org/els/CO_2_2_Child_Poverty.pdf

[60] Available data from the WFP-run ESSN safety-net programme for refugees tends to confirm this. For the third quarter of 2019, WFP reported that ***'Monitoring analysis demonstrated improvement in outcomes among assisted people compared to their situation before they started receiving the ESSN. The trend reversed during the second half of 2018, with deteriorating results brought on by the economic recession and the eroding purchasing power; this deterioration affected food consumption, coping strategy, debt and expenditure results. However, most results are worse for refugees who do not receive the ESSN, which suggests that the assistance is preventing a further deterioration in living standards.'*** WFP – The Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) - July-September 2019.' See link https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000104792/download/

[61] See for example Newmana, A., Bimroseb, J., Nielsenc I. and Zacher H. (2018). Vocational behavior of refugees: how do refugees seek employment, overcome work-related challenges, and navigate their careers? Journal of Vocational Behavior, 105, pp. 1–5. ; Phillimore, J. & Goodson, L. (2006). Problem or opportunity? Asylum seekers, refugees, employment and social exclusion in deprived urban areas. Urban Studies, 43(10), pp. 1715 ff.

[62] World Food Programme, Social Cohesion Online Survey in Turkey (Rounds 1, 2, 3), July 2018, Link.

[63] Global Views on Immigration and the Refugee Crisis, Ipsos (September 2017) Link

[64] T.C Kamu Denetçiliği Kurumu (Ombudsman Iık), "Türkiye'deki Suriyeliler (Syrians in Turkey)",pp: 196-197 https://www.Ombudsman.gov.tr/suriyeliler/files/basic-html/page8.html

[65] Interviews with UNICEF staff in Ankara.

Refugee children report problems of hostility, teasing and beating in the school, which has a negative impact on their school attendance. [66] Since they struggle to find a comfortable place for themselves in Turkish schools, concerns about hostility and difficulties integrating with Turkish classmates inclines a negative impact on Syrian children's attendance rates and also on social inclusion.

Social protection for refugees

With the influx of Syrian refugees to Turkey, an emergency social safety net (ESSN) scheme was launched in 2016, financed with €1.725 billion by the EU and its Member States under the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey – the largest-ever humanitarian aid programme financed by the EU. The ESSN programme was formerly administered by the World Food Programme but has now been transferred to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and is implemented by the Turkish Red Crescent. It works by providing monthly transfers to the most vulnerable refugees via a special debit card, allowing them to purchase essential items.

According to the findings of an internal analysis commissioned by UNICEF on the extension of Conditional Cash Transfers to Syrian refugees (2018)[67], ***'lack of financial means'*** is cited as the principal reason why refugee children do not attend school or drop out of school in Turkey. Many families rely on income from child labour due to the parents' inability to gain a fair wage. Thanks to UNICEF advocacy and funding from the EU and other donors, the national Conditional Cash Transfers for Education scheme was extended to refugee children during the evaluation period.[68]

Child development policy, Child Rights Monitoring (CRM) and Data Generation

Early Childhood Development.

According to TurkStat data from 2017, infant and under-five mortality were 9.2 and 11.2 respectively, per thousand live births, compared to 10.2 and 12.4 in 2015. Even though child mortality continues to decline among the overall Turkish population, regional disparities persist, with the infant mortality rate rising to 10.2 in Southeast Anatolia. The 2013 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) put full immunization coverage at 74.1% and stunting at 9.5%.[69] The 2018 TDHS puts full immunization coverage at 72% and stunting in under-5s at 6%. [70] No representative statistics are publicly available for specific groups of children, although the 2018 TDHS provides data on child health and nutrition for both Turkish and Syrian refugee children.

Attendance at pre-school has been rising but remains relatively low. In the 2017-2018 school year, the net enrolment rate for 3-5year-olds rose from 39.54% to 44.02% in the 2015-2016 school year. Since 2019, it has been compulsory for children in Turkey to have at least one year of pre-school education; but as noted above, this policy has yet to be fully realised in practice.

Overall, while the importance of Early Childhood Development (ECD) is recognized and is becoming a national priority (e.g. in the new National Development Plan), there is still limited coordination on this agenda and a lack of an integrated approach.

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[66] Based on an internal analysis commissioned by UNICEF. See UNICEF 'Voices of Syrian Refugee Children in Turkey'

[67] Ibid.

[68] A provisional assessment of the CCTE scheme and its value is given in section 3 below; but the scheme is due to be fully evaluated in its own dedicated evaluation.

[69] The 2013 DHS put full immunization coverage at 74.1% and stunting at 9.5%. Assuming consistent methodology, this suggests significant progress on nutrition but a concerning lack of progress on immunisation, perhaps related to political turbulence from 2016 onwards.

[70] I.e. 72% of children age 24-35 months had received all basic vaccinations by the time of the survey.

Child rights monitoring

There are insufficient arrangements for child rights monitoring in Turkey. Policy implementation is monitored through mechanisms that often do not hold government agencies accountable and do not support performance improvement. According to the 2015 EU Progress Report on Turkey, ***'the 2013 national children's rights strategy and action plan were not implemented, and the Children's Rights Monitoring and Evaluation Board did not meet'.***[71] The Ombudsman for women's and child rights receives complaints concerning public institutions, but it is not fully independent. The loss of independent civil society capacity to monitor child rights is a significant factor here.

On the availability of data for CRM, this is limited despite the range of actors and processes involved (including TurkStat and the DHS). The MoFLSS, for example, has limited capacity to generate and analyse child protection data, reportedly due, in part, to weak information management systems.[72] UNICEF has had some policy and advocacy successes, including the development and adoption in 2018 of a new Child Rights Strategy by the Ombudsman Institution (OI), and the establishment of a child rights monitoring body in Parliament (the Child Rights Sub-Committee). But real progress has been limited in practice. Restrictions on data collection concerning refugees remain in place, the reach and capacity of the OI are still limited, and the role of civil society organisations in policymaking, monitoring and delivery of services is not properly institutionalised. Other CRM actors such as the National Human Rights Institution have limited leverage, and lack independence.[73]

2.4 The evolution of UNICEF's country programme

The volatile and rapidly evolving nature of the political, security and social context in Turkey, over the evaluation period, raises questions about the effective evolution of a strategy that was originally designed in 2015. This question is considered in more detail in the next section. Here we sketch the evolution of the programme and consider its breakdown by sector and growth in budgetary terms over the evaluation period.

For much of the period under review (up until March 2018), the refugee situation in Turkey along with the rest of the regional Syria crisis response constituted an L3 corporate emergency priority for UNICEF. Unlike most other parts of the region, however, the government in Turkey took full ownership and leadership of the refugee response; and the role of international actors has consequently been largely an auxiliary one, and somewhat different in nature to that elsewhere in the region. Many of UNICEF's normal International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) partners have struggled to find an effective role for themselves in Turkey; with the result that UNICEF's portfolio of implementing partnerships looks rather different to that in comparable contexts.

UNICEF's programme is aligned with the development co-operation framework agreed between the Government of Turkey and the UN System in Turkey in December 2015,[74] as well as with the UN-sponsored Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan for the Syria Crisis ('the 3RP'). Among its sister UN agencies present in Turkey, the agendas addressed by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Women and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have had a substantial overlap with that of UNICEF. As well as general coordination and alignment of UN agency programmes under the Un Development Cooperation Strategy (UNDCS), UNICEF has collaborated with other UN agencies on a number of specific agendas. These include cross-agency initiatives like that on social cohesion, and more specific areas of work such as with International Labour Organization (ILO) on child labour, and on child early and forced marriage with UNFPA, UN Women, UNHCR and International Organization for Migration (IOM).

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[71] https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2015/20151110_report_turkey.pdf
[72] Key informant interviews, Ankara
[73] Theory of Change – Quality of Evidence
[74] See United Nations Development Cooperation Strategy (UNDCS) 2016-2020. Since the agreement of the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UN framework has been re-designated the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), replacing the earlier UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) model. A new UNSDCF for Turkey is due to be drafted to follow on from the existing UNDCS.

Beyond these initiatives exist a range of other forms of collaboration and harmonisation of approaches, for example through technical working groups at the UNCT/ UNDCS or 3RP levels[75], as well as collaboration with NGO networks and coalitions on specific topics such as Violence Against Children and Children with Disabilities.

Before the emergence of the refugee crisis since 2012, UNICEF's programme in Turkey was a relatively modest, policy-focused one. UNICEF's programme grew dramatically in response to the escalating influx of (mainly Syrian) refugees, from an operation with 56 staff members and a budget of USD 35 million in 2014, to one of 122 staff members and a budget of USD 205 million at the end of 2019. UNICEF's programme has since combined a substantial component of direct support to service delivery (particularly in the education sector) with strong policy advocacy and technical advisory roles, largely focused on the central ministries in Ankara except increasingly involving engagement with provincial and municipal authorities. The pre-existing relationships with the Ministries of National Education and Ministry of Family and Social Policy (and later MoFLSS) provided a strong platform for scaling up of support to government. While UNICEF's range of potential NGO partners shrank during the evaluation period (for reasons outlined above), it built strong working relationships with some of the larger NGOs like the Turkish Red Crescent, Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers & Migrants (ASAM) and Support to Life.

From the government's perspective, UNICEF offered technical and policy expertise that its own ministry staff at times lacked (along with the rapid staff turnover) as well as access to considerable donor funds. In this regard, given its breadth of sectoral involvement and long-standing relationships with the relevant ministries, UNICEF was able to play a role unlike that of any other UN agency. As we explore in this evaluation, its added value appears to lie to a significant degree in its ability to work with and across different government bodies, locally as well as nationally.

For the most part, UNICEF's collaboration with government bodies have been structured around annual 'rolling work plans', based on support to the relevant areas of government policy, with each party's responsibilities articulated along with a related budget. These are agreements to work together on a common agenda, and they provide a platform for dialogue and for monitoring progress.

One major challenge for UNICEF over the evaluation period was to effectively combine a major crisis response based on service delivery with more system- and policy based approach to the wider issues affecting children's development and well-being in Turkey. This it has consciously tried to do by incorporating the refugee response into the wider country programme. In following sections, we review how well this integrated approach was achieved in practice. Some of the related humanitarian-development 'nexus' issues are considered in section 5 below.

The 2018 COAR reflects the attempt to balance the potentially competing priorities involved: ***'This year, UNICEF Turkey continued to maintain a balance between addressing the specific and urgent needs of refugee children and working to uphold the rights of all vulnerable children in the country. The humanitarian response is fully integrated in the Country Programme and refugee and migrant children are seen as one of the vulnerable groups of children who are at risk of being left behind – albeit a group which remains very large and continues to face particular vulnerabilities.'***

The integration of the humanitarian and development strands of UNICEF's programme in the 2016-2020 CPD reflected a determination to take a system-strengthening approach to what has increasingly become a chronic situation for the refugees – and reflected the Government's own de facto approach to integrating refugee service provision into mainstream services, most notably in education. The evaluation considers the merits of this decision, and whether the system-strengthening approach has worked.

[75] UNICEF chairs the Results Group of the UNDCS (Social Inclusion) and the Monitoring for Strategic Results Working Group.

In terms of geographic coverage, UNICEF adopted a dual approach. For programmatic areas targeting Turkish and refugee children primarily based on the system-strengthening approach, the geographic coverage has been generally national (all 81 provinces). For programmatic areas targeting primarily refugees and largely based on service delivery type of interventions (school construction, community-based child protection services, winterization, etc.), the geographic focus has been largely on the 20 provinces with the highest concentration of refugees. Where possible, even in these programmatic areas the coverage has been national – for example with the Conditional Cash Transfer Education (CCTE) and Syrian Volunteer Education Personnel (SVEP) programmes that have 'service delivery' aspects but have nationwide coverage.

Total programme expenditure and relative expenditure across different programme components are shown in Figures 4 and 5 below. Two aspects stand out in particular. One is the expansion of the programme scale as shown in Figure 4: major growth from 2013, fuelled by the emergency response to the Syrian refugee influx, and accelerated growth from 2016-2019.

The second feature of the expenditure data is the dominance of certain programme components (Figure 5), particularly education work (predominantly refugee / access-related), which constitutes around 60% of programme expenditure over the CPD period to date.[76] Child protection (predominantly community-based) constitutes around 15% over the same period, while Equitable Chance in Life (dominated by social protection for refugees) constitutes around 18%.

Figure 4: Growth in annual UNICEF programme expenditure in Turkey (USD) 2013 to 2019 [77]

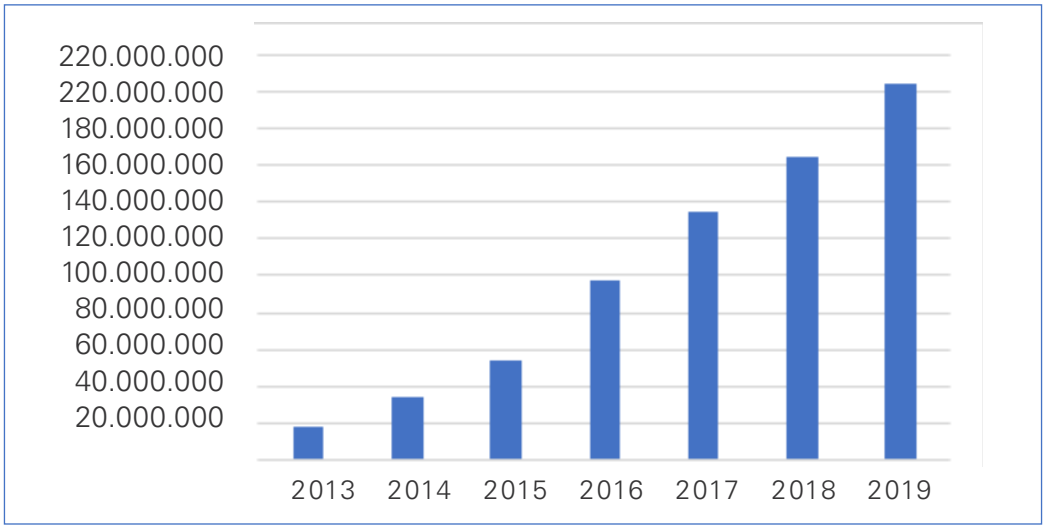
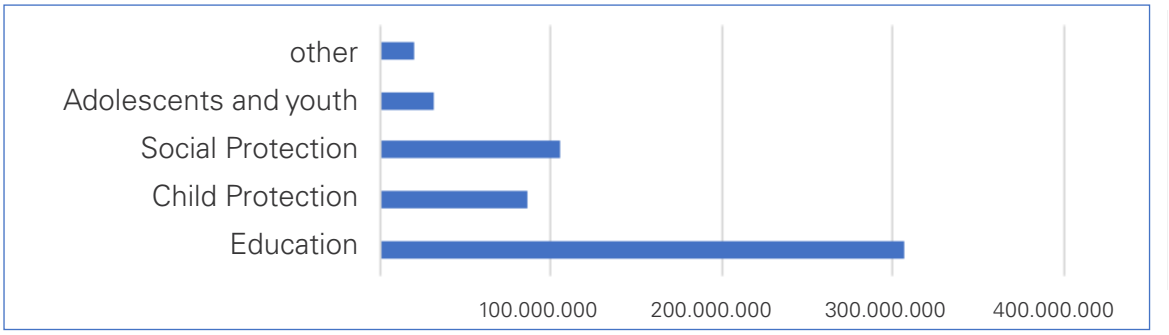


Figure 5: UNICEF programme expenditure (USD) by sector Jan 2016 to end Dec 2019



[76] Since much of this is made up of funding for cash distributions (under CCTE and Syrian volunteer incentive payment schemes), this perhaps gives a slightly misleading picture of the balance of effort for the programme overall.

[77] Charts based on data in the COAR for 2019.

3. UNICEF's programme as a whole: relevance, strategy and logic

In this section, we assess the overall rationale for the UNICEF programme in Turkey as articulated in the CPD for 2016-2020 and related documents. This includes questions about the relevance of its stated priorities, given the priority needs of children and existing policy commitments; and the cogency and logic of the strategy adopted to address those priorities. In the next section we consider these questions in more detail regarding the four main programme components. Here we consider the country programme, and in particular the theory of change and related results framework against which UNICEF monitors its progress in Turkey.

It should be noted that much of what is said here concerning UNICEF's results framework, and the way in which 'outputs' and 'results' are understood, relates to UNICEF globally as much as it does specifically to UNICEF in Turkey – see below.

UNICEF's relevance in Turkey

As noted in the previous section, the rapidly evolving nature of the context in Turkey over the evaluation period raises questions about the ongoing relevance of a strategy that was originally designed in 2015. The question of relevance must be considered in a wider context. UNICEF's response to the situation in Turkey, as set out in the 2016-2020 CPD and related documents, has reflected both the nature of the Turkish context and UNICEF's global priorities under successive corporate strategic plans. It has been aligned with the Government of Turkey's national priorities as set out in the 10th National Development Plan (now superseded by the 11th Plan) and the UNDCS for Turkey. It has also been aligned with the '3RP' framework concerning Syrian refugees in the region. New global and national strategic frameworks have come into force since the CPD was developed, including the SDGs and the Agenda 2030, the Global agenda on Migration, the 2018-2021 UNICEF Strategic Plan & the Gender Action Plans (2014-2017 and 2018-2021). With respect to the ongoing refugee crisis, the response to which constitutes a substantial part of UNICEF's work in Turkey, the country programme has also had to meet UNICEF's own Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action.[78]

Particularly in the earlier stages of the evaluation period (2016-2017), UNICEF was quite heavily involved in humanitarian service provision, notably in the construction of temporary schools and the distribution of school supplies. However, this should be qualified. Although categorised along with the wider Syrian regional response as a corporate L3 emergency priority until 2018, the refugee response in Turkey has been an unusual one for UNICEF, as it has been for UNHCR. There has been relatively little need for involvement in the 'child survival' sectors (health, WASH, nutrition), since the Turkish state has essentially taken care of most refugee needs in those sectors, either through provision in camps or through allowing refugees access to the relevant services in (mainly urban) host communities. As the 2015 evaluation of the earlier UNICEF refugee response found,[79] UNICEF was right to decide not to engage substantially in these areas of work given existing government capacities.[80] Nothing found during the present evaluation would contradict that view, or would suggest that UNICEF should now seek to expand its role in health, WASH or nutrition.[81]

From the outset of the refugee crisis, UNICEF's role has been largely concentrated on ensuring that refugee children had access to education, and on protecting them from the particular vulnerabilities associated with life in exile – sometimes a heightened form of previously existing domestic threats, sometimes relating to the refugee context. This includes a range of child protection threats, from GBV and child marriage to child labour and exploitation.

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[78] 'The CCCs', UNICEF 2010. See link. These are currently under revision.
[79] Evaluation of UNICEF's response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey (2015) (Darcy et al.)
[80] UNICEF did play an important role in relation to immunisation campaigns (ibid).
[81] One possible exception to this is a possible advisory role on nutrition in relation to early childhood development (ECD).

One challenge in locating this humanitarian role within the wider country programme has been that of timeframes. Strengthening national and local systems to cover the needs of all children in Turkey (Turkish, refugee and other) made sense as an approach, particularly given the government's own strategy of integration. But attempting to meet acute needs through such an approach sometimes results in what we describe as a ***temporal disconnect*** [82]: it takes time to strengthen and expand systems to cover new needs, and meanwhile acute needs can go unmet. UNICEF was not blind to this problem. One example of how it attempted to compensate was the focusing of initiatives like the community-based child protection programme around refugee needs in the first instance, before expanding them to cover gaps left by existing systems for Turkish children. In the process of doing so, UNICEF has been able to shed light on gaps or weaknesses in existing systems and to focus its system-strengthening efforts accordingly.

Overall, the evaluation finds that UNICEF has successfully applied humanitarian-development 'nexus' thinking to its programme in Turkey. In the process, it has designed some creative and innovative approaches to addressing the challenges involved, which provide useful lessons for others in UNICEF working in UMIC contexts.[83]

As the analysis of specific programme components in the next section shows, the overall conclusion of the evaluation regarding the relevance of UNICEF's role, approach and strategy is a positive one. UNICEF did well, both in the original formulation of its approach in the CPD and through subsequent adaptions, to define and maintain a highly relevant role for itself in Turkey at a time of major political, social and institutional upheaval. That role has appropriately reflected its mandate, policy priorities and comparative advantage in this context; and has been consistent with the wider UN approach as defined both in the UNDCS and in the '3RP'. UNICEF has built on and deepened relationships with central government bodies while taking steps to strengthen relations with provincial and municipal authorities in key areas of the country. Here it has played a role that perhaps no other international organisation could play in working across sectors and ministries, and in helping bridge the gap between national, provincial and local layers of government.

Much remains to be done in this respect. UNICEF needs to maintain and strengthen working relationships with the relevant government ministries and departments in Ankara; but also to work beyond Ankara and build on the existing working relationships with local authorities, not just in the south east of the country but more widely across the most deprived areas of the country. That requires a consistency of engagement with local actors, including civil society networks, that is a challenging but necessary part of this 'outreach' approach. Given the potential scale of such work, this will require a targeted approach based on levels of child vulnerability and opportunities for progress.

Finally under this heading, we note that the question of relevance depends on an understanding of children's priority needs and of the role that UNICEF could best play in helping to meet those needs. This in turn is related to the question of how well informed the programme has been by reliable evidence about needs, and this issue is considered in section 4 below.

The programme structure and logic

In seeking to address the priority issues facing girls and boys in Turkey (Turkish and other), UNICEF defined four Outcomes in the CPD (see Figure 2 above) to which the country programme is designed to contribute, based on the progressive realisation of rights. Related to this, and seen as key intermediate steps, are a series of Outputs that the programme is intended to help deliver, relating to the removal of key bottlenecks and barriers to progress. A range of implementation or change strategies by which these will be achieved is articulated in the strategy.

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[82] This concept is explored further in section 6 below.
[83] On the 'nexus' issue, see further section 5 below.

The ET found the country programme ***structure*** difficult to follow. The framework of outcomes and outputs is designed to stress cross-sectoral linkages, but the result is rather confusing (certainly to an outside audience) and appears unbalanced across the four outcomes. Most of the work is grouped under Outcome One, which is very broadly framed; and the links between the related outputs are not clear. More problematically, the stated 'Outputs' in the CPD are really more in the nature of 'sub-outcomes', because they represent something over which UNICEF has limited control (see below).

The evaluation concludes that for the new CPD for 2021-2025, a structure that more clearly links UNICEF interventions with outcomes and sub-outcomes is needed. That structure also needs to make clearer the links between the interventions in question, to show the coherence and inter-connectedness of the component parts of the programme. The present structure, dictated in part by the need to align with UNICEF global frameworks, does not quite achieve that.

The overall ***logic*** for the country programme is set out in an overarching ToC annexed to the CPD; and the logic of some (though not all) of the related programme components is spelled out in separate theories of change. [84] Figure 6 below illustrates the overarching logic of the programme.

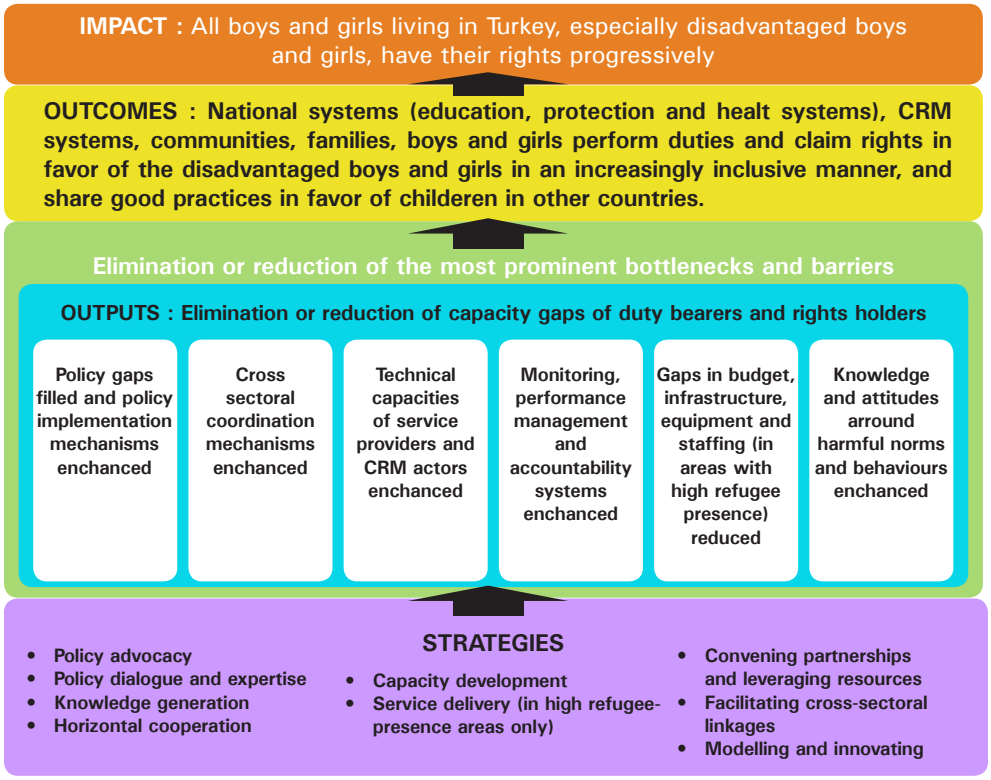

Figure 6: Graphic of Overarching Theory of Change for Country Programme 2016-2020 [85]

The outcomes that UNICEF seeks to advance are ones over which it has limited influence, and the question is how to maximise that influence. The logic of the 2016-2020 CPD,[86] involves the attempt to remove key barriers to progress on achieving fulfilment of child rights. This is consistent with the Monitoring Results for Equity Systems (MoRES) approach, which aims to 'identify barriers, bottlenecks and enabling factors which either constrain or advance the achievement of desired outcomes for disadvantaged children'.[87] The barriers in question may be at the policy, systems or implementation levels, often involving lack of resources or necessary skills and knowledge.

[84] These are considered in section 4 below.
[85] Annex 1 to the CPD 2016-2020
[86] As set out in the 'Overarching Theory of Change' in Annex 1 of the 2016-20 CPD.
[87] MoRES Briefing Note, UNICEF February 2013. According to the briefing note, MoRES *'builds on the existing human rights based approach to programming and is intended to enhance and sharpen country programmes of cooperation for accelerated results for the most disadvantaged children.'*

Sometimes the barriers involve lack of relevant data on which to base policy, adapt systems or strengthen implementation. Sometimes they involve prevailing social norms and harmful practices, particularly around gender roles. These factors are analysed in broad terms in the overarching ToC, but in much more detail in the sector specific ToCs.

The evaluation found the logic of UNICEF's approach to be essentially sound, both overall and by sector. But it depends to a high degree on the quality of the evidence and analysis underpinning it – and this is something that requires re-assessment as the context evolves. UNICEF has been stronger in this regard in some programme components than in others, but overall it has done well to maintain and update the analysis given the turbulence of the context and the constraints on evidence and data gathering.[88]

The graphic in Figure 6 gives a sense of the overall logic of the programme. It combines the common elements linking the more detailed sectoral ToCs and shows the way in which UNICEF in Turkey has aligned its programme with the corporate strategic plan(s). The ToC is supplemented by a CPD implementation strategy as well as sector specific ToCs [89] which contain much more detailed analysis. While these appear to the ET to be generally cogent, they contain one common flaw: the ***assumptions*** and ***risks*** involved are at best only sketched and they are not properly analysed. This includes assumptions about UNICEF capacity (including funding), government receptivity to policy advocacy, and about the feedthrough of enhanced policies and systems to better outcomes for children. As we discuss further in section 6 below, this last assumption cannot be assumed to hold true, since policies have not always been uniformly implemented and systems have not always delivered, particularly for the most disadvantaged.

The evaluation found some common issues across the different programme components regarding target setting and prioritization. In many cases, it is not clear from this or the ToCs how targets were set or how they relate to the locus or scale of need. UNICEF sometimes reports absolute numbers (e.g. of children reached with a service) without stating the proportion reached of those assessed to be in need, making it hard to assess the proportionality of the response.[90] In the absence of more information about the rationale for the targets set, the evaluators had to assume that they were based to a large degree on UNICEF's estimate of its own or the system's capacity to deliver, especially where the baseline (e.g. for children receiving a service) is zero. Target (non-)achievement therefore often tells us little other than how accurate that assessment proved to be, and whether the (implicit) assumptions about delivering on the target held true in the event. As a result, quantitative analysis of % target achieved was found to be of limited value in this context, and the programme component results reported in section 4 should be interpreted with some caution.

Assessing UNICEF's impact and programme performance

The intended Outcomes of UNICEF's work in Turkey are ones over which UNICEF has limited – but potentially significant – influence on. They are aligned with UNICEF global priorities and are tracked through outcome indicators in the RAM monitoring framework. Reported changes in outcome indicators to the end of 2019 show significant progress in some areas. [91] These are not 'results' in the usual sense, since any changes at this level cannot be assumed to be the result of UNICEF interventions. But the analysis of the output indicators in section 4 below suggests that UNICEF has made a substantial contribution to changes in some of the key underlying factors.

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[88] See further section 4 below

[89] Implementation Strategy for the Turkey – UNICEF Country Programme 2016-2020, June 2016 (internal document)

[90] This seems to be driven in part by the requirement to use standard indicators, either to align with UNICEF global practice or with other agreed reporting frameworks such as those for the UNDCS or the 3RP. In particular, the formula '# of children reached with services' or its equivalent is common both in UNICEF's own global indicators and in the humanitarian 3RP indicators.

[91] See Annex D for an extract from RAM showing movement against outcome indicators to the end of 2019

UNICEF country offices are required to align their results monitoring (RAM) frameworks with UNICEF and UN-wide global and regional frameworks (standard goals, indicators etc.). At the top level, these involve standardised high-level goals and related indicators, progress against which can in theory be aggregated globally; but which do not always have clear relevance to the national context, particularly a UMIC one like Turkey. The result is at times uneasy to compromise between an effective and relevant national-level performance management framework and a globally and regionally aligned set of reporting indicators. The problem is heightened in the Turkey case by the juxtaposition of humanitarian and development targets and indicators within the same strategy and monitoring framework.

The evaluation concludes that a better way of meeting these two requirements needs to be found for the new CPD.

The challenge of assessing UNICEF's effectiveness relates in part to the framing of the programme Outputs. As noted above, the stated 'Outputs' in the current frameworks are not outputs as normally understood but are more in the nature of sub-outcomes. The result is that there is a missing step in the logic, connecting what UNICEF ***does*** with what result it is seeking to achieve. This in turn makes gauging effectiveness difficult, and it also means that the framework does not provide a solid basis for accountability and learning. The TCO has been somewhat constrained in this regard by the need to be consistent with UNICEF global guidelines, including those for choice of indicators for the RAM data framework. [92] But the evaluation concludes that in drawing up the new CPD for 2021-2025, the TCO needs to find a way of better articulating this link between sub-outcome and the outputs over which UNICEF has control (such as delivery of training or provision of technical advice).

This matters not least for performance management and programme adaptation. As currently formulated, it would be hard to determine whether the failure to achieve a stated 'Output' (or sub-outcome) was a consequence of UNICEF or its partners failing to properly deliver the requisite contribution, or to a fault in the programme logic, or to some external factors over which UNICEF had no control over. More generally, the four specified outcomes depend on multiple factors for their achievement, of which UNICEF's interventions are only one part; raising the question of contribution to change rather than direct attribution of results. While this is quite normal, particularly in upper middle-income countries, the relatively weak articulation of the link between what UNICEF has done and the achievement or non-achievement of outcomes makes UNICEF's distinctive contribution and role harder to assess.

There is a related problem of assessing change at the outcome level. The Outputs (or sub-outcomes) specified in the CPD are largely framed in terms of 'increased capacity' of systems and organisations to fulfil their designated purpose. But increased capacity must be gauged against improved system or organisational performance, and it is not always clear how such improvement is to be measured. Coverage and quality of services delivered are clearly key measures, but the baselines against which to measure change are (in many cases) uncertain.

The UNICEF TCO has progressively adjusted many of the output indicators over time to better reflect the relevant challenges, and to align with other monitoring frameworks like that for UNDCS. We consider this in more detail in section 4. Here we note that, while such changes may have been warranted to ensure that the relevant factors were being monitored over time, the result is that there is a significant degree of discontinuity in the accountability path and limits on the extent to which inter-year comparisons can be made.

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[92] Many of the Output indicators are set by UNICEF globally, aligned to the global strategic plan. These may be adapted to the local context and aligned with the UNDCS indicators, as well as with the CCCs and UNICEF's Humanitarian Performance Monitoring indicators, as appropriate.

Many of UNICEF's objectives (particularly those relating to systems, or to changing attitudes and harmful social practices) are medium- to long-term by nature; and here the question is whether UNICEF is able to show that it helped make progress towards the ultimate goal. Given the logic underpinning the programme and its component parts, assessing effectiveness depends on the availability of adequate data on changes in the related outcome indicators [93], and on being able to demonstrate with reasonable confidence some causal link to UNICEF's interventions. This UNICEF has been able to do only to a limited extent. There is a spectrum here: the more direct, 'service delivery' type interventions involve a relatively short causal chain between input, output and outcome. Here the case for effectiveness is relatively easier to make, although (as the CCTE case demonstrates) this is not always straightforward. In other cases, particularly for the more upstream policy and systems-related work, the causal chain is longer, the contributory factors are multiplied and so the question of effectiveness is more complex. This largely reflects the differences between trying to gauge the effectiveness of humanitarian and developmental interventions.

What UNICEF has been able to do more consistently is to point to its contribution to the achievement of proximate goals (e.g. specific policy or systems changes) that might reasonably be expected to contribute to the desired outcome. Here the essential challenge is a 'reality check' one, testing the real-world outcomes that the programme logic assumes. How do we know that children have actually benefited in the ways intended? And if they have not, what changes to policy or implementation might enable that benefit to be realised? We say more about this reality check function in section 6 below.

In the following section, we consider the achievement of proximate goals; in other words, the delivery of outputs and their more immediate effects (actual or presumed) on the related outcomes for children.

[93] This assumes that the indicators chosen to provide a sound basis for gauging progress towards the intended outcomes. This has been difficult to evaluate, as the rationale for the choice of indicators is not generally given.

4. Evaluating the components of UNICEF's programme

4.1 Introduction

As noted in section 1 above, for the purposes of structuring our analysis, we divide the programme into four thematically linked components that combine elements from across the defined programme Outcomes and Outputs.[94] These components are as follows:

(i) Child Protection
(ii) Education
(iii) Social Policy, Social Protection and Social Cohesion
(iv) Child development policy, Child Rights Monitoring and Data Generation

The context related to each of these components is described in the previous section, along with UNICEF's overall response. Here we consider the specific components of that response in terms of their rationale, relevance to needs, effectiveness and sustainability.

4.2 UNICEF's child protection response

UNICEF's programme response to the child protection context described in section 2 can be divided into four main sub-components, as follows:

CP.1 Strengthening the national social care and child protection systems (Outputs 1.J, 3B)
Aim: The child protection system, including Psychosocial support (PSS) services, has increased capacity to detect, refer, assess, prevent and manage cases of children in need of protection, including at municipal & community level.

CP2. Community-based child protection services (Output 1.C)
Aim: Enhanced capacity to deliver CP services at community level in refugee-hosting areas (e.g. Kilis), including PSS, assessment, referral, GBV. Partnership with municipalities on child marriage.

CP.3 Strengthening justice system capacities for children (Output 1.E)
Aim: The justice and protection systems have increased capacity to provide children and adolescents in contact with the law with a second chance.

CP.4 Strengthening national systems for child rights monitoring and redress (CRM), and for generating and using child-related data and evidence (Outputs 2.A, 2B)
Aim: Relevant line ministries, TurkStat, National Human Rights and Equality Institution (NHREI) and CSOs have increased capacity to generate and use quality and disaggregated evidence about children for monitoring, reporting and advocacy.

Following the 2018 Programme Review, this structure was slightly modified by separating national CP system strengthening and community-based child protection services (now Outputs 1J and 1C, respectively). Child labour, while it constitutes a child protection issue, does not sit within this structure, and is dealt with as part of the 'social policy' portfolio. The child rights monitoring and redress agenda (CP 4 above) is also treated separately in this evaluation, given its application across the whole spectrum of child-related concerns.

[94] In doing so, we sometimes diverge from the terminology used in the country programme. See Box 1 above on definitions.

Child protection programme strategy and logic

The aims that UNICEF set for itself on child protection are summarised above. The means by which it has attempted to reach those ends, and the logic connecting the means and ends, are described in a series of related theories of change. The evaluation found that the strategy was built on a reasonably strong logic of programme intervention. A number of specific ToCs underpin this area of work [95] and an overall child protection theory of change was developed in 2017. [96] While these ToCs are strong on the analysis of bottlenecks and barriers, the links between the related goals and the proposed strategies are only partly articulated; and like the overarching programme ToC, they do not articulate the conditions that need to be met for the logic of intervention to be valid (the assumptions stated relate only to adverse prevailing contextual factors).

Despite these caveats, the evaluation concludes that the essential logic of the child protection programme held true throughout the evaluation period, thanks in part to the timely adjustment of the programme to the evolving context. As noted above, UNICEF adapted the original Output 1C, and it was also able to readjust the mix of change strategies as the operating environment became more challenging. In particular, the shrinking operating space for civil society organisations and limited ability of INGOs to operate effectively in Turkey required UNICEF to consolidate its partner portfolio, and to look for new kinds of partnership – including with municipalities and with the private sector. [97]

The only programmatic area that does not have a clearly articulated ToC is that linked to the National Child Care and Child Protection Systems and this appears to be reflected in the rather fragmented engagement with the MoFLSS (i.e. the almost exclusive focus on foster care, case management and outreach programmes – ASDEP). To be fully developed this ToC, requires a thorough analysis of the child protection needs and vulnerabilities in the country – something that is currently hampered by the lack of evidence and restrictions on evidence generation. It also needs a thorough analysis of the current legislation, policies, regulations and social welfare workforce in order to identify factors that hamper the realisation of children's rights. Indeed, the latter is one of the priority actions identified by the 2018 Programme Review for the upcoming programming period.

Child protection programme relevance

The evaluation found that overall, the child protection component of UNICEF's programme was and has remained largely relevant to the priority child protection needs of vulnerable boys and girls in Turkey, as outlined in section 2 above. [98]The programme underwent a fundamental review within the Country Programme Review process (November 2018- February 2019). Child Protection programme priorities were realigned to the changes in the evolving political and institutional context, and new priority actions were identified to better enable the achievement of programme aims.

The decision to split the original Output 1C into two separate outputs (one for Community Based Child Protection mechanisms and one for strengthening national child protection systems) reflects the fact that while integration of national systems and local mechanisms remains the goal – notably through the ASDEP – that integration has not yet been achieved in reality.

This is a good example of how the programme was able to remain relevant to the current protection needs of the most vulnerable girls and boys while incorporating a national and longer-term perspective. While continuing to provide services to the most vulnerable, UNICEF has increasingly invested in supporting child protection system strengthening.

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[95] See UNICEF ToCs for Child Protection for refugee children; Access to Justice; Child Marriage; CCTE Cash and CP components. All updated as of November 2017

[96] Contained in the document Child Protection Programme: Updated programming note (2017-2020), sub-titled ***Strategic Notes for the Child Protection Programme for the period 2017-2020 (May 2017)***

[97] UNICEF 2017 Annual Report

[98] The evaluation draws its conclusions on this issue and on the effectiveness and sustainability of the child protection programme following interviews with staff from the TCO CP Section and SP and PM&E team, and a review of documents including UNICEF SitAn 2014; UNICEF SitAn 2017; IOD PARC "Evaluation of the Community-based Child Protection Services in response to the Syria Refugee Crisis in Turkey (January 2016-January 2019)-Final Report" October 2019; UNICEF Programme Review Report 2018; and Amendments to CPD Results Framework after 2018 Programme Review.

Over the evaluation period, UNICEF also re-focused its child protection implementation modalities. An example is the expansion of outreach efforts to ensure that the most vulnerable refugee children and their families can be identified, assessed and referred to specialized services through strengthening the inter-face between CSOs and government authorities (ASDEP), establishing adequate referral pathways and coordination mechanisms. Another example is the provision of legal aid mechanisms for refugee children and their families.

In a wider policy perspective, UNICEF's child protection work is consistent with key priorities for children established in the Eleventh National Development Plan for Turkey (2019-2023), including child protection and care and justice for children. The programme is also relevant and contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals 5 (Gender Equality), 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). The Community Based Child Protection component is relevant to the priorities identified for refugee children by the 3RPs.

UNICEF's focus within the child protection agenda was appropriately balanced between strengthening national systems and community-based services, the latter initially focused on refugee children. The evaluation found that this balance, and its evolution over the CPD period, was generally an appropriate one. Within the choice of priority child protection agendas, target setting was also found to have been generally appropriate,[99]although here (as elsewhere in the programme) the overall aim of 'system strengthening' plus movement of related outcome indicators against baseline figures is often too broad to be useful as a basis for monitoring progress and performance management against UNICEF activities. The lack of key data on child protection compounded this problem.

The overall goal of childcare and child protection system strengthening involves the entire child welfare system – and that system has crucial linkages with education, social policy, justice, health and other services. Within this picture, UNICEF focused on foster care, case management and outreach programmes (ASDEP), and this appears a reasonable decision. The lack of a clear picture on child protection needs in the country, and variable capacity within the MoFLSS, has constrained the coherence of UNICEF's approach towards the Ministry. That collaboration is still fragmented and needs to develop in a more consistent way. The evaluation concludes that UNICEF did what it could in this regard, given that the MoFLSS underwent a major restructuring in 2018. In this picture, it made sense for UNICEF to continue collaborating with MoFLSS on priority areas agreed with the Ministry while advocating for more strongly evidence-based programming.[100] We suggest that in the next CPD, a more holistic approach is warranted that draws the necessary links between the services listed here.

CP programme results and effectiveness

Overall, the evaluation found that UNICEF has made a substantial contribution to national system strengthening for child protection and childcare. The Outcome Indicators (see Annex D) which are aligned with UNICEF global indicators do not properly reflect this, but the more specific 'Output' indicators in Box 2 below give a fuller picture of progress achieved in key areas over the past few years – even if the extent of the contribution of UNICEF to that progress is difficult to gauge. UNICEF needs to continue to support the government's efforts in this regard, particularly on the social services workforce. UNICEF did well in supporting the complementary local systems for refugee child protection, which need now to be more strongly linked to the national systems. Below, we consider some of the sub-components of this work.

[99] UNICEF SitAn 2014; UNICEF SitAn 2017; IOD PARC "Evaluation of the Community-based Child Protection Services in response to the Syria Refugee Crisis in Turkey (January 2016-January 2019)-Final Report" October 2019. For Community-Based Child Protection Services, estimation of needs and targets for child protection, psychosocial support and gender-based violence are made within the 3RP process and based on the joint UN and partners situation analysis. Sources: Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019; KII with UNICEF CP section staff, UNHCR and partner NGOs.

[100] KII with MoFLSS, UNICEF staff and Turkish Red Crescent

Box 2: Child Protection: Summary of reported progress against Output indicators to end 2019

(Source: CPD 2016-20 RAM Monitoring Framework: 2019 Progress-Final)

Output 1C: Community-based child protection

- Refugee and host children assessed by community-based actors (81% of target achieved in 2019 – NB much more ambitious target set for 2020)
- Targeted PSS (161% of target achieved)
- Children on the move receiving protective services (127% of target achieved)

Output 1J: National child protection and care system strengthening

- Number of refugee and host community children assessed for protection needs by State-coordinated outreach teams (substantial progress reported, though short of target)
- Child Protection System has both preventative and responsive services available and there is a framework for coordination (progress against target not given)
- An alternative care policy in line with the 2009 Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children is available in the country (significant progress reported towards 2020 target)

Output 3B: Enhanced capacity to address GBV and child marriage

- Refugee women and children receive GBV-related support through UNICEF-supported programmes (158% of target achieved)
- Number of adolescent girls receiving prevention and care interventions to address child marriage through UNICEF-supported programmes (132% of target achieved)

National childcare and child protection systems

UNICEF's aim under this heading was that the child protection system, including PSS programmes, should have 'increased capacity to detect, refer, assess, prevent and manage cases of children in need of protection'. This appears to have substantially helped achieve, and the target on PSS has more than been met (see Box 2). Policy and implementation mechanisms (regulatory frameworks; SOPs) were strengthened to promote care reforms with emphasis on alternative care. However, efforts still need to be made to ensure that the Alternative Care Policies are consistently implemented throughout the country. [101]

Some 4,795 staff from MoFLSS and other relevant institutions were trained on to provide specialized child protection and psychosocial support services in emergency and disaster situations. Similar efforts are ongoing also to enhance the effectiveness of case management, strengthen the social service workforce in the social welfare sector and create linkages between social protection and child protection systems. As Box 2 above indicates, progress has been made on strengthening national systems and making the necessary links, although this is hard to quantify.

Community-Based Child Protection

In consideration of the specific and urgent child protection needs of refugee children and vulnerable Turkish children living in the same communities, the services delivered by the national systems are complemented by community-based services supported by UNICEF. These are delivered in conjunction with municipalities, NGOs and other partners through a network of safe spaces, community centres, outreach services and mobile teams in 32 (out of 82) provinces. In 2019, about 255,000 children benefitted from structured PSS programmes. Programme monitoring [102] showed that approximately 64% of children reported an improved sense of social and emotional well-being following the PSS programme.

[101] The monitoring framework suggests that progress to date has only been partial on this agenda: CPD 2016-20 RAM Monitoring Framework: 2019 Progress-Final.

[102] Ibid

Through other child protection services, 78,199 refugee children were identified and assessed, of whom 37,237 were referred to specialized services.[103]

Community-based services have been implemented in partnership with CSOs in response to the urgent needs that could not be met by the national system.[104] This was exploited as an opportunity and entry points to progressively engage with the MoFLSS and promote the expansion of the national system to refugee children.[105] The new national protection outreach programme (ASDEP) is expected to extend the coverage of child protection services for both Turkish and refugee children. UNICEF is supporting this process, which it is hoped will ensure a more systematic and sustainable approach to the provision of child protection services for refugee children as well as for Turkish children. There is also reportedly interest from the MoFLSS to learn from the experience of extending the CCTE scheme to include a child protection component, and a willingness to consider a similar integrated model to link national social protection schemes to child protection services.[106]

Justice for Children [107]

The main UNICEF intervention in the field of justice for children has been a collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and civil society organizations (including the Union of Turkish Bar Associations) to ensure child-friendly judicial procedures, and particularly to improve the child-sensitive judicial interview processes. The enhanced use of alternatives to imprisonment was also supported through the development of a new probation framework for children and young people.[108]

This has been both an appropriate and a highly successful area of work for UNICEF, from advocacy and policy formulation to piloting and delivery at scale. The success of the UNICEF juvenile justice programme lies in building on existing capacity in the system, with change being jointly developed with the Government and integrated in the relevant procedures and legislation.[109] In the process of implementation of the juvenile justice programme and related reforms, the courts have extended good practices developed for children to other vulnerable groups (e.g. women experiencing violence). Informants pointed to the importance of UNICEF's role in this reform, not only for the trainings for judges and other staff (sensitization on child rights and skills development to work with the children), but even more for the professional expertise, excellence and know-how for the development of standards in the area.[110] They noted that UNICEF maximized impact by working with existing resources and often acted as a moderator between different sides in a debate on policy.

While the problem of a lack of specialised juvenile courts in some provinces remains, UNICEF's justice for children work is reported to have been highly effective both at a policy advisory and advocacy level and through support to implementation. [111] Much remains to be done; for example, UNICEF intends to conduct a review on the situation of girls and refugees in pre/post trial detention with the Ministry of Justice. For the future, the challenge will be to support implementation of the new policy and legal commitments, while considering wider aspects of this agenda – particularly in the field of juvenile justice (i.e. children in conflict with the law), including work on prevention and on alternative remedies.

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[103] Ibid, and UNICEF PPT presentation of the CP Sector; UNICEF Turkey 2018 Humanitarian Results; IOD PARC "Evaluation of the Community-based Child Protection Services in response to the Syria Refugee Crisis in Turkey (Jan. 2016 – Jan. 2019)"
[104] UNICEF 2014 SitAn draft with Exec Summary; UNICEF 2017 updated SitAn, UNICEF Country Office Annual Report 2016, 2017, 2018
[105] UNICEF Country programme document 2016-2020; UNICEF "Theory of change on child protection of children under temporary protection, children seeking international protection and children on the move" June 2016; IOD PARC "Evaluation of the Community-based Child Protection Services in response to the Syria Refugee Crisis in Turkey (January 2016-January 2019), UNICEF Programme Review Report 2018; UNICEF Amendments to CPD Results Framework after 2018 Programme Review triangulated through interviews with UNICEF CO management staff, MOFLSS and Turkish Red Crescent
[106] KII with UNICEF TCO staff and MOFLSS officials.
[107] Findings in this section based on KII with UNICEF section staff in TCO; officials at Ministry of Justice; staff at the Ombudsman Institution; government officials in Izmir Municipality; national NGO partners.
[108] UNICEF COARs 2017, 2018; KII with UNICEF section staff in TCO.
[109] KII at Ministry of Justice; UNICEF section staff in TCO.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.

Child marriage and gender-based violence

UNICEF can demonstrate a number of advocacy and policy achievements under this heading, together with support to implementation. Advocacy with the MoFLSS reportedly contributed to the development of the Draft Strategy Document and Action Plan on the Elimination of Early and Forced Marriages and the Draft Strategy Document and Action Plan on Women's Empowerment (both awaiting formal approval).[112] Through a UNICEF-led UN Joint Programme on the Elimination of Child, Early and Forced Marriage, UNICEF trained over 1,000 government staff (including of municipalities of Gaziantep and Kilis in the Southeast), religious and community leaders, caregivers and adolescents on how to better identify and respond to child marriage cases within their communities. Training has also been provided to front-line workers in different sectors and communication for development (C4D) interventions have been developed. Guidelines for Service Providers on the Prevention of Child Marriage have been disseminated to 1,900 service providers.[113]

UNICEF and partners also redoubled efforts to combat and respond to the wider GBV agenda. Via NGO-supported Girls Safe Spaces, UNICEF reached over 8,000 refugee and Turkish girls and women with structured and community-supported activities designed to prevent and respond to GBV. Two "Girls Safe Spaces" were operational in Mardin and Sanliurfa, providing girls at risk and survivors of GBV with counselling, tailored PSS, legal counselling and referrals. Overall, the evaluation conducted in 2019 on community-based child protection services concluded that the model is effective – though adjustments were needed to better reach girls in their late adolescent, and coverage remained an issue.[114]

Child protection programme sustainability

In this area of work as in others, the sustainability of the UNICEF role is partly dependent on continued funding. Since much of the resourcing to date has come from humanitarian sources, questions surround the sustainability of some aspects of the child protection work (see further section 6 below). However, many of the relevant initiatives, including the ASDEP process, are not in themselves dependent on external funding sources and the question is how UNICEF is able to maintain its specialist capacities in this area and help ensure continuity of the related services.

Some sustainability concerns have been addressed in the design of the programme. At the beginning of the Country Programme, the community-based psychosocial support services targeting refugee children (later expanded to host communities) was distinct from the national child protection system. Since then, in an attempt to guarantee a more sustainable approach, increasing efforts are being made to strengthen the capacity of the national child protection system to serve Turkish and refugee children (although the two agendas are now monitored separately). Other examples of this integration include the ASDEP-related work and also, to some extent, the child protection component of the CCTE.

[112] KII with officials at the MoFLSS; UNICEF section staff at TCO
[113] UNICEF COARs 2017, 2018
[114] IOD PARC "Evaluation of the Community-based Child Protection Services in response to the Syria Refugee Crisis in Turkey (Jan. 2016 – Jan. 2019)" – UNICEF 2019

Integration and coherence of UNICEF's child protection work

The synergy between different programme components relating to the broader child protection agenda was difficult to assess in some cases, either in theory or practice. So too was the way in which different sub-components contributed to the continuum of care and protection. For example, the links were not clear between child welfare and justice for children, or community-based child protection and child rights monitoring mechanisms.

Elsewhere the synergies are more apparent; for example, between the National Child Care and Child Protection Systems component and the Community-Based Child Protection Services – including the element on child marriage and gender-based violence – which work in combination to address child protection priorities. Yet even here, there appears to be an intrinsic 'temporal disconnect' in the timeframes needed to produce results for children by these two components. [115] While Community Based Child Protection produces immediate benefits for girls and boys, and their families, the component relating to system strengthening takes longer to cascade to its end users. This requires the system to develop the capacity of the social service workforce and to create linkages between social protection and child protection systems.

The evaluation found good examples of mainstreaming child protection in other sectors. These include the protection component of the extended CCTE; the integration of PSS into the education programme (formal and non-formal); and the incorporation of child protection in teacher training (regular teachers and SVEPs) as part of the MONE-UNICEF education personnel management strategy.

4.3 UNICEF's education response

The Education component of the Country Programme 2016-2020 is concerned with access to quality inclusive education[116] for all children including those with special needs (i.e. children with disabilities, refugee children, other children with child protection concerns) and on education and life-long learning opportunities for adolescent boys and girls. Specifically, the Education programme contributes to Outcome 1 and Outcome 3 through the three following sub-components:

> ED1. Formal Education for Refugee Children (Output 1A)
> ***Aim: Increased capacity allows school-aged refugee children back in school or newly enrolled.***
>
> ED2. Quality Inclusive Education (Output 1B)
> ***Aim: Education system has increased capacity to provide quality inclusive education for vulnerable children 3-17 years old (including refugee children)***
>
> ED3. Education Opportunities for Girls and Boys (Output 3A)
> ***Aim: Increased capacity to provide and facilitate gender-sensitive and inclusive formal, non-formal, informal education opportunities for adolescent boys and girls***

Education strategy and programme logic

While the Education strategy for 2016-2020 is built on a relatively strong logical framework, it suffers from some of the problems mentioned with the wider programme logic in section 3 above. In particular, the defined 'Outputs' are in reality (sub-)outcomes over which UNICEF has limited control. For each of the three components a situation analysis and theory of change was developed and updated 2017. [117] These are strong on context analysis and rationale for the strategies adopted; though less strong on risks and assumptions, which are only sketched.

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[115] By 'temporal disconnect' we mean the lag between work on system change (or strengthening) and resultant change in the actual delivery of improved services. We consider this and other disconnects in section 6 below.
[116] Including early childhood education
[117] UNICEF "Theories of Change: Education – Update as of November 2017". See also UNICEF SitAn 2014; UNICEF SitAn 2017; UNICEF "Study of barriers and bottlenecks to girls' secondary education" 2018

Despite the caveats noted above, the evaluation concludes that the basic logic underpinning the education programme held true throughout the implementation, and the mix and evolution of the change strategies was found by a recent evaluation to be appropriate to the evolving context.

Education programme relevance

The UNICEF Education programme has sought to be relevant to the education needs of all children in Turkey by: (i) helping the government address the immediate issue of access to formal education by refugee children; and (ii), increasing the capacity of the education system to provide quality and inclusive formal and non-formal education to Turkish as well as refugee children.[119]

The evaluation concludes that this twin-track approach was and remains appropriate to meeting priority education needs (as described in Section 2 above).[120] Strategic education priorities were identified through dedicated situation analysis[121] in preparation for the Country Programme Document in 2015 and confirmed in the Programme Review in 2018. The education programme is consistent with the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of National Education for 2015-2019, which revolves around the three main axes of access, quality and institutional capacity, and includes an emphasis on disadvantaged groups. The relevance and importance of the UNICEF Education programme and its various components was also confirmed in key informant interviews, including those in the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and Ministry of Youth and Sport.

Education programme results and effectiveness

The effectiveness of the education work is reflected in the movement of the related indicators at both Outcome and 'Output' level. At the Outcome level, progress can be seen most strikingly in the enrolment rate among Syrian refugee children (both girls and boys), which had risen by over 70% during the evaluation period – though it remained short of the target of three in four children enrolled. The evaluation concluded that UNICEF had played a substantial part in helping achieve that increase.

At the Output (or sub-outcome) level, progress against indicators is summarised in Box 3 below. As this shows, progress on refugee child education (Output 1A) has been strong against targets; but progress has been much more mixed against the other two Outputs. Various factors appear to have contributed to this, including policy-related factors (e.g. on gender-responsive teaching materials), and cultural and economic factors (non-formal education for refugee adolescents). But the evaluation notes that over a period of particular political and bureaucratic upheaval it is perhaps unsurprising that some of the institutional and policy targets have been only partly met.

The education response for Syrian children under temporary protection has been led by the Ministry of National Education with the support of the UN and UNICEF particularly, since the beginning of the Syrian Crisis.[122] In the initial phase of the response – when the crisis was expected to resolve in a short period and Syrians under temporary protection were hosted in camps – UNICEF contributed by supporting TEC for Syrian girls and boys, designing an adapted curriculum in Arabic, supporting recruitment and training of education personnel (SVEPs), and designing a Foreign Student Education Information Management System (YOBIS). These were all found to be necessary and effective interventions.[123]

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[118] S.Durston, et al. "Evaluation of the UNICEF's Support to Education Personnel in the Syria Crisis Response in Turkey" September 2019

[119] UNICEF "Theories of Change: Education – Update as of November 2017"

[120] Based on interviews with UNICEF section staff, triangulated through interviews with MoNE and a review of relevant written sources including World Bank "Improving the Quality and Equity of Basic Education in Turkey: Challenges and Options", 2011; Education Monitoring Report 2015-16, UNICEF 2017 SitAn – draft; Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2016, 2017-18, 2019-20; "No Lost Generation" Initiative; UNICEF "Study of barriers and bottlenecks to girls secondary education" 2018; MoNE "For a stronger tomorrow: Education Vision for 2023" October 2018.

[121] UNICEF SitAn 2014; UNICEF SitAn 2017; UNICEF "Study of barriers and bottlenecks to girls' secondary education" 2018

[122] The 3RP and "No Lost Generation" Initiative provide the framework for the education response to the Syrian Crisis in Turkey and in the region.

[123] COAR 2016, 2017; Durston, S. et al. (op. cit.). Confirmed in KII with various departments within MoNE.

Since 2016, the Ministry of National Education has adopted a policy of gradually moving refugee children from TEC to Turkish Public Schools. As of the end of 2018, about 85% of the Syrian refugee children enrolled in formal education were in Turkish public schools, as compared to 20% three years earlier. For 2019/20, that figure has risen to 95%. [124] UNICEF's role has evolved accordingly, although some aspects of the future programme (e.g. the role of SVEPS in the public education system) remain to be resolved.

Analysing the education output indicators and targets achievements is not straightforward, in part because of discontinuities in the data. Adjustments to the programme as the context evolved led to changes in the RAM indicators: of the 17 indicators currently included in the RAM framework for the education programme, twelve (70%) have been changed since the beginning of the country programme. Of those six have been dropped due to phasing out of certain programme components (e.g. phasing out from TEC, transition of SVEPs to schools, handing over YOBIS to MoNE) and another six added due to shifting programme priorities (e.g. ECE).

Box 3: Education: Summary of reported progress against Output indicators to end 2019
(Source: CPD 2016-20 RAM Monitoring Framework: 2019 Progress-Final)

Output 1A: Access to formal education for refugee children

- Strong progress on Syrian refugee children enrolment (98% of target met)
- Strong progress on number of SVEPS receiving financial incentives (97% of target met)

Output 1B: Quality inclusive education for vulnerable children

- Teacher training module developed, tested and adopted by MoNE (target met)
- Number of teachers trained on QIE (45% of target met)
- Law/policy guaranteeing right of CWD to education (progress against target unclear)
- Education assessment tools and frameworks (limited progress against target)
- Overall score on effective education (50% of change target met)

Output 3A: Increased education opportunities for adolescent boys and girls

- Gender-responsive teaching and learning materials for upper secondary education (programme halted by MoNE)
- Access of refugee adolescents to non-formal and informal education (35% of target met)
- Programmes for the most vulnerable adolescent girls and boys to increase retention in upper secondary schools (target met: 9th Grade transition policy adopted by MoNE)

Although the three Education programme components work in synergy, there is an intrinsic temporal disconnect in the intervals needed to produce results for children. While the classroom-level components of formal and non-formal education produce immediate benefits for girls and boys participating in education activities, the components relating to system strengthening and quality takes longer to cascade to the end users.

A related issue of tension between 'inclusiveness' and 'quality' can be found in classes where Turkish children and Syrian refugees learn together. Especially in early grades, Syrian children are not (yet) equipped with sufficient linguistic abilities. Classes tend to be overcrowded and teachers not yet trained on inclusive classroom management. This creates two types of scenarios, both witnessed in the field visits for this evaluation. [125] When the Turkish children are the majority in the class, Syrian children do not participate in learning as they are not able to engage with the regular teaching in Turkish. When Syrian children are the majority in the class, the teacher has to adjust, and teaching revolves around learning Turkish language more than other content. Both situations create frictions among the Turkish and Syrian parents as they see their children not receiving the education they need and being marginalised in class.

[124] Ministry of National Education data
[125] Visits to primary schools in Gaziantep and Adana municipalities

Another issue that was observed in the field mission is a central-local disconnect on education. While some degree of institutional disconnect is perhaps inevitable in a country the size of Turkey, UNICEF should continue and build on the 'convenor' or brokering role that it plays between central and local authorities. This could serve both to help bridge disconnects within the same institution (e.g. MoNE) and create connections between institutions. An example of that is the successful Early Childhood Education programme developed with the GAP administration – a model that could be shared and discussed with MoNE at district and central level.

Overall, the evaluation concludes that UNICEF's work on education in Turkey has been both wide ranging and effective. In particular, the combination of support to SVEPs, the extended CCTE programme and other measures appear to have been significant factors in expanding refugee children's access to formal education. Work on quality inclusive education for vulnerable children and on gender-sensitive education for adolescents has been extensive at all levels. What is lacking is evidence on the resultant (gender-disaggregated) educational outcomes, both for refugees and Turkish children. This should be a focus of UNICEF's future work in this area.

Education programme sustainability

The evaluation found that UNICEF's education response was well designed from the beginning of the Country Programme, in particular by anticipating the likely need to accommodate large numbers of refugee children in the mainstream Turkish school system (a 'resilience' agenda). As the Education ToCs put it: ***'The temporary measures currently in place will have to be substituted with sustainable solutions that facilitate the inclusion of refugees in the Turkish society, including its education system.'*** [126] The Turkish government delivered on this agenda through the MoNE and the education system. From UNICEF's perspective, this transition was successfully managed within the original programme design, although the relative balance of strategies shifted over time from support to service delivery towards strengthening of education systems.

The future sustainability challenge lies largely in the SVEPS programme, and in the realization of full inclusion (beyond simple integration) of Syrian and other nationalities alongside Turkish students in the education system.

Integration and cross-sectoral linkages

The education programme has contributed to the three cross-sectoral priorities in the Country Programme: ending child marriage and addressing gender-based violence in emergencies; combatting child labour; and advancing girls' secondary education, including non-formal education. Synergies with other sectors within UNICEF have also been established through cross-cutting initiatives such as the child protection component of CCTE and the development of Psychosocial Support Module. An important component of the programme addresses the educational needs of children with disabilities.[127] Inter-sectoral linkages have been an essential feature of the extension of the CCTE programme to include vulnerable refugee children. In this initiative, UNICEF facilitated cooperation among (what was then) the MoFSP, MoNE and Turkish Red Crescent (TRC).

[128] The innovative child protection component of the programme draws on data obtained through implementation of the conditional cash transfers to identify and reach out to individual children at risk and refer them to appropriate protection services, creating a strong link between social assistance and child protection.

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[126] UNICEF "Theories of Change: Education – Update as of November 2017"

[127] The Inclusive Early Childhood Education for Children with Disabilities project, an initiative with a 2.95 million Euros budget, co-financed by the European Union and the Republic of Turkey, jointly implemented by UNICEF and the Ministry of National Education, aims to increase access for children with disabilities (CWD) to mainstream early childhood education (ECE) programs and grade one via the provision of quality inclusive education. The project was launched in 2017. The legislation regarding the education services offered to CwD was successfully revised by MoNE thanks to UNICEF support. The renewed emphasis on inclusiveness of education is also a pillar in the MoNE strategy Vision 2023.

[128] KII with UNICEF, MoFLSS, MoNE and TRC

4.4 Social policy, social protection and social cohesion

Social policy, as the term is used by UNICEF Turkey, encompasses work on child labour, child-friendly cities and social protection, notably the CCTE scheme as extended to Syrian refugees. Here we review these elements of the programme, together with work aimed at promoting social cohesion, particularly between refugee and host communities. The main elements of this component of the programme fall under Outputs 1D and 1F as follows:

Output 1D: Social protection for vulnerable children
Aim: Families, local authorities and the social protection system (governmental and other actors) have increased capacity to support vulnerable children in accessing the means to fulfil their rights.

Output 1F: Participation and interaction of Turkish and Syrian adolescents and youth
Aim: Turkish and refugee adolescents and youth have increased opportunities for participation, meaningful engagement and interaction with peers.

Box 4: Social policy: summary of reported progress against Output indicators to end 2019
(Source: CPD 2016-20 RAM Monitoring Framework: 2019 Progress-Final)

Output 1D: Increased social protection support to vulnerable children

- # of children reached with humanitarian cash transfers (125% of target met)
- # of municipalities with high concentration of vulnerable children implementing local policies to address their needs (as per CFC model) (97% of target met)
- # of "Activities" approved in the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour under implementation (100% of target met)
- Number of refugee children with protection needs related to child labour identified and assessed (51% of target met)
- Evidence from the CCTE used to inform discussions about scheme's future & sustainability (met)

Output 1F: Increased opportunities for participation and interaction with peers (Turkish and refugee adolescents and youth)

- # of T & S adolescents & youth in empowerment programmes (94% of target met)
- # of adolescent boys and girls completing skills development programme (46% of target met)

The logic of the key social policy components of the UNICEF programme is articulated in separate theories of change for Child Labour, Social Cohesion and the CCTE programme for refugee children (cash component)[129]. That logic is considered under each component heading below. Although there is no overarching theory of change for social policy as defined by the UNICEF in Turkey, one emergent theme from across the component ToCs is the inter-connectedness of agendas in this area, and in particular the links between child protection, social protection and education agendas.

Child labour

Strategy, logic and relevance

The TCO's theory of change for child labour identifies three main root causes of the problem:

- Fragmented social protection and weak child protection and education systems
- Unethical business principles, inadequate inspection mechanisms, structure of the labour market
- Negative social norms

[129] UNICEF TCO: Theory of Change on Child Labour (as of October 2017); Draft Theory of Change on Social Cohesion (undated); Theory of Change for Improved School Attendance of Refugee Children – Demand Side (CCTE) (as of Sept. 2019)

UNICEF's strategy is built on addressing these factors. [130] On the demand side, UNICEF in Turkey is thought to have a potentially ***'pivotal role in building the capacity and raising the awareness of the private sector actors and labour inspection system',*** mirroring its global work on child rights and business principles and its long-term partnerships with the private sector. On the supply side, UNICEF identifies for itself a role in making social protection schemes more child-friendly and better targeted; in strengthening the related child protection system, including referral mechanisms and preventive measures for child labour; and in increasing access to and quality of education. UNICEF's expertise in communication for development is seen as adding value for enhancing social norms around child labour, although progress in this area is foreseen as a mid- to long-term agenda.

The evaluation concluded that while the ToC on child labour shared some of the flaws noted earlier for other components (in particular, the sketchy analysis of risks and assumptions), the essential logic of this component was sound, and remained so throughout the evaluation period. The scale of need and related vulnerability (as sketched in section 2.3 above) is such that child labour is a vital area of work for UNICEF in Turkey. The evaluation concludes that UNICEF should review the scope of its work in this area, while continuing to help build and support related coalitions of actors.

Results and effectiveness

UNICEF scaled up its work in this area in 2017, targeting over 15,000 vulnerable children and their families with socio-economic, educational and psychosocial support to counter the negative coping strategies that lead children to work.[131]It established new partnerships with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Security and the Confederation of Craftsmen and Tradesmen to enforce child labour laws, promote child rights and business principles, and support referrals to technical/vocational training. In partnership with ILO, UNICEF developed a toolkit for identifying and preventing child labour cases, which it disseminated in 2019 among humanitarian and developmental stakeholders. In addition, UNICEF provided trainings on child rights and child labour to more than 1,500 labour inspectors, police officers, MoNE staff, and municipal and social services staff, as well as 1,500 members of the Confederation of Craftsmen and Tradesmen, Turkey's largest small/medium enterprises association.

UNICEF has also engaged more directly on the service provision aspects of the child labour agenda. Through NGO partners, UNICEF also reached nearly 6,000 children engaged in (or at risk of) child labour and identified over 2,000 with protection needs, who were referred to external services for specialized support.[132]It has supported municipalities (e.g. in Adana and Izmit) with related services in local support centres. At the same time, UNICEF has supported evidence generation on this agenda, producing two reports with NGO partners on the role of agricultural intermediaries and wage payment systems on child labour in seasonal agricultural work as well as two rapid assessments of child labour in the shoemaking and furniture industries.[133]

Programme future and sustainability

As the ToC notes, this element of the programme requires long-term investments to see the effects but is ***'more likely to be sustainable by nature as it aims to build on existing systems.*** A relative shift away from service delivery towards more 'durable solutions' requiring policy advocacy and capacity building has been seen over the evaluation period, as envisaged in the ToC; but the need for support to service provision remains, particularly in those areas hosting large numbers of refugees.

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[130] UNICEF TCO: Theory of Change on Child Labour (as of October 2017)
[131] COAR 2017
[132] UNICEF TCO 2018 Humanitarian Results, December 2018
[133] Development Workshop, *Child Labour in Turkey's Furniture Manufacturing Industry: Rapid Assessment Report,* Oct. 2019

The evaluation concludes that there is scope (depending on UNICEF capacity) to expand this area of work. The potential agenda extends well beyond those sectors of work mentioned here and overlaps with the agenda concerning children working on the street.[134]

The extended CCTE scheme

In 2016, refugee children had limited access to social protection schemes and social assistance tended to be ad-hoc. Given rising rates of out of school children, UNICEF engaged in policy dialogue with the former Ministry of Family and Social Policy (now MoFLSS) concerning the national Conditional Cash Transfers for Education scheme for which Turkish families were eligible. This reportedly led to the Government of Turkey's decision to expand the existing CCTE scheme to include (Syrian and non-Syrian) refugee children, supported by funding from the EU and other donors. The scheme came on stream in 2017 through a partnership between MoFLSS, the MoNE, the TRC and UNICEF (which administers the scheme).

Strategy, logic and relevance

The theory of change for this component of the programme [136]gives as its problem statement that ***'Refugee families are unable to ensure their children's regular attendance at school'.*** The aim of the CCTE scheme for refugee children is to improve school attendance and reduce drop-out, by providing a small financial incentive for consistent attendance. The scheme expanded significantly over the course of 2018, growing from 188,500 recipients in January 2018 to nearly 411,000 by December that year. As at December 2019, the cumulative total stood at 562,016. Over 80 per cent of CCTE beneficiaries have also benefited from the non-conditional ESSN scheme administered by WFP (and now IFRC/TRC).

This evaluation did not set out to fully test the logic of the extended CCTE scheme, which is to be evaluated in 2020. But it notes that the rationale extends beyond purely educational concerns. The refugee specific CCTE scheme differs from the national programme in that it includes a child protection component, under which field teams reach out to households of children do not attend school regularly or have stopped attending. The teams attempt to identify the causal factors involved and to facilitate access to any appropriate services. This component, implemented in 15 provinces with a large number of refugees, aims to reduce exposure, and to mitigate and respond to gendered risk factors that hinder children from going to school.

The scale of the expanded CCTE scheme appears to the team reasonably proportionate to need, given the emergent demand and assuming an overall child refugee population 1.7 million.[137] With regard to targeting, the evaluation notes the disparity in enrolment rates for primary school age refugee children (ages 5-9) at 96.24 per cent, and high school age children (ages 14-17) at 18.97 per cent.[138] While top-up payments for adolescent boys and girls were introduced into the CCTE programme for the 2019-2020 school year, UNICEF should consider increasing incentives for children attending lower and upper secondary school – noting that adolescent girls and boys are also the groups most vulnerable to non-attendance and drop out.

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[134]The 2012 Child Labour Survey by TurkStat (see 2.3.8 above) shows that nearly 50% of child labour cases are in agriculture, 24.3 % in industry and 31% in services including but not limited to working on the street.

[135] KII with TCO section staff, MoFLSS and EU officials in Ankara, and review of documentation including COAR for 2016 plus sources cited below.

[136] Theory of Change for Improved School Attendance of Refugee Children – Demand Side (CCTE) (as of Sept. 2019)

[137] UNICEF estimate, UNICEF TCO 2018 Humanitarian Results, December 2018

[138] Figures as of January 2019. These are gross enrolment rates: https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/stats_popup5.html

Effectiveness and value added

Data from the RAM monitoring framework (see Box 4 above) indicates that UNICEF has been successful in achieving its expanded targets for this component of the programme. Further information is available from interim monitoring processes,[139] including enrolment rates among beneficiary children and parental perceptions. While these data tend to confirm the value of the expanded scheme, they are not on their own such as to be able to draw definite conclusions as to whether the programme does in fact increase enrolment, attendance, retention and completion of education for different age and gender groups.

The evaluation found that the combination of cash and child protection was the most distinctive contribution of the extended CCTE scheme. As one informant from the UNICEF Child Protection Team in Ankara put it: *'…where the cash comes together with the child protection component, [it provides] a holistic perspective to child wellbeing: needs assessment (children and families), mental health, emotional wellbeing, and the condition of the house.'* [140] The same informant described how the programme design was the result of collaboration between different departments of UNICEF, and that this had parallels in government: UNICEF TCO has put effort into strengthening the linkage between child protection and social protection at ministry level. This also creates a potential platform for advocacy to adapt the child protection component to the national CCTE programme, which is lacking this feature so far.

The forthcoming evaluation of the extended CCTE scheme may be able to demonstrate whether either the cash or child protection components are effective in increasing school attendance, retention and completion of education. As noted here, results from third party monitoring suggest that there are some positive effects in these areas.[141] In any case, UNICEF should articulate (and demonstrate) the value of the child protection component in its own right, as a basis for attempting to get it taken up as part of the wider CCTE scheme.

Social cohesion

Strategy, logic and relevance

UNICEF Turkey's ToC on social cohesion [142]describes the problem of lack of social cohesion between refugee and host populations as deriving from two main factors: (1) Limited opportunities for positive interaction between refugees and Turkish citizens; (2) High chances of misunderstanding between refugees and Turkish citizens. The ToC points out that, even though there are many cultural similarities, important differences exist between Turkish and Syrian Arab cultures. Combined with the language difference, these constitute a significant barrier to social cohesion between the two communities, as do (actual or perceived) areas of competition for jobs or access to services.
[143] The environment for refugee children in particular can be a threatening and risky one where they come together (in school or other environments) with Turkish children and adults, and the ET heard multiple anecdotal reports of bullying.[144]

UNICEF's concern with social cohesion is therefore certainly warranted. Yet the driving factors involved are so powerful and diverse in nature that UNICEF itself can only expect to help mitigate some of the most acute aspects of the problem as it concerns children, while working with others to ensure that the wider agenda is tackled both in policy and programmatic terms.

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[139] See e.g. CCTE Third Party Monitoring – A Snapshot of findings from quantitative data, PowerPoint Presentation, February 2019 UNICEF and Tandans Data Science Consulting, "Monitoring of the Conditional Cash Transfer Education for Refugees", Inception Report, March 2018.
[140] Interview Ankara
[141] CCTE Third Party Monitoring op. cit.
[142] UNICEF, Draft Theory of Change on Social Cohesion (undated)
[143] Interview with an academic informant in Ankara, September 2019.
[144] Programme-related internal analysis commissioned by UNICEF in 2019 as part of the review of the extended CCTE scheme found that bullying in or on the way to school was one of the top three concerns of Syrian children and their parents, and a significant factor in regular school attendance. Verbal harassment, physical intimidation or violence, together with generally feeling unwelcomed, all undermined regular school attendance, at times without the knowledge of parents. See also Communication for Development (C4D) Strategy for the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) Programme for Refugees DRAFT, 4th February 2019

Its ability to forge partnerships on social cohesion with governmental and CSO partners is a key part of its added value in this regard.[145]

UNICEF's work on social cohesion (as set out in Output 1F) includes a significant social inclusion dimension, focused on the social participation and interaction of Turkish and refugee adolescents. From the early days of the refugee response, and through its Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP) work, UNICEF has worked with partners to empower Syrian and Turkish adolescents and young people through social cohesion and community-based peace-building activities. This has included practical assistance that has had a (secondary) social cohesion rationale, such as the distribution of 800,000 school bags and stationery kits to Syrian and vulnerable Turkish students across the country.[146]

Results and effectiveness

UNICEF has supported a range of activities relating directly to social cohesion. For example, in 2018, Girl Friendly Centres and Adolescent Friendly Centres enabled 98,576 adolescents and young people (42,498 boys, 56,078 girls) to participate in meaningful engagement activities aimed at enhancing social cohesion between refugee and Turkish adolescents and youth.[147] This includes the 'Social Circus' implemented by the GAP administration, which trained 556 young Turkish and Syrian people in circus performing arts and life skills, reaching an audience of over 190,000 young people.

UNICEF has supported the training of Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) and municipal focal points in child rights, participation and social cohesion – and specifically on facilitation of adolescent and youth activities. Some innovative approaches have been adopted with Kilis municipality, the MoYS, MoFLSS and GAP administration, including the 'Girls' Empowerment through Sports' initiative. UNICEF has also supported consultation with adolescents which led to the development of a child friendly version of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. UNICEF supported the annual Children's Forum in October, which brought together refugee and Turkish adolescents.

In Kilis, where about half of the population is made up of refugees, UNICEF helped the municipality reach out to previously underserved populations and include them in community-based education, child protection, and social cohesion activities. In 2016, the Southeast Anatolia Project (GAP) Administration partnered with UNICEF's 'Child Friendly Cities' initiative on a circus-based initiative, training adolescents in multiple locations including Sanliurfa and Batman. In 2018 UNICEF scaled up its cooperation with MoFLSS, MoYS and other partners to ensure increased adolescent engagement through national systems. The result was a significant number of adolescents and young people (refugee and Turkish) participating in social, peer-to-peer, and leadership development activities.

Although relatively modest in size and focused on output rather than outcome level, UNICEF contribution to social cohesion was both relevant and of good quality, based on an integrated methodological approach combining Child Protection and Education. Psycho-social support and social cohesion remain key factors in supporting Syrians refugees in order for them to deal with the war traumatic experience and improve prospects for effective integration with the Turkish host community. UNICEF is also well placed to engage the relevant line ministries in planning and implementation of the PSS and Social Cohesion components.

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[145] One good example is the UNICEF partnership with the MoYS, MoFLSS, the Development Foundation of Turkey (TKV) and the South-Eastern Anatolia Project (GAP) Administration.

[146] Although the primary rationale for the distribution of school bags and kits was an educational one, it also had social cohesion and 'do no harm' aspects (avoidance of resentment caused by differential treatment of different groups).

[147] The numbers achieved in 2019 were similar: 94,024 young people, of whom 44,930 were boys and 49,094 girls

Yet while UNICEF's approach is aligned to the 3RP framework, indicators are lacking to describe outcomes in terms of changes and benefits achieved for the beneficiaries.

Sustainability and future programme

Social cohesion has come relatively late onto the agenda in Turkey – and informants for this evaluation suggest it remains rather ill-defined and uncoordinated among all the relevant actors. This matters, particularly at a time when social and political tensions surrounding the refugees' presence are escalating. The expectation of most Turkish people is that the refugee issue was a temporary one has been confounded in practice, as we are now nearly eight years into the crisis. Although recent political rhetoric has encouraged the expectation of a mass return home of Syrian refugees, the situation in Syria is such that there is little prospect of voluntary return in the near future, and it appears that a majority of refugees expect to stay in Turkey.[148]

Social cohesion therefore remains an increasingly pressing issue. The legal framework concerning Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey includes social cohesion components, and efforts aimed at 'harmonization'. In February 2018, the government adopted the National Strategy on Harmonization and developed a National Action Plan. In line with the legal framework, and led by a dedicated department, the Directorate General of Migration Management undertakes harmonization activities at both the national and the provincial level, aimed at promoting harmony between host and refugee communities, strengthening social inclusion and promoting self-reliance of Syrians under temporary protection.

While the refugee-related social cohesion agenda is the most pressing, the social cohesion agenda in Turkey extends beyond this. The social and economic inequities mentioned earlier (in section 2) have seen a widening gap between the poorest and most marginalised children in Turkey and children belonging to middle and upper-middle income classes. As one academic informant said ***"We used to attend the same public primary school regardless of our socioeconomic status. However now, two different childhoods are emerging. The relationship between children belonging to different social and economic status has changed. Different types of childhood and adolescence have emerged and the polarization has been deepened."*** [149]As another informant put it ***"the inequality between children in accessing education starts with their postcode and the gap widens between the rich and the poor, which contributes to polarization of the society in the future."*** [150] This suggests a wider social cohesion agenda that demands attention in the medium to longer-term. UNICEF, together with UNDP and others, has a role to play here both in supporting government efforts to reduce social and economic inequities, but potentially also in bringing different social groups together in ways currently being explored with regard to the refugee/host populations.

[148] See Global Views on Immigration and the Refugee Crisis, Ipsos (September 2017), cited above: link
[149] Interview with an academic informant in Istanbul
[150] Ibid.

Box 5: The 3RP Social Cohesion Framework.

The Social Cohesion Framework Document (2019) framed as part of the Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan for the Syria Crisis concludes that the main factors of tension include the perception of cultural differences, competition for jobs, security concerns, lack of interaction between communities, misperceptions and misinformation concerning the services available, and pressure on services and assistance. These factors have resulted in an increase in inter-community incidents and in an increase in the social distance between the communities as well as a decline in the support of the Turkish population for services and assistance to refugees. These observations have prompted the 3RP partners to step up their specific programming to support Government efforts to promote social cohesion further. 3RP Turkey Social Cohesion Framework Document outlines a framework for 3RP partners to support the Government of Turkey in achieving this objective. Current social cohesion efforts consist mainly of investment in public spaces and infrastructure, the organization of joint events and initiatives to generate mutual understanding between communities, and support to host communities to alleviate pressure on resources and competition for assistance. The 3RP partners have agreed to a significant development of programming in the areas of support to local and municipal institutions, community participation, rule of law and access to justice, as well as to livelihoods and access to work.

Child-Friendly Cities

The Child Friendly Cities and Communities Initiative (CFCI) started in 2014 in ten municipalities with a high concentration of vulnerable children. It aimed to address the challenges faced by the most vulnerable children in urban areas, and more generally to support municipalities in designing programmes that meet the needs and expectations of children, including their rights to leisure and development. The initiative had a target of including 30 municipalities by 2020. In practice, 29 municipalities are now reported to have adopted child-friendly budgeting and UNICEF have trained municipal staff on incorporating child-friendly components into their five-year plans. UNICEF has collaborated closely with the Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT) to make CFCI guidelines and training materials available to a wide range of municipalities across the country.

The CFCI also seeks to empower young citizens to influence decisions about their city, express their opinion on the city they want, and participate in family community and social life. Under the "Child Friendly Cities" initiative, UNICEF trained Adolescent and Youth volunteers as trainers on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adolescent and youth engagement, and how to build more child-friendly cities and neighbourhoods.

With regard to sustainability, the adoption of child-friendly practices by targeted municipalities and planned cooperation with the private sector should both help ensure continuity of the CFCI. Although the ET was unable to explore the wider impact of the initiative, it did observe the adoption of good practices (including child-friendly budgeting) by municipalities in provinces visited in south-eastern Turkey. It concluded that this was and remained both an important initiative in its own right and a relevant role for UNICEF to continue. It could perhaps be more closely linked to the work on social cohesion and inclusion, and (at a national level) to the wider issue of public finance for children.

4.5 Child development policy, child rights monitoring and data

UNICEF's work on policies and laws relating to child rights issues extends across its whole programme. Here we consider some of the work on systems and mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing those rights, and the generation and use of child-related data.

CRM and accountability

UNICEF's work on child rights monitoring and accountability – closely linked to the justice for children and other child protection work – falls under Output 2B of the CPD.

> Output 2B Increased capacity to monitor child rights and ensure redress for violations
> *Aim: By 2020, relevant human rights monitoring mechanisms have increased capacity to monitor child rights violations and activate redress actions in line with international standards and good practices*

UNICEF monitors progress on this output against two main indicators (see Box 6 below).

Box 6: CRM: summary of reported progress against Output indicators to end 2019
(Source: CPD 2016-20 RAM Monitoring Framework: 2019 Progress-Final)

Output 2B: Strengthening child rights monitoring and redress for violations

- # of complaints on children's rights violations to Ombudsman Institution and NHREI from children and NGOs (109% of target met)
- Capacity of OI, NHREI, Parliament and NGO networks on child rights to monitor and report on child rights violations (progress reported for OI and NGOs)

Interventions on CRM are distributed across the TCO sections.[151] The Child Protection section supports capacity strengthening of redress mechanisms; national civil society (except the media); c) Regulatory and oversight entities; d) International treaty bodies, through strengthening the reporting and follow-up capacity of the relevant Turkish institutions. The Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) section supports capacity strengthening for evidence generation, analysis and dissemination of national monitoring systems and national civil society.

As noted in section 2.3 above, arrangements for child rights monitoring in Turkey are not fully in line with international standards – something that goes to confirm the relevance of this area of UNICEF's work. Official systems have room for improvement: policy implementation is insufficiently monitored through mechanisms with limited mandate and capacity. The main structural cause here appears to be the limited separation of power and public accountability systems, linked to limitations on freedom of expression in the country. This compounded by the shutdown of NGOs and more generally by the restrictions placed on civil society organisations, has resulted in significant limitations in the oversight of child rights.

One key counterpart for UNICEF has been the OI. The establishment of the OI in 2012 was intended to help to ensure that child rights are systematically monitored and to provide redress for breach of rights. In practice, it has struggled to fulfil these functions, in part because of lack of capacity.

Under Output 2B, the aim was that relevant human rights monitoring mechanisms should have increased capacity to monitor child rights violations and activate redress actions in line with international standards and good practices. UNICEF contributed efforts to strengthen independent child rights monitoring through its partnership with the OI and its collaborations with two NGO networks (Children with Disabilities and Violence Against Children).[152] The establishment of the Parliament Subcommittee for the Child Rights, following advocacy by UNICEF working with the OI, represents a significant achievement. It will now be important to monitor the effectiveness of that body. [153] Of the other CRM actors, UNICEF has pursued advocacy on CRM with the NHREI.

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[151] UNICEF document Definition of Child Rights Monitoring (CRM) systems, January 2016
[152] COAR 2018; interviews with UNICEF section staff in TCO.
[153] In this context, it should be noted that the Turkish Parliament ratified the 3rd Optional Protocol (on a Communications Procedure) to the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2017, which entered into force in March 2018.

While evidence generation is part of the NHREI's mandate, a combination of lack of capacity and limited independence make this an uncertain CRM source. UNICEF has not developed a rolling work plan with this institution.

The quality of data for child rights monitoring in Turkey is dependent on the Government capacities to collect reliable data on the specific indicators. There is often no other source and UNICEF is itself largely dependent on official data. While it has worked with TurkStat and Ministries (and also with universities like Hacettepe) on data gathering and quality control, and has had input into the design of processes like the Demographic and Health Survey and Child Labour Survey, it has relatively few options for large scale data gathering itself. [154] An attempt in 2017 to collect data using diversified channels could not be finalized due to contextual factors and this is illustrative of the challenge. It remains to be seen whether the potential Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) process being discussed within the framework of the National Official Statistical Programme can be successfully undertaken.

We consider the question of child-related data and evidence in more detail below.

The generation and use of child-related data and evidence

UNICEF's work in this area falls under Output 2A of the country programme and is also part of the CRM concept:

Output 2A Increased capacity to generate and use child-related data

Aim: By 2020, relevant line ministries, TUIK, NHRI and CSOs have increased capacity to generate and use quality and disaggregated evidence about children for monitoring, reporting and advocacy.

Box 7: CRM: summary of reported progress against Output indicators to end 2019
(Source: CPD 2016-20 RAM Monitoring Framework: 2019 Progress-Final)

Output 2A: Increased capacity to generate and use child-related data

- Capacity (availability of tools, expertise, internal policies, information) of relevant CSOs and institutions to generate evidence on the situation of children in line with international good practices (narrative progress report)
- % of evaluations planned for completion in 2019 finalized (target met)

Strategy, logic and relevance

This component of UNICEF's programme has its own theory of change,[155] in which two main constraints are identified to evidence-informed policies and service provision: the limited availability of evidence and the ***limited use*** of evidence. UNICEF seeks through its programme to tackle both of these factors. A number of contributory factors are identified, including limited technical capacity in the Government of Turkey (GoT) agencies for the systematic monitoring of key indicators.[156]

Regarding the availability of data, generation, various sources indicated that there is still some room for improvement, particularly EU Progress Reports and the Peer Review Report commissioned by Eurostat in 2015.[157] Gaps in data availability have been observed particularly on GBV, child abuse, violence, neglect and disabilities.

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[154] Interviews with UNICEF PM&E staff in TCO Ankara
[155] UNICEF, Theory of Change on Quality Evidence- February 2016
[156] Ibid.
[157] *'Peer Review Report on the compliance with the European Statistics Code of Practice and the coordination role of the National Statistical Institute in Turkey'*, G. O'Hanlon, P. Guzman, F. Galik.

Concerning the use of evidence, analysis of existing sources suggests that that decision-making is often not clearly based on evidence; and policy implementation is monitored through mechanisms that could more strongly enable accountability and performance improvement.[158]

The ET was unable to determine the extent to which this analysis held true through the evaluation period. Overall, it concluded that although progress appears to have been made in some areas (see below), the concerns identified in the theory of change remained valid and that the problem of lack of technical monitoring capacity persisted. [159] This would tend to confirm the relevance of UNICEF's ongoing work in this area.

Results and effectiveness

Although UNICEF has made some progress in this area, overall results have been constrained by the complex political situation and the shrinking space for CSOs. Restrictions on data collection concerning refugees continue to constitute an obstacle to monitoring the realization of the rights of this highly vulnerable group. [160] This is an acknowledged problem, and strategies to mitigate these risks were identified during the Programme Review. [161] While the evaluation was unable at this stage to assess fully whether these had been successfully implemented, it did find that significant progress had been made based on data provided by the TCO.

As a part of its efforts to accelerate the agendas related to violence against children (VAC) and CWDs, UNICEF has contributed to strengthening the capacity of civil society to monitor children's rights and to promote inclusive and innovative services for children. [162] UNICEF has recently (2018) provided technical and financial support to several CSOs to conduct research and to generate and use evidence for monitoring and advocacy. For example, the CSO Development Workshop published two reports on child labour in agricultural production with UNICEF support, and the findings are being used for advocacy to improve local policies targeting the families of seasonal agricultural workers. The NGO Network for the Rights of Children with Disabilities and UNICEF are currently finalizing a situation analysis of CwDs, which will be used to inform reporting and advocacy in relevant platforms.

The recently published 2018 TDHS was the first nationwide survey in Turkey to generate official data disaggregated for the Turkish and the Syrian refugee population, with UNICEF's support on methodology[163]; and the TCO signed an agreement with the Hacettepe Institute of Population Studies to support the operationalization of data collection in refugee households. [164] The TCO also initiated a dialogue with the SDG Indicators Unit at the TurkStat, established in 2018, supporting the Unit's role and visibility. In addition, greater interaction between TurkStat, SBP and relevant line ministries was facilitated in the context of the Gender and Family Statistics Working Group. A gap analysis of statistics on children has been initiated to inform the next Official Statistical Program. [165]

With the OI, UNICEF supported the development of new mechanisms for managing and investigating complaints related to children, contributing to the promotion of a child-focused culture in the institution. In October 2018, the OI formally adopted a new Child Rights Strategy, which was developed with UNICEF's technical support and includes specific goals for improving the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), raising awareness in society, and strengthening staff capacity to respond to individual cases.

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[158] See inter alia the 2015 and 2016 EU Progress Reports on Turkey. The 2016 report found that 'recent steps taken by the government to improve policy planning and monitoring of the government's performance should be complemented with ex post results-oriented reports enabling better public scrutiny of government work' (p.15).
[159] KII with NGO and academic, Ankara
[160] COAR 2017, 2018
[161] UNICEF Turkey Programme Review of the 2016-2020 Turkey-UNICEF Country Programme
[162] COAR 2018
[163] E.g. the inclusion of ECD indicators based on the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey's (MICS) methodology. This will (inter alia) enable the calculation of one SDG indicator currently not measured in Turkey, thus contributing to reducing the data gap for SDG monitoring.
[164] Interviews with PM&E section staff in UNICEF TCO
[165] Ibid.

As part of this strategy, UNICEF trained forty-two OI staff on child-sensitive case management guidelines and outreach strategies, with a focus on identifying and reaching the most vulnerable children.

The overall picture on child-related data is an inconsistent one. There are significant gaps, some of which have been noted above. At the macro level, this compromises the monitoring of child rights and the child-related SDGs; and means that outcome data to inform policy formulation, targeting and programme adaptation is lacking in some important areas. Despite some positive achievements, including the recent DHS process to which UNICEF contributed, more solid and sustainable results in this area are constrained by the complex political situation and the shrinking space for civil society in the country. Continuing restrictions on data collection concerning refugees continue to be an obstacle for monitoring the realization of the rights of this highly vulnerable group.

There is a lack of updated data and research in key areas. UNICEF and TurkStat recently reiterated their intention to collaborate closer to fill these statistical gaps, and it is expected that the planned 2021 Population Census will provide an opportunity to improve the available data related to children. CSOs have a crucial role to play here, though for reasons outlined above their role has been severely curtailed over the evaluation period.

The lack of available data from independent sources noted above, related in part to the shrinking space for civil society, is particularly evident in the lack of data on particularly vulnerable and marginalised groups of children (refugees, ethnic minorities, children with disabilities). Data on outcome indicators tend to be updated on an annual basis at best, and are disaggregated (by place, sex and social group) only to a limited degree. Mechanisms for the measurement of the child rights at the local level are weak, leading to a potentially unrepresentative and 'static' picture of the child rights situation in Turkey.

As noted above in relation to many of the specific elements of UNICEF's agenda, the evidence base from which it and other actors are working is often thin, outdated or both. Evidence generation has remained a key challenge for the child protection programme in particular. The MoFLSS has limited capacity to generate and analyse child protection information and a weak information management system. Although UNICEF's approach is to address the protection needs of all children, lack of evidence has constrained possibility of preventing and responding in a targeted (and gendered) way to specific issues of the most vulnerable girls and boys, for example children with disabilities and children from minority ethnic groups.

This limited ability to access and collect information is to some extent an issue for the Education programme as well. The MoNE relies on a relatively strong gender disaggregated information management system (E-Okul). The related information is mostly public and shared with UNICEF. In addition, the direct implementation of the Syrian Volunteer Education Personnel programme, the YOBIS information management system, Temporary Learning Spaces and school rehabilitation and supply has generated a significant body of reliable information on education. Despite that evidence generation leading to informed programming is challenging in some areas. For example, administrative data on non-attendance by girls and boys, and the reasons for it, is not normally made available and may not be reliable. In addition, the E-Okul system does not have indicators for measuring the inclusion and performance of disadvantaged groups or those from specific social backgrounds or ethnic groups.

The value of the role played by UNICEF is well illustrated by the YOBIS example. The Education Information Management System for Foreign Students (YOBIS) – now handed over to MoNE – was instrumental in generating evidence about refugee children's access to (and quality of) education. As the recent Evaluation of the UNICEF's Support to Education Personnel in the Syria Crisis Response in Turkey (2019) concluded: ***"In the absence of YOBIS over 600,000 Syrian and other foreign children would have been invisible".***[166] Another example is the Study on Barriers and Bottlenecks to Girls Secondary Education (2018). This was pivotal in identifying and better understanding the barriers to girls' education, especially upper secondary (high school) education, in Turkey.

One strategy in UNICEF's own global social protection strategic framework[167] promotes expanding and diversifying evidence on impacts. In the new CPD, UNICEF needs to work more on developing different qualitative and quantitative monitoring instruments, which would additionally enable feedback from the local level about child rights. While it is important to work with government bodies to improve official data collection systems, it is also important to help build other (independent) capacities for data gathering and situational monitoring.

Sustainability and future programming

Given the issues highlighted concerning both lack of availability and lack of use of child-related data and evidence, UNICEF clearly has an important ongoing role to play in this area. The evaluation concludes that it should seek to strengthen its cooperation with relevant CSOs and their networks through the promotion of SDGs and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). UNICEF should continue to provide support to government institutions and CSOs in strengthening monitoring processes with regard to the CRC. It should put more effort in building capacity of CSOs for specific topics such as child violence prevention, dropout prevention, child labour and children with disabilities; as well as more generally for child poverty and well-being.

In this context, the EU enlargement policy and monitoring framework could be used as an entry point for policy dialogue for developing better child-sensitive statistics as well as more broadly for child policy development. TurkStat is aligning statistical framework with the EU,[168] and this presents an opportunity for UNICEF to use these processes to promote the child rights agenda.

[166] S.Durston, et al. "Evaluation of the UNICEF's Support to Education Personnel in the Syria Crisis Response in Turkey" September 2019

[167] https://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/UNICEF_Social_Protection_Strategic_Framework_full_doc_std.pdf

[168] Interviews with PM&E section staff in UNICEF TCO

5. Cross-cutting issues and wider lessons for UNICEF

5.1 UNICEF and the humanitarian- development nexus in Turkey

The refugee situation in Turkey is an atypical 'humanitarian crisis' in a number of ways. This is an upper middle-income country with high levels of government capacity and well-developed public services. From the outset, the Turkish government was generous in its welcome of the Syrian refugees, granted them substantial rights under Temporary Protection legislation, and took the lead in ensuring that their needs were met. Early plans to house refugees in camps were superseded as numbers escalated and refugees chose to settle in (mainly urban) host communities. The job of providing services to these expanded towns and cities fell to local and national authorities, and the government came to adopt a policy of integration of refugees into host communities with full access to free public services. Initial offers of international assistance were declined; but as the number of refugees grew to unprecedented levels, Turkey called on the international community to share the financial burden of hosting some 4 million refugees – a call that was given particular edge by the European migration crisis, which saw the EU agree Euro 6 billion in funding in exchange for Turkey's cooperation in stemming the flow of migrants and asylum seekers to Europe. More recently, the initial welcome of refugees has come under increasing strain as competition for jobs and services grows, language and cultural differences have hindered integration, and political rhetoric concerning the refugees has hardened.

The nature of this context makes the distinction between humanitarian and development agendas harder to draw than is normally the case. Protracted large-scale refugee crises more typically involve refugees being largely confined to camps and provided with services mainly through the international humanitarian system, often over many years. In the Turkey case, the issues are rather different – including issues of 'transition' and the relationship between humanitarian and developmental approaches. UNICEF's decision to focus on system strengthening coupled with support for supplementary services reflected the prevailing situation and the kind of role it demanded. But it raised the question whether relatively acute and immediate needs could be met through an essentially developmental approach. The answer in this case appears to be (broadly) 'yes', but because of the time-lag involved, only if provision is also made for meeting interim needs through alternative systems. The TEC and the community-based protection mechanisms are two examples of such interim systems in the Turkey case.

In UNICEF's case, the nexus involved adopting a changing mix of implementation strategies over time. The clearest pattern here concerns the relative shift over the course of the evaluation period away from service delivery towards system strengthening and capacity development. This transition has happened in different ways and at a different pace in each programme component. For example, while the justice for children work succeeded in modelling and handing over Child Friendly Interviewing Rooms, the Community-Based Child Protection Services are still largely relying on direct service provision through CBOs, only partially complemented by the ASDEP.

While such transitions make clear sense in a context like Turkey, they are not necessarily supported by the available aid funding mechanisms. One might expect (particularly in light of the World Humanitarian Summit and Grand Bargain donor commitments) that as humanitarian funding phased out, commensurate and complementary development funding would be made available to ensure smooth transitions and avoid 'cliff edge' suspension of programmes. That does not appear to be the case in Turkey. This is particularly significant in the context of an upper-middle income country where typical development funding instruments are not available.

Overall, the evaluation concludes that UNICEF has successfully applied 'nexus' thinking to its programme in Turkey – and that it has in the process designed some creative and innovative approaches to addressing the challenges involved. Others in UNICEF working in UMIC contexts would do well to learn from these.

5.2 UNICEF's approach to gender issues in Turkey

The UNICEF Country Office has tried to address gender issues through a twin track approach. The first involves a set of targeted gendered programme priorities, that include promoting secondary education, learning and skills for adolescent girls and boys; ending child marriage and tackling gender-based violence. The second involves an integrative and mainstreaming approach – integrating a gender perspective in all programmes – whilst concurrently seeking to improve the gender responsiveness of official systems and processes, contributing to improved overall gender equality results.

Some aspects of gender inequality in Turkey have been highlighted in earlier sections. Turkey ranks 64th out of 189 countries in the UNDP Gender Development Index[169] and 130 out of 149 countries in the World Economic Forum's 2018 Gender Inequality Index.[170] Among the various inequities in the country, those related to gender and the relative inequality of women and girls continue to stand out. UNICEF has rightly focused on the particular issue of adolescent girls' empowerment, and the evaluation believes that it should continue this focus. In doing so, however, it should not neglect other gender-related issues, including areas in which boys may face particular challenges.[171]

Each of the four programme components described above have taken account of gender-related factors in their design and implementation. In Education, a gender equality package was implemented in 162 secondary schools in all 81 provinces. This was considered a success by partners, although MoNE subsequently decided to cease the programme.[172] Monitoring data in formal education is disaggregated by sex/age, location and specific vulnerabilities, reflecting successful collaboration with MoNE on YOBIS and E-Okul. Gender-specific evidence on retention and completion of education (including Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALP) and other non-formal education) remains incomplete, making the impact of girls' education on reducing early child marriage uncertain. This is an area for further work.

With regard to Child Protection, UNICEF has done well to incorporate gender-specific approaches. For example, 60% of the Community-Based Child Protection (CBCP) work is linked to targeted actions on (e.g.) adolescent girls' education, gender-based violence and child marriage. However, there are significant gaps. The recent CBCP evaluation was largely positive but concluded that despite all efforts, linkages between programme approaches on child labour and child marriage, case management and PSS are weak. [173] There has also been limited disaggregation of data by sex/age, and other factors that would have allowed UNICEF to demonstrate it has reached out to vulnerable groups, particularly girls and women affected by SGBV. With regard to the latter, interventions have focused on prevention (raising awareness) and on strengthening response mechanisms. These interventions have reached significant numbers,[174] although the impact of preventive interventions is hard to assess, particularly given the overall lack of data on the incidence of SGBV.

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[169] 2017 data: (link) http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GDI

[170] Global Gender Gap Report 2018: (link) https://bianet.org/english/women/203678-turkey-ranks-better-than-19-of-149-countries-in-gender-equality

[171] This is important not least from a social cohesion perspective, particularly with regard to the interaction of adolescent boys from Turkish and refugee communities.

[172] This reflects the fact that gender equality issues have become increasingly sensitive in Turkey, and MoNE's decision is reflective of a more general policy trend.

[173] UNICEF/ IOD PARC Evaluation of the Community-based Child Protection Services in response to the Syria Refugee Crisis in Turkey (January 2016-January 2019) – September 2019

[174] Programme interventions reached 182,784 Syrian and Turkish women, girls and boys on GBV through prevention and response interventions (Source: RAM 2019 – Progress Final)

There are other evidence gaps that affect targeted action by UNICEF and others. Limited gendered targeting for children with disabilities, child labourers and children from minorities relate to gaps in CRM monitoring systems and independent reporting on child rights violation. As noted earlier, MoFLSS itself has limited capacity to generate and analyse child protection data. For refugees, there is limited – and weakly gender disaggregated – data on access to protection services, legal and psychosocial counselling. Measures taken following the attempted coup in 2016 has impacted on women's NGOs which are potentially important partners for their skills and expertise on gender equality, GBV and child marriage. UNICEF should re-consider its partner portfolio with a view to re-building stronger partnerships and collaboration in these areas.

Some of UNICEF's achievements on gender issues have been at the policy and design level, at both national and local levels. Policy advocacy and technical assistance reportedly contributed[175] to the development of the "Strategy Document and Action Plan for Combating Early and Forced Marriage" (MoFLSS), although at the time of writing this has not yet been approved. The UN Joint Programme on the Elimination of Child, Early and Forced marriage (started in 2018) builds on the large-scale Gaziantep programme model. This involves a multi-sectoral approach with a focus on capacity building (largely trainings based on guidelines for service providers including both government and NGO partners) and awareness raising at all levels including with local communities. At the municipal level, local planning in Gaziantep and Kilis municipalities now includes action on child marriage.

C4D has been an important mode of engagement for promoting positive social norms – including modelling gender equality – and addressing harmful traditional social norms at community level. The document 'Road Map to strengthen C4D effort to prevent and respond to Violence Against Children, including Child Marriage'[176] highlights priority areas as prevention of child marriage, positive parenting, GBV and child rights monitoring at community level. However, the evaluation could find little evidence of impact on social norms in the areas identified as priorities. While this is admittedly a medium- to long-term agenda, UNICEF and others in this field need better ways of gauging changes in attitude and behaviour over time.

Likewise, on agendas such as adolescent girls' empowerment, the concept of 'empowerment' is a broad one, including concepts like resilience, mental health, and well-being that are themselves hard to measure. Broader empowerment requires significant changes in social norms, in family decision-making in more traditional patriarchal households. An environment needs to be created in which adolescent girls (and boys) can exercise voice and agency to influence the important decisions that impact on them such as marriage and restrictions on movement outside the home. Access of girls and young women to education, employment or training is an important, tangible and measurable indicator of empowerment. [177]Using its C4D approach, UNICEF should attempt to find better ways of capturing the wider elements of empowerment listed here.

With regard to justice for children, the contribution to gender equality is unclear, again in part because of weaknesses in the child rights monitoring system. The 2013-2017 National Children's Right Strategy and Action Plan was not renewed and implementation is not closely monitored - despite the EU Commission report on sexual abuse and ill-treatment of juveniles in detention.[178]

[175] KII with section staff in UNICEF TCO
[176] Draft August 2018. This remains a working document.
[177] Included in the results framework for Outcome 3.
[178] See https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2016/20161109_report_turkey.pdf

Some gender-specific protocols have been adopted by the Ministry of Justice (e.g. on interviewing victims) and trainings on interview skills include a basic element on gender sensitivity.

Here and elsewhere in the programme, there are some common weaknesses. Gender integration and gender mainstreaming priorities are not explicitly articulated; it is not clear whether different programme components conducted a gender analysis and vulnerability assessments (on different impacts for boys and girls); and it is unclear whether and how these informed programming, strategies and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) frameworks. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it must be assumed that such assessments are not routinely conducted.[179]

The issue of Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and child safeguarding is clearly addressed in UNICEF's contracting processes with NGOs and civil society organisations. What is less clear to the ET team is how this area of concern is addressed with regard to government institutions. The EU Commission Report for 2016 has highlighted the issue of abuse of children in detention facilities, and this may be part of a wider problem (at least it cannot be assumed that it is not). The TCO PSEA workplan shared with the ET identifies training and capacity building for government staff on sexual exploitation and abuse as an area of potential future engagement; but it is unclear whether robust policies and procedures are in place for MoFLSS, MoNE and MoJ, or what UNICEF might do to help ensure this. At present, it is difficult to assess based on available information how PSEA cases are reported and managed or how child safeguarding policies are implemented by government partners.

There are sometimes tendency in UNICEF Turkey, as often elsewhere, to equate gender with girls' and women's issues. This is perhaps reflected within the TCO, where women take most of the responsibility for working on these issues in the TCO. [180] While the focal points have done well to further this agenda, it is not clear why the TCO did not appoint a dedicated gender adviser as they met the relevant criteria ; especially as the Light Gender Assessment [182] highlighted issues around capacity on gender ('currently not sufficient for achieving gender results envisaged by the GAP and SP considering the workload of GFPs') within the TCO. There is evidence of leadership on gender issues (e.g. the chief of child protection manager is a sectoral gender focal point), and more broadly with UN Women around coordination on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (through the UN Gender Theme Group and UN Results Group on Gender) and of commitment to gender equality programming through the UN Joint Programme. Yet this commitment within UNICEF Turkey has not been backed by human resource allocation for gender. A dedicated gender adviser position, as recommended in the Light Gender Assessment, could have significantly contributed to gender achievement across the programme and enhanced capacity on gender beyond the targeted actions. This is an issue that UNICEF should review for the future programme, even if targeted actions no longer form part of the programme portfolio.

Overall, UNICEF has done well in addressing gender issues in Turkey, and it should build on progress to date. The experience of an ambitious large-scale gender equality programming, and the distinctive 'twin track' approach, has given rise to some valuable lessons, not only for Turkey but more widely. The process of designing the next country programme presents an opportunity for UNICEF, the GoT and other partners to capture and disseminate some of the learning generated from the programme, including how to pursue on gender equality in such a complex and sensitive political and cultural environment.

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[179] There are a number of exceptions to this. For example, in the case of justice for children, the different vulnerabilities of girls and boys have informed thinking (e.g. on victims of sexual abuse).
[180] This also partly reflects the gender split in UNICEF staffing in the TCO, which is roughly 2:1 female: male.
[181] TCO met the gender staffing criteria to appoint at least one full time gender adviser (at P3 or P4) or a senior gender adviser (at P5). (Guidance of Staffing for GAP Results- Revised April 2019).
[182] Light Gender Assessment: Turkey – S. Ranchod and S.Boezak (May 2016) page 11.

5.3 Wider lessons learned

A number of programme-specific lessons arise from the analysis in previous sections of this report. Here we highlight what appear to be the most important overall lessons for UNICEF in Turkey; many of which are also lessons that UNICEF institutionally might learn from in contexts that share similar features.

One of the most significant lessons concerns UNICEF's comparative advantage and the specific added value of its role in Turkey over the past five years. The L3 emergency context and the 3RP 'resilience' approach demanded a support role that extended well beyond the former 'upstream' policy work with government. That role has been a semi-operational one, spanning policy advocacy, technical advice and capacity development as well as direct support to implementation. UNICEF's strong working relationship and trust established with government ministries has been key to this, together with newly formed relationships at central, provincial and municipal levels. This has been maintained even through the period of upheaval of government administration that followed the attempted coup of 2016, though maintaining those relationships has been a challenge in the face of government staff turnover and shifting reporting lines. UNICEF is seen as a *'trustworthy and transparent partner', and informants noted that 'UNICEF's relationships with Government at senior management level and the respect accorded to the agency by partners have considerably facilitated progress'.*[183]

The trust established has been crucial to UNICEF's ability to play an expanded role in a context where government has exerted particularly tight control and where international organisations have not been centrally involved in the humanitarian response. In particular, UNICEF has played a role that perhaps no other international organisation could play in working across sectors and ministries, and in helping bridge the gap between national and sub-national layers of government. Here, UNICEF's breadth of mandate and its wide-ranging technical capacity have been a major comparative advantage. Informants also underlined the importance of *'UNICEF's professional expertise, excellence and know-how for the development of standards.*[184]

Related to the above, and specifically on the humanitarian-development nexus, there are significant lessons to be learned from the system-strengthening approach adopted by UNICEF in Turkey. The decision to integrate the refugee response within the wider country programme was a bold one and depended on the ability to make existing government policy frameworks and social welfare systems work both for Turkish and refugee populations. The evaluation concludes that this was the right approach and has been largely successful; but that this approach on its own could not have met the more acute needs of refugee children in the short term. Here, support to 'bridging' services such as the community-based child protection scheme, has been a necessary complement to the system-strengthening work. Working with NGOs trusted by government (notably the Turkish Red Crescent and ASAM) has been essential for the delivery of such bridging services locally, although the evaluation concludes that extending the involvement of CSOs will be essential to effective delivery of services to the most vulnerable sectors of society in the medium to longer term.

The Turkey experience seems to demonstrate that a system-strengthening approach to dealing simultaneously with humanitarian and development priorities is a viable one, at least in contexts of this kind (relatively highly developed, with established systems). From a humanitarian perspective, this provides an indirect but potentially more sustainable way of meeting UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action. A similar approach to protracted crisis response may be possible in other comparably developed contexts, though this will depend heavily on the strength of existing systems, and (in the case of refugee crises) on the policy of the government in question concerning the integration of refugees and extension of public services to cover their needs.

[183] Interviews with government counterparts, Ankara

[184] Ibid

The extent of the necessary short-term complementary systems would also depend very much on context. But one related lesson from this 'support to systems + complementary services' approach has been the observation that establishing complementary services can help to shed light on gaps or weaknesses in existing national systems, helping in the development of those systems to the benefit of all vulnerable populations.

Although this evaluation has not looked specifically at the management aspects of UNICEF's work in Turkey it is important to note continuity of senior leadership – from the Representative and Deputy Representative to the sector chiefs – has been an essential factor both in building trust with counterparts, and in the ability to navigate complex and shifting political tides. [185]It has also been an important factor in UNICEF's ability to maintain overall consistency of approach, while identifying and acting upon the need for adaptation in the programme and in the mix of implementation strategies adopted.

[185]This is in contrast to the preceding CP period to 2015, during which there was major discontinuity in senior leadership, including at Representative and Section Chief levels.

6. Sustainability, challenges and opportunities

6.1 Sustainability and transition

UNICEF in common with other international actors in Turkey face a series of issues concerning the sustainability and transition of existing programme initiatives, some of which were highlighted in section 4 above. One major factor here is the availability of funds: most donors see the crisis triggered by the mass influx of refugees over the past few years as essentially over, and humanitarian funding sources are expected largely to dry up over the coming two to three years. While the status and situation of Syrian and other refugees in Turkey is far from settled – and events in Syria may even generate further refugee flows – most donors are expected to revert to standard developmental modalities in their engagement with Turkey. And since Turkey is a relatively highly developed upper middle-income country, it is unlikely to be seen as a priority for normal developmental assistance. As often, geopolitics may determine the reality of further aid flows or loan financing. Meanwhile, the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT) II funding (the second tranche of the EU's refugee-related funding to Turkey) will be programmed largely through IFIs and the government rather than through the UN agencies, which may expect to lose potential leverage in the process.

UNICEF faces imminent challenges relating to sustainability and transition of some of its largest programme components. These include the two large cash-based initiatives, the CCTE programme for refugees and the SVEP incentive scheme. Funding for both is uncertain, and there is no sign that the government is willing or able to take them on budget, or to administer them. As the recent evaluation of the UNICEF's Support to Education Personnel in the Syria Crisis Response in Turkey (September 2019) concluded, there is an urgent need to agree with MoNE and other government departments a way forward for the SVEP scheme. Apart from its intrinsic value, it provides a lifeline for the volunteers (53% of whom are female) and to some 13,000 Syrian families. [186] While the role of the SVEPS may need to evolve, a sustainable transition for them is essential.

The CCTE programme is implemented through a partnership between MoFLSS, MoNE, the TRC and UNICEF, which administers it. Funding for the current scheme for refugees is due to end in 2020 and at the time of writing, no future funding had been secured. The evaluation believes that UNICEF should consider handing over the administration of the scheme to the Government or TRC, unless there is clear added value in UNICEF continuing to run it. That said, the child protection component of the CCTE provides a unique window onto child protection and other issues at the family level, and that benefit should be preserved. One important advocacy line to be pursued is the extension of that child protection component to the wider national CCTE scheme.

While humanitarian funding streams may be drying up, most government respondents to this evaluation foresaw a strong continuing relationship with UNICEF on social policy issues, including those concerning the Syrian refugee population. They expect UNICEF ***"…to share "best practices", in spite of the funding challenges"***[187] and see UNICEF as a trustworthy and transparent partner. One potential constraint in this regard is the continuing rapid turnover of ministry staff.

More generally, the UNICEF strategy of working with and through government systems means that a degree of sustainability is built into the programme, at least regarding the technical capacities. In some cases, notably in relation to justice for children, the progress is deeply rooted, from legal and policy to systems and procedural changes.

[186] S.Durston, et al. "Evaluation of the UNICEF's Support to Education Personnel in the Syria Crisis Response in Turkey" September 2019

[187] Interviews in Ankara

. Though the UNICEF programme itself has been contingent on the availability of international funding, the system strengthen and capacity development effects of the partnerships involved can be expected to have some durability of effect – and UNICEF should make it a priority to ensure the continued provision of technical advice and support to ensure that they do.

Addressing the wider sustainability issues for the programme, and ensuring continued progress on the child development agenda, will require UNICEF to address more consistently the public finance for children Public Finance for Children (PF4C) agenda. The new CPD should focus more on integrating PF4C principles in the new CPD and seek close engagement with what is now the Strategy and Budgeting Presidency. The decisions governments make about how to fund social policies and services are critical to children and to equitable development overall. Many of the obstacles to improving child outcomes can be traced to public financial management challenges. While UNICEF Turkey should find its own way to introduce PF4C goals in the CPD, in doing so it should draw upon UNICEF's global PF4C programme framework. Options for progressing this agenda include work on PF4C in SDG implementation, as a tool for the implementation of the National Development Plan, and PF4C in the Economic Programme of Turkey (in cooperation with the European Commission).

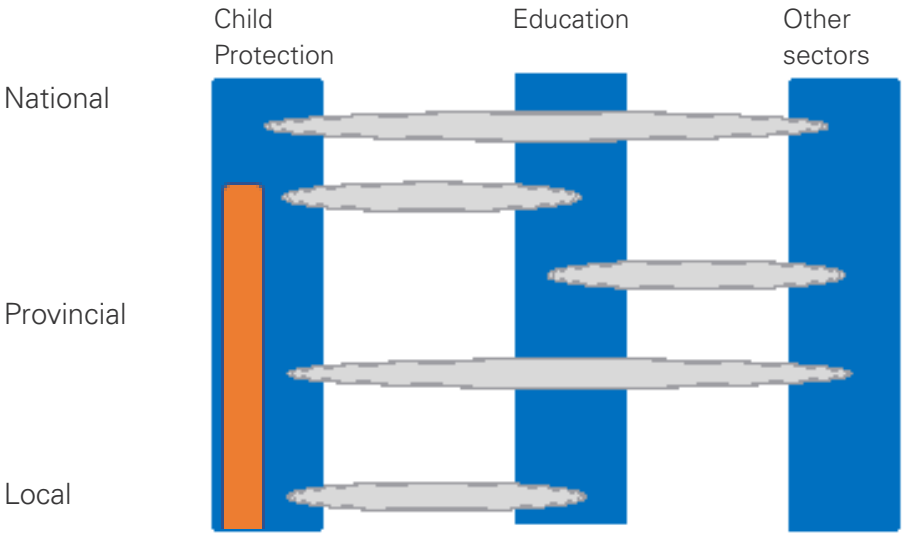
6.2 Four challenges (and opportunities) for UNICEF

Apart from the issue of sustainability, the ET identified four areas of challenge – and related opportunities – for UNICEF in more effectively addressing the needs of children in Turkey. This concern system disconnects, evidence gaps, working with civil society, and tackling the issue of social cohesion. For the most part these challenges are not specific to UNICEF, but rather reflect the difficulties facing all actors working on this agenda. In other words, these are challenges that are inherent in the current context; and the question for UNICEF is how it can best address them in its current and future programme.

Challenge 1: System disconnects

During the course of the fact-finding mission, it became clear to the ET that some of the most significant challenges to the delivery of essential services for children arise from 'disconnects' between the central, provincial and local/municipal levels of government administration. This situation is compounded by a lack of communication and harmonisation of policy and systems within and between different ministries and sectors. These disconnects can be described (respectively) as 'vertical' and 'horizontal', as illustrated in Figure 7. They may relate to the failure to make the necessary links between two or more sectors of work or institutional policies.

Figure 7: Horizontal and vertical 'system disconnects'



The problem of disconnects goes beyond failures to communicate or to make links between different policies and systems. As noted in section 3.1.7, there may also be a lag or 'temporal disconnect' between the respective timeframes for upstream policy and systems work and for downstream service delivery – something that becomes more serious when the needs are acute (i.e. humanitarian) in nature, when system strengthening alone may not deliver results in the necessary timeframe. Various examples are noted in preceding sections.

Perhaps the most important disconnect of all is that between policy and reality – or more specifically, between intended outcomes from policies and the 'real world' outcomes for children. Work to support national policy development remains an essential (and valued) part of what UNICEF does in Turkey; but much of the challenge lies in the translation of policies through effective systems that deliver consistently for those who most need assistance. Too often, the benefit delivered through services or protection systems (including child rights monitoring) does not match the stated aim and is limited or inequitable in its coverage and reach.

In some cases, this 'reality' gap relates to a temporal disconnect between system strengthening and service delivery outcomes. But sometimes the necessary conditions, resources or capacities to achieve the stated aim of a policy are lacking. One example is the policy of integrating of Syrian refugee children into the Turkish public-school system, where the language barrier (Arabic/Turkish) as well as social factors and resources constraints, seriously impede effective integration; something that contributes to social tensions in areas of high refugee concentration. Here there is a risk of 'integration' being achieved in name only; and a similar risk applies to other areas of policy.

UNICEF should be prepared to identify and highlight such situations, and advocate for necessary changes in policy or systems to enable the related goals to be achieved in practice. This 'reality check' function is already reflected in some existing initiatives. So, for example, UNICEF works with MoNE to monitor the impact of teacher training, partly in order to inform the development of a longer-term teacher development plan. Consistent monitoring of outcomes against real-world indicators is an essential component of UNICEF's programme strategy and planning; but this function needs to extend beyond the specific initiatives with which UNICEF is involved.

From this arises an opportunity. UNICEF has played an important part in helping to bridge some of these divides, for example in 2017, by providing financial and technical support for the creation of linkages between education and social assistance information systems. The evaluation concludes that this is a vital role and one which UNICEF is uniquely placed to perform. That role should be further developed through the new CPD and should inform the human resourcing of the new programme.

Challenge 2: The evidence gap

The nature and scope of this challenge has been described in earlier sections. While Turkey is a relatively data-rich context in some ways, there are significant gaps in the evidence base concerning baselines and outcomes for some of the most vulnerable categories of children, including those from refugee and ethnic minority groups. Part of the challenge is the lack of opportunity for independent data gathering capacity: UNICEF and others are heavily reliant on infrequently gathered official data.

As noted earlier, some areas of programming (notably) are particularly affected by this evidence gap. This is particularly true of child protection; but in education too, some forms of data (e.g. on refugee educational outcomes) are lacking. As with the 'disconnect' challenge, one of the biggest gaps relates to evidence concerning the real-world benefits of programmes and services delivered by UNICEF and others. UNICEF needs to find more responsive ways of gauging the effects of its interventions, not assuming (for example) that teacher training results in better educational outcomes for children.

The related opportunity in this case is to work more closely with government counterparts (national/local) and other partners to find more locally responsive and regular ways of gathering relevant data. There are also strong links between this agenda and that of child rights monitoring, the systems for which (as discussed above) are weak. UNICEF might also use its own MICS methodology and other survey techniques, in partnership with others, to help deepen the evidence base.

Challenge 3: Working with civil society

One recurrent theme in the evaluation has been the crucial role played by civil society actors in ensuring the effective and equitable delivery of services. That role has become much more difficult to sustain in the current political climate, and UNICEF (with the UN in Turkey as a whole) has an important role in helping to keep the space open for NGOs and other civil society actors, particularly at the local level.

UNICEF has an opportunity to lead on this agenda, to promote an understanding on the essential role played by CSOs in this context, and to support partnerships between CSOs and local authorities. Although the role of CSOs should be understood in more than just instrumental terms, helping to compensate for weaknesses or capacity gaps in government systems, there are strong practical and policy reasons for championing their role. There are at least two aspects to this. One concerns the ability of such organisations to reflect the interests of local communities, based on proximity and a relationship of trust. This trust factor should not be underestimated as a factor in people's ability to access services. The second concerns CSOs' links across (and understanding of) different social groups, including those that may be socially marginalised or isolated such as linguistic and ethnic minorities, women, people with disabilities, and refugees and migrants.

The role of CSOs in this regard is essential to the independent monitoring of child rights function and related policy advocacy; to evidence generation for monitoring the situation of children and identifying systemic or other problems; to awareness raising on child rights; and to supporting rights holders and claimants in accessing redress mechanisms.

Challenge 4: UNICEF and social cohesion

Social cohesion between refugee and host communities poses one of the most urgent challenges in Turkey today. As argued above, UNICEF needs a more coherent approach to this issue, as does UN. Current approaches appear ***ad hoc***, diffuse and reactive. While UNICEF must be realistic in what it seeks to achieve in this area, and should be careful not to over-claim the social cohesion effects of individual initiatives (it has not done so to date), the new programme as a whole should be reviewed through a social cohesion lens – for example, thinking through the social cohesion dimensions of early childhood education. As suggest above, this extends beyond the refugee-host agenda, though that certainly presents the most immediate priority.

UNICEF has an opportunity here, building on existing social inclusion initiatives (e.g. its youth participation work) to take a lead in both addressing and better understanding the factors driving social division. There is a potentially wider role for C4D in promoting social cohesion (including dispelling some prevailing myths about refugees), both as a diagnostic tool and a force for change. The new country programme should also be prepared to address some of the challenging issues of social cohesion and social inclusion concerning ethnic minorities.

7.1 General conclusions

7.1 Context and evolving needs

The national context in Turkey over the evaluation period has been a turbulent one, and there have been major changes since the CPD was written in mid-2015. Two factors in particular over the past four years have affected the agenda for children and the operating environment for UNICEF and others: the rapid escalation in numbers of (mainly Syrian) refugees from around two million to over four million; and fundamental changes in Turkey's political and institutional landscape following the attempted coup in 2016 and subsequent national state of emergency. Changes in government structures and personnel have since made continuity of engagement with ministries difficult. More fundamentally, the human rights environment – particularly regarding freedom of speech and association – has become much more restrictive, according to several international observers. In this environment, many NGOs (including actual or potential partners of UNICEF) have been forced to close down or suspend activities. At the political level, EU accession talks have stalled and show few prospects of being revived while the current measures persist.

While Turkey is a relatively highly developed upper-middle income country, living standards are around half the EU average, and development is highly uneven across the country. As a result, there are persistent equity gaps, including regional and rural-urban disparities, as well as inequities related to gender, ethnicity and other factors. The recent economic downturn has compounded this situation. These inequities, largely related to poverty and social marginalisation, directly affect the security and development of children in Turkey. The threats to children are often gender-related: they include violence and abuse, child labour, child marriage, adverse discrimination, lack of access to quality inclusive education, threats to early childhood development, and lack of opportunities for self-development. Gender inequalities persist for women and girls. Appropriate provision for juvenile offenders is only available in parts of the country, and pre-primary schooling – while compulsory in theory from 2019 – is only available for some. Turkey has made progress in some of these areas, and the policy environment (including the new National Development Plan) is relatively favourable, though gender equality remains an exception.

While the agenda of concern for Turkish girls and boys is extensive, that for refugee and migrant children involves particularly acute vulnerabilities. The scale and nature of the refugee influx has had major social, political and economic consequences for the country – particularly in the poorer south east provinces where around half the refugees have settled. Despite Turkey's generous welcome of refugees, the politics surrounding the massive refugee influx (the largest in the world) have become increasingly challenging. Hardening social attitudes, particularly among host communities in areas of high refugee concentration, raise major issues about social cohesion and the potential for social conflict. Language and cultural differences compound political and social tensions, specifically around access to services and to the labour market. The Turkish government's policy to date has been largely to integrate Syrian refugees into (mainly urban) Turkish host communities and into mainstream public services, including the public-school system, rather than to 'contain' the refugee population and provide separate services. This remains official policy, despite the tensions noted here and recent government rhetoric about large scale return of Syrian refugees.

Turkey's strategic geopolitical position as a potential gateway to Europe for refugees has dominated recent relations with the EU, and its involvement in the Syrian conflict now sees it playing a direct military role within that country in efforts to secure a 'buffer zone' along its border – intended by the government in part to enable the large-scale return of Syrian refugees. Multiple uncertainties surround the potential outcomes.

UNICEF's role and strategy

UNICEF has risen well to the challenges involved in working in Turkey over the past four years. It adopted essentially the right strategy from the outset, including that of integrating its humanitarian and refugee-related work into its wider Turkey programme, and of working closely with government to help ensure that national and local systems were better able to meet the needs of all children, Turkish and refugee. In doing so, it mirrored the integration policy of the Government and has contributed substantially – through the extended CCTE and SVEP schemes as well as in other ways – to increasing access to formal schooling for refugee children with gender-targeted action for adolescent girls and boys, as well as enabling Syrian teachers to continue to play an active role in teaching Syrian children.

Across the wider programme, UNICEF's role has enabled significant progress in key areas for children. Significant progress has been on the justice for children agenda, on child-friendly budgeting and planning in municipalities, and on addressing child labour. The language of child protection now features in official language and policy (national and local) in ways that it did not before UNICEF's involvement. Community-based child protection – originally focused on refugees – has significantly extended scope of local child protection services, and work on the ASDEP has helped provide a basis for extending the reach of social services. While much remains to be done to strengthen these systems, significant progress has been achieved despite major institutional upheaval. The humanitarian (refugee-focused) work has been appropriate and justified in its own right and has been well used to shed light on more general problems concerning national and local child protection systems.

The strategy outlined in the 2016-2020 CPD has remained essentially the right one over the intervening years in despite of the changes and turbulence noted above. That said, the balance of effort has shifted in relative terms away from service delivery and more towards systems strengthening and policy work. This shift was warranted in the circumstances given the capacities of the state to deliver services; and it should be continued in the next phase of UNICEF's programme.

The role played by UNICEF in Turkey has appropriately reflected its mandate, policy priorities and comparative advantage in this context. It has also been consistent with the wider UN approach to national resilience building under the '3RP' Syria regional plan. UNICEF has built on and deepened relationships with central government ministries while taking steps to strengthen relations with provincial and municipal authorities in key areas of the country. It has played a role that perhaps no other international organisation could play in working across sectors and ministries, and in helping bridge the gap between national, provincial and local layers of government. Much more remains to be done in this respect. UNICEF needs to continue to work beyond Ankara and to build on the existing working relationships with local authorities not just in the south east of the country but more widely across the most deprived areas of the country. That requires a consistency of engagement with local actors, including civil society networks, that is a challenging but necessary part of this 'outreach' approach.

Assessing the effectiveness of UNICEF's work is easier in some cases than in others. The link between UNICEF's interventions and positive outcomes is demonstrable in the case of the justice for children work, enrolment of boys and girls in formal education, provision of non-formal education opportunities, and (to some extent) the CCTE scheme, in all of which UNICEF effectively combined policy influence, systems work and support to implementation. There are other areas of work – including social cohesion and child rights monitoring – in which UNICEF's impact is less clear or appears minimal, perhaps because the contribution to the relevant outcome is indirect, is one among multiple contributory factors or can only be judged in the medium to longer-term. UNICEF's framing of its own agenda has not always helped in this regard.

The CPD framework of outcomes and outputs, while attempting to highlight cross-sectoral linkages, is rather confusing and appears unbalanced across the four outcomes. The stated 'Outputs' in the CPD are really sub-outcomes; and there is a lack of clear logical connection between activities, outputs and outcomes. A more clearly articulated framework would better enable UNICEF to track its own effectiveness, analyse the reasons for success and failure, and be more accountable for the results. Part of the challenge here is to reconcile the requirement to align with UNICEF's global 'generic' reporting frameworks on the one hand, and on the other to construct an effective and relevant performance management framework at the national level. The evaluation concludes that a better way of reconciling these demands in the Turkey context needs to be found in the new CPD for 2021-2025.

Overall, the evaluation concluded that UNICEF could strengthen both the theoretical underpinning of the programme and the way in which it seeks to assess whether the various programme components are achieving their aims. The challenges highlighted in the process of trying to assess effectiveness for the current evaluation reflect an important challenge for the Country Office itself. For each programme component, UNICEF needs a more robust and consistent answer to the questions: what difference are we making in practice for vulnerable children? And how do we know? The challenge is a global one for UNICEF but has its own particular features in Turkey.

UNICEF as a whole has much to learn from the Turkey experience. Continuity of engagement with government ministries has provided a basis of trust on which to build a platform of support that extends from policy formulation and technical advice to direct support to implementation – in a context where international organisations generally have struggled to find a clear role. UNICEF's comparative advantage here has been clear: it is a trusted partner of government, and its breadth of mandate and technical capacity have allowed it to work across sectors and ministries, while helping bridge the gap between national and sub-national layers of government. UNICEF's needs to be careful to maintain its independence of judgment, but the evaluation concludes that the overall working relationship with government in this context has been a constructive and appropriate one, providing a strong basis for future collaboration as well as for further policy advocacy.

UNICEF now faces some strategic choices. The humanitarian funding streams that have allowed it to grow its overall programme must be expected to reduce significantly over the course of the next two to three years – though geopolitical and other factors may see alternative funding sources coming on-stream. More generally, a high degree of medium-term uncertainty surrounds the forward planning agenda for UNICEF, particularly concerning the Syrian refugees and their status (political, social, economic); the effect of geopolitical and global factors on Turkey's security and economic situation; and the scale and nature of future aid or loan financing to Turkey. Given this uncertainty, particularly concerning refugees, UNICEF must retain flexibility to respond as necessary to urgent new needs. But the overall picture and likely resource constraints suggest that there is a need to consolidate and focus the programme around medium to long term priorities for all vulnerable children in Turkey.

There has already been a substantial shift by UNICEF from service delivery to system strengthening. It now needs to continue the related shift from a reactive to a more proactive agenda, giving due weight to preventive measures, while retaining focused support to essential service delivery. Securing the necessary resources to pursue this wider agenda will be challenging – particularly if it is to continue to work at provincial and municipal levels. But UNICEF should be confident in its ability to effect change primarily through its policy advocacy and technical advisory roles, building on established relationships of trust with the relevant government bodies.

7.2 Specific conclusions

Results, effectiveness and coherence

One of the most important areas of intervention by UNICEF in the past four years has been in enabling ***access to formal education by refugee children.***[188] The major rise in school enrolment for refugee girls and boys over this period (from 230,000 children in the 2014/2015 school year to 684,728 children in 2019/2020) has been enabled in part by UNICEF's interventions, including earlier work to support TEC , the SVEP incentives programme, and subsequent support to the integration of refugee children into the Turkish public school system. The Conditional Cash Transfers for Education scheme for Syrian refugees was both a significant policy achievement and an important 'direct benefit' intervention by UNICEF. The actual incentive effect of the cash payments involved is unclear and is due to be evaluated. While anecdotal evidence suggests that the CCTE payments are valued, and third-party monitoring data suggests a positive effect on attendance of enrolled children, this evaluation draws no firm conclusion either way as to its effect on levels of school retention or drop out. It should be noted that there appear to be significant counterincentives to school attendance, notably those related to child labour for boys, and child marriage, pregnancy and cultural factors for girls (though as noted above, reliable data is lacking on this). This underscores the need for complementary programme interventions to address these issues.

Non-formal and informal education opportunities (including Accelerated Learning Programme, Basic Literacy and Numeracy, and Turkish language courses) have also contributed significantly to access to education opportunities for refugee boys and girls. The development of an accredited ALP curriculum is an example of UNICEF successfully combining advocacy, policy and technical support.

UNICEF's child protection work has had a strong underlying logic, and has made a significant contribution to protecting children, notably through helping strengthen protection systems at all levels. UNICEF found an appropriate balance between supporting national systems and community-based protection services, and the child protection work has successfully evolved to meet emerging needs. The addition of a child protection component to the extended CCTE scheme has allowed UNICEF to shine some light on family-level issues and negative social norms that might be preventing refugee boys and girls from attending school, or which may be causing other harm. UNICEF is rightly seeking to get this protection component adopted by the wider national CCTE scheme.

UNICEF's work on the issues of child marriage and child labour has been important and valued by partners, particularly at the local and municipal levels. This was an area where the evaluation felt UNICEF could do more to help build and support coalitions combining local authorities and civil society actors. The work on children in contact with the law (enabling more child friendly judicial process) is a good example of combining policy advocacy and advisory work with practical support to implementation. The evaluation suggests that UNICEF could broaden the scope of its work in this area to include more on children in ***conflict*** with the law. Given the new legislation and policy directives in this area UNICEF has an important role to play in ensuring that the new rules are applied effectively and benefit children in all parts of the country.

Some questions surround the coherence of the child protection work. For example, the links were not clear between child welfare and justice for children, or community-based child protection and child rights monitoring mechanisms. With regard to child-care, there are critical linkages between education, social policy, justice, health and other services. While UNICEF understandably focussed its efforts on foster care, case management and social work outreach (ASDEP), the evaluation suggests that in the next CPD, a more holistic approach needs to be taken. Working on prevention will also require closer work with the outreach social services run by MoFLSS.

[188] Education-related work, mostly targeted on refugee children, has constituted by far the largest budgetary component of the programme over the evaluation period (see Figure 5 in Section 2 above).

In the area of child rights monitoring, UNICEF's support to the Ombudsman's Institution has seen that body adopt a new Child Rights Strategy; and UNICEF has played a significant advocacy role in the establishment of the Parliament Subcommittee for the Child Rights. Neither of itself ensures that child rights will be more consistently monitored and enforced in Turkey, but they are important steps towards that goal. UNICEF will need to stay closely engaged with this agenda.

The evaluation also makes the case for more consistent collaboration with other UN agencies. The 2015 evaluation of UNICEF's response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey[189] noted a quite fractured and competitive environment among the UN county team. While that environment is now far more constructive, positive collaboration is still not as strong as it could be. Some respondents to the evaluation felt that UNICEF itself could be more engaged in UN collaborative activities, [190] although the overall finding here is that UNICEF has done relatively well on this front. Where there are common programmes, they tend to be rather technically focused – as for example with the collaboration between UNICEF and ILO on developing a toolkit on child labour among Turkish and refugee children. More concerted joint advocacy and common strategic approaches by UN agencies are needed on some of the key child rights issues.

A more joined up UN approach at local and provincial levels is certainly warranted, on social cohesion and in other areas of work. This we believe includes support to the role of civil society organisations, making the argument with government bodies as to their essential role and seeking to promote essential coalitions of official and voluntary actors.

Cross-cutting issues and wider lessons

The humanitarian-development nexus. UNICEF's decision early in the refugee crisis response to focus primarily on system strengthening reflected the prevailing context and the kind of role it demanded. But it raised the question whether relatively acute needs could be met through an essentially developmental approach. The answer in this case appears to be that they can, but (because of the time-lag involved) only if interim provision is also made for meeting immediate needs through support to supplementary service delivery. In UNICEF's case, the nexus involved adopting a changing mix of implementation strategies over time. Its technical advisory role is particularly effective (and appreciated) in this context. With regard to funding, despite the Grand Bargain commitments of donors, it seems that the gradual withdrawal of humanitarian funding is not being matched by a commensurate increase in developmental funding to help smooth transitions. This adds to the sustainability challenges noted above and represents an advocacy priority for UNICEF in collaboration with UNDP, UNHCR and other UN agencies.

UNICEF's approach to gender issues. The UNICEF Country Office has tried to address gender issues both through a set of specific gendered programme priorities, and through an integration approach and efforts to make systems gender responsive. While the gendered programme elements appear to the ET evaluation team to have been appropriate and largely effective, it is less clear whether integration and mainstreaming efforts have worked, and UNICEF should review its own working practices and capacities in this regard. While UNICEF has generally done well in identifying and addressing the different needs and vulnerabilities of girls and boys in Turkey, more remains to be done to provide an evidential basis for gender-related outcomes.

[189] Evaluation of UNICEF's response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey (2015) (Darcy et al.).
[190] Interviews with UN staff in Ankara

Sustainability, challenges and opportunities

With most humanitarian funding streams likely to dry up over the next one to two years, UNICEF faces imminent challenges relating to sustainability and transition of some of its largest programme components. These include the two large cash-based initiatives, the CCTE programme for refugees and the SVEP incentive scheme. Both deserve to be continued, although UNICEF's role in their future is unclear. The evaluation concludes that UNICEF should seek to secure future funding for both, as the government is unlikely to fund them, and the Regional Office (particularly through the RD) could play an important advocacy role in this regard at senior EU levels in Brussels; but UNICEF should aim to handover the administration of the CCTE. For the SVEP scheme in particular, UNICEF arguably has a moral obligation to try to achieve a sustainable transition, given the livelihood dependencies involved.

There remain multiple challenges. Neither the (revised) SVEP cadre nor their incentive scheme appear sustainable in the longer term. UNICEF is engaging with MoNE on their potential future role, and opportunities may exist for using SVEPs in relation to programmes such as the out-of-school children study. The sustainability of the ALP work is also in doubt, pending a viable hand-over solution to MoNE.

The problem of system disconnects

The evaluation highlights a number of other challenges and obstacles to progressing the child rights agenda in Turkey – and a series of related opportunities to advance this agenda. The first of the challenges concerns a ***series of 'disconnects'*** in the systems designed to protect children and support their development. These consist of both 'horizontal' failures to connect policy and systems within and across the relevant Ministries in Ankara, and 'vertical' disconnects between the national, provincial and local/municipal levels of government administration. UNICEF has played an important part in helping to bridge some of those divides, for example in 2017, by providing financial and technical support for the creation of linkages between education and social assistance information systems. UNICEF should continue to play this bridging role, while being careful not to perpetuate divides in its own ways of working and engaging with government. It needs to be able to speak convincingly to a cross-sectoral agenda if it is to influence a more 'joined up' approach to policy making and systems design. At the same time, it needs to maintain the sector-specific expertise in child-related policy and practice that has contributed so much of value to government and non-governmental partners alike.

The evaluation identifies other areas of apparent disconnect, perhaps the most important of which is the ***gap between the intended outcomes from a policy and the 'real world' outcomes*** for children. Too often, the benefit delivered through services or protection systems (including child rights monitoring) does not match the stated aim. Sometimes this relates to a 'temporal' disconnect between system strengthening and service delivery outcomes. Sometimes the necessary conditions are lacking to achieve the stated aim. The evaluation cites the example of the integration of Syrian refugee children into the Turkish public-school system, which faces multiple challenges. There is a risk in this case of 'integration' being achieved in name only; and the same risk applies to other areas of policy. UNICEF should be prepared to identify and highlight such situations and advocate for necessary changes in policy, systems or capacities to enable the goal to be achieved in practice. This 'reality check' function depends on the ability to monitor local outcomes, going beyond the initiatives with which UNICEF is directly involved. This an area where we believe UNICEF has a role to play in coalition with other actors (state and CSO).

Gaps in available data and evidence

A second major challenge identified by the evaluation lies in the ***scarcity of consistent*** data and evidence concerning the security and development of some of the most vulnerable categories of children, as well as data on the effect of related interventions. UNICEF has played a substantial role in improving national level outcome data for children, working closely with the relevant Ministries and with TurkStat. However, there is considerable scope to do more, including the potential for using the MICS approach as a complement to the DHS process in monitoring SDG-related outcomes. More 'granular' data is often lacking that would enable provincial and local level issues to be identified; and separate data on vulnerable minority groups appears almost entirely lacking. This makes targeting specific interventions to help such groups impossible.

For the four million refugees in Turkey, of whom close to half are children, the evidence base remains thin, in large part because of government restrictions on the collection of relevant data. This is true both of the 3.6 million Syrian refugees and the 400,000 or more refugees from other countries (which would be considered a massive influx in any other context). [191]The unquantified but significant numbers of unregistered refugees must be added to these totals, and relatively little is known about their condition.

The availability of gender and age-related data and analysis is uneven. While there is generally good disaggregated data available for education, evidence on retention and completion of secondary education for adolescent girls and boys (including NFE and ALP) is incomplete. This makes it hard to make links to child marriage and child labour agendas. In the field of child protection, the significant data gaps include gendered targeting for children with disabilities, child labour and children from minorities; and data on access to protection services and counselling by girls and boys. Data on violence against children (including GBV) is almost entirely lacking as reporting does not differentiate between children and women who were subjected to SGBV, those who are 'at risk' of sexual violence and those with protection needs who received preventive interventions through community-based child protection. The shutdown of NGOs – and particularly women's NGOs – since 2016 limits the scope for gendered data gathering and evidence collection more generally.

The gaps in the evidence concerning children are linked to major ***weaknesses in the systems for child rights monitoring in Turkey.*** The MoFLSS itself has limited capacity to generate and analyse child protection data due in part to weak information management systems. UNICEF has had some policy and advocacy successes, including the development and adoption in 2018 of a new Child Rights Strategy by the OI, and the establishment of a child rights monitoring body in Parliament. But real progress has been strictly limited in practice. Restrictions on data collection concerning refugees remain in place, the reach and capacity of the OI are still limited, and the role of civil society organisations in policymaking, monitoring and delivery of services is not properly institutionalised. Overall, UNICEF and others seem too heavily reliant on limited official data on child rights fulfilment, and sources of independent monitoring are lacking.

The main structural causes behind the weaknesses of independent CRM systems appear to relate to the limited separation of power and public accountability systems. Despite some positive achievements, solid and sustainable results in this area are constrained by the complex political situation and the shrinking space for civil society organisations.

[191] The 2018 TDHS has gone some way to filling some basic quantitative data gaps concerning the refugee population

Collaboration with civil society

A third challenge identified by the evaluation relates to ***UNICEF's engagement with civil society.*** Following the closure of many NGOs after the 2016 attempted coup, UNICEFs range of potential NGO partners has shrunk, and it tends now to work with the larger (state-approved) NGOs including TRC (which has strong links to government), ASAM and Support to Life. It has some ongoing partnerships with universities, including Hacettepe in Ankara and is rightly looking to expand its partnerships with private sector actors.

While UNICEF's partnerships with national CSOs are appropriate and productive, UNICEF should recognise and promote the crucial role played by more local CSOs in this context, particularly with regard to equitable and effective service delivery. There are at least two aspects to this. One concerns the ability of such organisations to reflect the interests of local communities, based on proximity and a relationship of trust. The second concerns CSOs' links across (and understanding of) different social groups, including those that may be socially marginalised or isolated such as ethnic minorities, women, people with disabilities, and refugees and migrants. Their role in this regard is essential to the independent monitoring of child rights and related policy advocacy; evidence generation to monitor the situation of children and support advocacy efforts; awareness raising on child rights; and support to right holders and claimants in accessing redress mechanisms.

The evaluation also makes the case for more consistent UNICEF collaboration with other UN agencies. A more joined-up UN approach at local and provincial levels is certainly warranted on social cohesion and in other areas of work. This should go beyond technical cooperation: more concerted joint advocacy and common strategic approaches by UN agencies are needed on some of the key child rights issue and on support for the role of civil society organisations.

The challenge of social cohesion

The fourth challenge highlighted by the evaluation is that of addressing issues of social cohesion. Tension and conflict between refugee and host communities poses one of the most urgent challenges in Turkey today. As argued above, UNICEF needs a more coherent approach to this issue, as does the UN as a whole. Current approaches appear ad hoc, diffuse and reactive. UNICEF must be realistic in what it seeks to achieve in this area and should be careful not to over-claim the social cohesion effects of individual initiatives (it has not done so to date). The new programme should be reviewed as a whole, through a social cohesion lens – for example, thinking through the social cohesion dimensions of early childhood education. As suggest above, this extends beyond the refugee-host agenda, though that certainly presents the most immediate priority.
UNICEF has an opportunity, building on existing social inclusion initiatives (e.g. its youth participation work) to take a lead in both addressing and better understanding the factors driving social division. There is a potentially wider role for C4D in promoting social cohesion (including dispelling some prevailing myths about refugees), both as a diagnostic tool and a force for positive change.

Advocacy and rights

UNICEF can point to a number of policy advocacy successes, including getting child protection on the agenda in public policy, the CCTE policy change, and establishment of CR Committee. Yet while respondents to the evaluation felt that UNICEF had a powerful and influential voice, it was not always as vocal as it might be on child rights issues. This matters particularly at a time when the voice of civil society is less heard. A politically nuanced and a strategic approach is needed to continue developing and strengthening national monitoring and accountability system for children's rights, including those of civil society. For its part, UNICEF needs to find ways of strengthening its influencing work on gender and the rights of minorities, as well as on the role of civil society. Part of the answer may lie in more creative use of C4D approaches, and in building and supporting coalitions at the local level on topics like child marriage and child labour.

7.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are inter-linked in a number of ways, some of which are indicated below. The ET recognises that UNICEF is already working on some of the agendas noted here. It also recognises that these recommendations are in some cases dependent on the availability of adequate resources or on other factors – including the political 'space' to act. However, it believes that UNICEF's unique mandate and reputation is such that it can influence these factors over time, and that the attempt to do so on behalf of children is an important part of its mission.

All of the following recommendations are addressed in the first instance to the UNICEF Turkey Country Office. However, several of these may require working with colleagues at regional and HQ level; and some depend on external collaboration.

R1. Identify and help bridge disconnects within and across government systems

UNICEF should have a central part of its mission in Turkey to identify and help bridge 'horizontal' and 'vertical' disconnects (and potential linkages) in policy and systems designed to protect children and promote their development. This includes identifying and addressing failures of consistent translation of policy into local service delivery for the most vulnerable categories of children (a 'reality check' function). This in turn should be linked to a renewed focus on child rights monitoring. It should build on existing relationships of trust with national, provincial and local/municipal authorities, as well as the potential for working with community-based organisations and networks.

Sub-recommendations:

R1.1 UNICEF should further develop its 'convening' and brokering role in bringing together different government authorities to ensure complementarity of approaches in protecting the best interests of children. This requires working across national systems, and between the national and local/provincial levels, to help make the necessary links in policy and systems.

R1.2 This will require UNICEF to build on and strengthen its links with local level authorities (including municipalities) and to engage with them consistently over time. The respective roles of the Ankara and Gaziantep offices should be reviewed in this light.

R1.3 UNICEF should strengthen its role in identifying and help bridge 'reality gaps' between policy and delivery of services for children. This should build on the local engagement described above, strengthening of monitoring functions, and working with civil society networks (see R4 below).

R2. Consolidate and ensure sustainable transition of current service delivery programmes in the education sector

UNICEF should seek to ensure the sustainability of its current cash-based and service delivery programmes in the education sector (CCTE, SVEP, ALP) while exploring options for handing over its own administration of those programmes to other actors in the short to medium term.

Sub-recommendations:

R2.1 UNICEF should seek new international funding sources for the refugee extension of the CCTE scheme, given the likelihood that the GoT will not be able to bring it on budget in the near term. The Regional Office could play an important advocacy role in this regard, particularly with the EU in Brussels.

R2.2 UNICEF should pursue policy advocacy to extend the CP component of the extended CCTE to the wider national CCTE scheme and should consider re-targeting towards secondary school level where attendance rates are much worse than for primary level.

R2.4 UNICEF should explore options for handing over of the administration of the CCTE refugee element with the GoT/TRC.

R2.5 UNICEF should seek to secure future funding for a (revised) SVEP programme and discuss handover of administration with MoNE and potential partners. Likewise, it should aim to secure future funding for ALP and discuss handover with MoNE.

R3. Build stronger cross-sectoral linkages within UNICEF's own programme

In order to fulfil its ambition to work effectively across sectors to tackle multi-factor challenges to children's security and development, UNICEF needs to find better ways of bringing together agendas that are currently highly 'projectized' by donors, working to different timeframes and sometimes pursued in isolation from each other. The goal should be ***integrated programming*** at provincial and local/municipal levels, and highly coordinated policy and systems engagement at national level.

Sub-recommendations:

R3.1 The child labour agenda needs to be better integrated both within UNICEF's own child protection agenda and with the work of other UN agencies. The related evidence-generating work could usefully cross-fertilise the work on other aspects of UNICEF's agenda, including child protection and education.

R3.2 Likewise, the child rights monitoring agenda should be more closely linked to the community-based child protection work as well as other aspects of the CP programme.

R3.3 Given the critical care-system linkages noted above between education, social policy, justice, health and other services, the next CPD should adopt a more holistic approach that draws the appropriate links between these services. In doing so, it should draw on the UNICEF global social protection strategic framework to better integrate and orientate the future CPD ***(Integrated Social Protection Systems: Enhancing equity for children*** – https://www.unicef.org/reports/global-social-protection-programme-framework-2019)

R4. Diversify the partner base and help build stronger coalitions at all levels

For the post-2020 country programme, UNICEF needs to review its partnership portfolio and collaborations. It should aim for stronger UN collaboration on children's and gender issues, greater diversity of civil society partnerships, and the fostering of local coalitions between municipal authorities and community-based actors.

Sub-recommendations:

R4.1 UNICEF should pursue stronger collaboration and harmonisation with UNHCR, UNDP, UN Women and ILO on issues such as social cohesion, gender-related issues (including child marriage and GBV) and child labour, aiming to ensure the UN speaks with one voice on key child-related issues.

R4.2 In relation to the above recommendation, UNICEF should review the case for opening a small liaison office in Istanbul – where many other UN agencies have offices – or of seconding a staff member to a sister UN agency (e.g. UNHCR), particularly given the scale of issues related to refugee and migrant children in that city.

R4.3 UNICEF should maintain and build on effective current NGO partnerships like those with TRC, ASAM and Support to Life, while seeking to diversify its range of NGO partnerships nationally and locally, as conditions allow.

R4.4 In tandem with the diversification of partnerships, UNICEF should play a greater role in building and supporting coalitions and networks at the local level working on child-related and gender issues.

R4.5 In this context, UNICEF might consider trialling a consortium model i.e. multi-lateral partnerships between provincial/municipal authorities, CBOs and UNICEF, in order to foster more joined approaches and stronger collaboration. An adapted child-friendly cities model may provide a useful framework.

R5. Evolve UNICEF's technical support, policy advisory and capacity development roles

Given that the provision of technical support and advice on specific child-related agendas is clearly a key part of UNICEF's added value in this context, UNICEF should maintain and further develop its technical capacities – including expertise on ECD, gender and public finance for children, as well as child rights monitoring. At the same time, it should continue to build the capacities of both local authorities and non-governmental actors on child-related issues, and act as a catalyst in attempts to find locally appropriate solutions for children.

Sub-recommendations:

R5.1 Maintain and enhance UNICEF's capacities to provide relevant policy advice to government at all levels, particularly in the areas of ECD, gender and public finance for children.

R5.2 Reflecting the priority given in the Education Vision 2023 to strengthen the quality of education, UNICEF should seek to play a technical advisory role towards PIKTES, in discussion with MoNE.

R5.3 Given the potentially pivotal role of social workers in promoting the security and well-being of all children in Turkey, UNICEF should discuss with MoFLSS how it can better support the ASDEP process and build social work outreach capacity.

R5.4 UNICEF should offer consistent technical support and advice to local level authorities in areas of greatest child vulnerability (including its gender-specific dimensions), tailoring support to local priorities (e.g. child labour in Adana). This should be combined with targeted local evidence generation on selected priority issues.

R5.5 UNICEF should maintain senior-level capacity on gender analysis. UNICEF should work with its government counterparts to address training and policy gaps on PSEA, and to address issues identified (including abuse of children in detention facilities).

R5.6 UNICEF's should be creative in its efforts to develop capacity, which should include – but go beyond – technical training for individuals. Where possible they should include on-the-job accompaniment and mentoring, and potentially cross-institutional secondments. They should also include organisational capacity development as appropriate.

R6. Strengthen the evidence and monitoring base

Given the gaps in the evidence base concerning the fulfilment of child rights in Turkey, and the serious weakness of child rights monitoring systems, UNICEF should invest more in this area of work both with government and other partners. This should include thorough analysis of current legislation, policies, regulations and the social welfare workforce in order to identify factors that hamper the realisation of children's rights and address gender inequalities. It should also include documentation of lessons from this context that might have wider application, including lessons arising from ground-breaking efforts to integrate refugee children into the public school system.

In parallel with efforts to secure more consistent data on children and child rights, UNICEF should aim to strengthen the conceptual underpinning of its results monitoring framework as described in section 3 of this report, as well as the ways in which it seeks to monitor progress and changes in outcomes. This relates to the reality check function identified above and includes in particular gender-related outcomes. In doing this, UNICEF in Turkey needs to find better ways to reconcile the requirements to align with UNICEF's global reporting frameworks on the one hand, and to construct an effective and relevant performance management framework at the national level on the other. Given its particular experience in combining humanitarian and development targets within the same strategy and monitoring framework, the TCO should also actively contribute to the corporate dialogue on global standard indicators and their relevance to the range of contexts where UNICEF operates.

Sub-recommendations:

R6.1 Consider designating dedicated human resources on child policy, systems and child rights monitoring to inform UNICEF policy, strengthen outcome monitoring and underpin UNICEF's policy advocacy in Turkey. This should also help UNICEF play the 'reality check' role described above.

R6.2 While continuing to work with key ministries on data gathering and data quality assurance, work more closely with civil society actors on this agenda, including academic institutions and local civil society actors to provide a higher degree of independent review and evidence generation.

R6.3 In the new CPD, UNICEF should work more on developing different qualitative and quantitative monitoring instruments, which would additionally enable feedback from the local level about child rights fulfilment and the position of children in different environments and systems. This could include MICS and KAP survey techniques (see also R7 below).

R6.4 Given the unique nature and scale of integrated education (host/refugee) in Turkey, UNICEF should document and analyse the experience (with MoNE) in order to identify lessons both for short term policy or systems adjustments and more generally.

R6.5 Actively seek to fill gaps in current data and evidence concerning refugees and minority groups, as well as for children with disabilities.

R6.6 In drawing up the new CPD for 2021-25, UNICEF TCO should strengthen the logical framework of the programme in the ways described in section 3 of this report. At the same time, it should aim to produce a RAM framework that better meets the needs of the Turkey context.

R7. Strengthen UNICEF's work to influence social norms and social cohesion

UNICEF should in the new CPD devise a more coherent and consistent approach to influencing relevant social norms and to promoting social cohesion, in close collaboration with UN and other actors. It should broaden its use of C4D techniques in this regard, both in terms of evidence generation and influencing, as well as reviewing all relevant programme components with a social cohesion lens.

Sub-recommendations:

R7.1 In light of the alarming decrease in social acceptance of refugees, UNICEF should collaborate more closely with UNHCR and IOM on the social cohesion (host/refugee) agenda, which demands a multi-sectoral approach and broad understanding of the relevant social and economic drivers.

R7.2 Specifically, UNICEF should review the education components of its programme with social cohesion in mind, addressing factors that may exacerbate social cohesion issues and minimising unintended effects.

R7.3 UNICEF should have a particular focus, in collaboration with UNFPA and UN Women, on influencing adverse gender-related social norms, including child protection issues like child marriage and GBV, and norms that affect the realisation by adolescent girls in particular of their full potential. The Gaziantep experience on child marriage should be evaluated in this regard and the lessons applied more widely.

R7.4 UNICEF should build on and extend its current C4D agenda to better understand and influence prevailing social beliefs and attitudes that influence the treatment of girls and boys. Where possible this might include the use of KAP surveys. At a minimum, UNICEF should seek to consistently promote key messages through existing programmes (including education and child protection), through suitable media outlets and otherwise, and devise (with partners) a way of gauging changes of behaviour and attitude over time.

R8.UNICEF, communication and child rights advocacy

UNICEF should review its public and private influencing roles with a view to strengthening both. The TCO's Communication and Public Advocacy Strategy 2018-21 provides a sound overall base, but UNICEF needs more specific influencing targets and related strategy to be built into each component of its programme. The communication function in this sense needs to be more closely aligned with the programme than is currently the case, particularly in areas of the programme (like ADAP) that involve giving a voice to young people. UNICEF's role as an advocate is particularly important. It should be careful to maintain its independence of judgment while working closely with government counterparts. It must also remain prepared to make the case for what may at times be politically or culturally sensitive action where it judges it to be in the best interests of children and necessary for the fulfilment of child rights.

Sub-recommendations:

R8.1 In formulating its new CPD and related planning documents for 2021-25, UNICEF should build in influencing targets as an integral part of the programme design. Progress against these should be reviewed regularly by managers, and adjustments to targets & strategy made as necessary.

R8.2 Advocacy on gender-related issues needs to be maintained even though the current policy environment may be unfavourable in some ways. UNICEF needs to make the case for young women (Turkish and refugee) to be given the opportunities to able to participate fully in society and for girls' secondary education to be given due priority. Child marriage should remain an advocacy priority.

R8.3 Transition funding should be an advocacy priority for UNICEF in collaboration with UNDP, UNHCR and other UN agencies. This case can be made on both child development and humanitarian grounds, as well as on the grounds of social cohesion.

R9. Addressing neglected agendas

While UNICEF has put its emphasis on addressing systemic issues relating to child protection and development, the acid test of those systems is whether they effectively address the most pressing areas of child vulnerability. Some of the new or extended areas of work mentioned in this report are already suggested by the 2018 Programme Review and acknowledged by the TCO as necessary areas of growth. While UNICEF clearly needs to prioritise its efforts and cannot hope to cover all the relevant agendas for children, the evaluation suggests that certain issues be reviewed by UNICEF in this light, and that as a minimum UNICEF seeks to gather baseline information relating to each.

- ***Children working on the street.*** Information on the scale, nature and drivers of this phenomenon is scarce, and UNICEF should work with others to seek to address this gap. The same is true for ***child trafficking.*** More generally, UNICEF should review the scope of its work on child labour.
- Further work on ***children in contact with the law*** (including assisting policy roll-out and tackling violence against children in detention centres) should be matched by greater attention to children in ***conflict*** with the law, including for example the reintegration of juvenile offenders into society.
- ***Public finance for children*** (PF4C). The new CPD should focus more on integrating PF4C principles in the new CPD and seek close engagement on this agenda with the Strategy and Budgeting Presidency. Options for progressing this agenda include work on PF4C in SDG implementation, as a tool for the implementation of the National Development Plan.
- ***Early childhood development.*** UNICEF should adopt a more holistic approach to this agenda, building on existing work (including early childhood education). The 11th Turkey National Development Plan provides an opening for working more closely with the GoT on this agenda.

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