

Evaluation of UNICEF Interventions Supporting the Social Protection Reform in North Macedonia

INCEPTION REPORT

Final Draft, April 20, 2023

Prepared by:

Zehra Kacapor-Dzihic, Team Leader

Blerta Perolli-Shehu, International Specialist

Erisa Yzeiraj Pereira, International Specialist, Project Manager

Maja Gerovska Mitev, National Evaluator

Sophia Dunn, Quality Assurance

Contractor: Konterra Group

Report Commissioned by: UNICEF North Macedonia

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List of Acronyms

ALMPs	Active Labour Market Programs
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CO	Country Office
CP	Country Programme
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPE	Country Programme Evaluation
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSW	Centers for Social Work
CWD	Children with Disabilities
DCC	Day-Care Centers
EM	Evaluation Manager
EPI	Evaluation Performance Indicator
EQ	Evaluation Questions
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
ESA	Employment Service Agency
ESC	Evaluation Steering Committee
ET	Evaluation Team
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GD	Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEROS	Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System
GMA	Guaranteed Minimum Assistance
HRBa	Human Rights-Based Approach
ICF	International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health
IFI	International Financial Institution
IR	Inception Report
ISA	Institute for Social Activities
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MIS	Management Information System
MLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
MoF	Ministry of Finance
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPAA	National Plan for Adoption of Acquis
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
PwD	Persons with disabilities
QA	Quality Assurance
RBM	Result-based management
RO	Regional Office

RRF	Results and Resources Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOP	Standard Operations Procedure
TBD	To be determined
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNPSD	United Nations Strategy for Partnership for Sustainable Development
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WHO	(United Nations) World Health Organization

1 INTRODUCTION

1. The UNICEF Country Office (CO) in North Macedonia commissioned an evaluation of UNICEF Interventions Supporting the Social Protection Reform in North Macedonia as an opportunity for the CO and other relevant UNICEF stakeholders to benefit from independent assessment of UNICEF's performance and contributions to the social protection sector reform in the country.
2. In line with the requirements as described in the Terms of Reference (ToR), the evaluation intends to assess UNICEF North Macedonia contribution to the Social Protection System reform in North Macedonia during 2016-2020, with the summative perspective of the implementation of portfolio of social protection interventions, and formative perspective to identify current bottlenecks and potential mitigation measures, to generate recommendations towards policy improvements. The evaluation follows the 2019 OECD Development Assistance Committee evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, coherence, effectiveness, impact and sustainability and also assesses cross-cutting issues. Evaluation adheres to the Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the 2018 UNICEF Evaluation Policy and the principles of 'do no harm'. The evaluation is theory based and uses a mixed-methods approach drawing on three general sources of information: pre-existing documentation, pre-existing quantitative or qualitative information and primary qualitative and quantitative information as detailed in the methodology section below.
3. The immediate users of the evaluation findings and recommendations are expected to include several internal and external stakeholders, representatives of whom will be part of the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG), including UNICEF North Macedonia, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), the Institute of Social Affairs and Centres for Social Work (CSW) as well as implementing and development partners and donors.
4. The purpose of this Inception Report (IR) is to present the scope, purpose and objectives of the evaluation and describe how it will be conducted. It summarises key information about the context and UNICEF's social protection interventions under evaluation and identifies key stakeholders. The inception report builds on and expands the ToR of the evaluation ([Annex 1](#)).
5. The inception phase covers January–February 2023. The purpose of the inception phase is to gather relevant background information on UNICEF's activities towards contribution to the two major changes introduced in the country's social protection system in the period 2016-2020, i.e., activities and change strategies in contribution to the reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services, and the introduction of case management in the Centres for Social Work. During the inception phase, the evaluation team (ET) conducted a detailed document review of available documentation and consultations with UNICEF CO representatives. The inception phase also included designing a detailed evaluation data collection plan.

2 CONTEXT

Demographics

6. The Republic of North Macedonia is an upper middle- income country located in Southeast Europe. The country has a population of 1.8 million, of which 50.4 percent are female¹. The country is divided into eight statistical regions, covering 80 municipalities.
7. In recent years, North Macedonia has experienced a negative population growth, of -0.4 percent² which coupled with an aging population and high emigration rate, has decreased the working age-group from 71 to 60 percent³. According to the latest government statistical report, since the period of 2011-2021, the population aged 65 and up has increased from 11.8 percent to 17.2 percent⁴. This means the population is aging, but with fewer people in the workforce to earn an income to support the elderly. There are also less children being born to “replace” the workforce. The fertility rate decreased from 2.2 in 1991 to 1.5 in 2019⁵. The country has also experienced a decrease in marriages by 9.5 percent in the last decade while the number of divorces has increased by 12 percent⁶. These changes may have impacted on the low birth rate as 80 percent of children are born within wedlock.
8. The population is largely composed of ethnic Macedonians (58.4 percent) and other ethnic minority groups including Albanians (24.3 percent), Turks (2.5 percent), Rom (1.3 percent), Serbs (0.87 percent) and Bosnians (0.47 percent)⁷. Ethnic minorities, especially, Albanian and Roma, face slightly different demographic trends, with higher fertility rate and household size. Minority groups are also experiencing higher vulnerabilities in comparison to the ethnic Macedonian population.

Economy

9. North Macedonia has a relatively stable economy which is strongly integrated in the EU and Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA)⁸. In 2020, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was dominated by the services category at 55 percent, followed by mining, manufacturing, construction at 22.8 percent and lastly agriculture, forestry, and fishing at 8.6 percent⁹. The economy is however affected by a lack of consistent legal framework that enables effective operations for businesses and a lack of implementation of market laws. The informal economy also continues to represent a hindrance to the market in terms of competitiveness and sustainability. Recent data shows that 14 percent of the working population are informally employed, of which more than half are engaged in work¹⁰. Overall employment rate in North Macedonia is 66.3 percent. However, there is a distinct gender gap in the labour market where only 48.2 percent of women are engaged in labour compared to 69.7 percent of man. The country has seen stable growth in the employment rate, mainly due to reforms by the Employment Service Agency (ESA) including the Active Labour Market Programs (ALMPs).

¹ INSTAT, North Macedonia in figures, <https://www.stat.gov.mk/publikacii/2022/MK-brojki-2022-en.pdf>

² <https://data.worldbank.org/country/MK>

³ World Bank, Social Protection Situation Analysis, 2021

⁴ <https://data.worldbank.org/country/MK>

⁵ World Bank, Social Protection Situation Analysis, 2021

⁶ <https://data.worldbank.org/country/MK>

⁷ <https://balkaninsight.com/2022/03/30/north-macedonia-census-reveals-big-drop-in-population/>

⁸ UN 2020, North Macedonia Common Country Analysis for the 2021-2025 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

⁹ <https://data.worldbank.org/country/MK>

¹⁰ World Bank, Social Protection Situation Analysis, 2021

10. Long-term unemployment is high, with job seekers being unemployed on average for over 12 months. This is an improvement from past years where the average unemployment period was 23 months (in 2014)¹¹. Youth unemployment also remains high at 34.1 percent¹². There is a mismatch of skillset and market needs as well as outdated technology which further concerns the overall labour market. Furthermore, the labour market shows both regional discrepancies and gender inequality. Gender inequality is notable when it comes to income and earnings, and the sharing of home duties¹³. The northeast of the country has triple the rate of unemployment than other regions in the country, at 35.9 percent unemployment rate¹⁴.

Multi- Dimensional Poverty

11. North Macedonia has the third lowest poverty rate among Western Balkan countries. According to the World Bank, poverty rate (based on the upper middle income class poverty line) has shown a significant decrease from 41 percent in 2009 to 21 percent in 2018¹⁵. The at-risk-of-poverty rate also decreased from 35 percent in 2009 to 21.8 percent in 2018¹⁶.

12. The country's Gini Index which measures income equality across the country has declined from 33.6 percent in 2016 to 31.4 percent in 2020¹⁷. However, there is a notable inequality among the most vulnerable, with ethnic minorities, Albanian, and Roma population, multiple-children households, and single-parent households all facing higher at-risk-of-poverty rates.

13. According to the latest government statistics, an average household spends 67.2 percent of its income on their basic needs such as food, clothing, and housing. Increased family revenue, due to a rise in income, pensions, and social assistance, have led to increased numbers of households with adequate housing, access to water supply and basic sanitary conditions¹⁸.

14. **Education:** North Macedonia has achieved universal literacy; however quality education remains a challenge as identified by the low scores in the International Student Assessment (PISA) between the period of 2015-2018. Access to early childhood education in the country has improved at 67.4 percent. However, there is notable disparity in attendance among the poorest quintile (7.4 percent), ethnic groups (Albanians at 14.1 percent, and Roma and other ethnicities at 9.8 percent). Also, children in rural areas have a lower attendance than children in urban areas¹⁹.

15. School dropout is also more pronounced among ethnic minorities and in urban settings. Secondary education has higher out-of-school rates particularly among the poorest quintile and Roma. There is no gender disparity shown in relation to school dropout.

16. **Health:** North Macedonia basic immunisation coverage is at 95 percent, however in recent years there is an immunisation hesitancy among parents for children 0-35 months of age at 7.89 percent. This is more prevalent among urban (12.06 percent), richer (34.67 percent) and better educated adults (17.08

¹¹ <https://tradingeconomics.com/macedonia/long-term-unemployment-rate>

¹² <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.UEM.1524.ZS?locations=MK>

¹³ UNDP Gender Equality < <https://www.undp.org/north-macedonia/gender-equality>>

¹⁴ World Bank, Social Protection Situation Analysis, 2021

¹⁵ World Bank, 2022, Poverty and Equity Brief, https://databankfiles.worldbank.org/public/ddpext_download/poverty/987B9C90-CB9F-4D93-AE8C-750588BF00QA/current/Global_POVEQ_MKD.pdf

¹⁶ State Statistical Office, Laken Poverty Indicators in 2020 < https://www.stat.gov.mk/pdf/2022/4.1.22.40_mk.pdf>

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ UN 2020, North Macedonia Common Country Analysis for the 2021-2025 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

¹⁹ Ibid

percent)²⁰. After a reversal in 2017, the infant mortality rate continues to decline with the current rate of 5.7 deaths in 1000 live births in 2020²¹. Maternal mortality has also decreased from 12.7/100,000 live births in 2014 to 5.2 in 2020. Obesity is a growing concern among school-aged children with 38.4 percent of boys and 32.9 percent of girls being overweight²².

17. **Child Protection:** North Macedonia signed the Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) in 1993. The country's legal framework to protect children is strong with several key laws such as the National Strategy on Deinstitutionalization for 2018-2027, the Family Law and the Child Protection Law²³. Despite this, 73 percent of children ages 1-14 years in 2019 experienced some form of physical or psychological punishment by their caregivers²⁴.
18. North Macedonia has successfully transitioned from large-scale residential institutions to foster care and kinship programmes. Children in these large residential institutions have been transferred to alternative services such as small group homes, supported living facilities or foster families. Three centres for support of foster families have been established in the country, two of which are government -owned. Despite the progress, several challenges remain with the residential care and foster for children due to limited capacities of alternative care services and limited geographical spread of these services, limited number of foster care families and limited specialised training for these families.²⁵ Children with disabilities face even more obstacles to be placed into foster care.
19. Children with disabilities face several social and cultural barriers which inhibit their integration in daily life. As part of the deinstitutionalization agenda and to further support the no-children in large institutions strategy, the MLSP instituted day-care centres (DCC) as alternative forms of care for children with moderate and severe mental and physical disabilities and their families. DCCs are fully government funded centres whose management is subordinated to the CSWs. The centres are designed to serve small groups of children, 5-18 years of age, providing them with quality of care, and other psychosocial rehabilitation and counselling services.²⁶ However, their design model is not based on tailored needs of the children with disabilities particular to their area. DCCs are also utilised by both children and adults posing child safeguarding risks²⁷. Furthermore, DCCs are not well inter-linked with other sectors providing services in the municipality. Thus, these centres act more in social isolation which further marginalises these children²⁸.
20. **Gender:** North Macedonia has adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and has set up adequate legislation in place to ensure gender equality. However, the implementation of the legal framework is lacking. The country faces gender disparity in the labour market with high inactivity among rural and ethnic minority women. Furthermore according to UNWomen, women and girls aged 10+ spend 15.4% of their time in unpaid domestic work compared to 5.1% spent by men²⁹. Gender based violence is another issue in the country, with Roma girls being most vulnerable to it and early child marriage. Traditional gender norms which normalise some form

²⁰ Multidimensional Child Poverty in North Macedonia

²¹ UNICEF 2021 Annual Report

²² Ibid

²³ UNICEF 2019, Analysis of the Situation of Women and Children in the Republic of North Macedonia

²⁴ <https://data.unicef.org/country/mkd/>

²⁵ Bogoevska, Bornarova, and Georgievska, 2023. Transformation of Out-of-Home Services for Children in North Macedonia: Towards Individualized and Child Tailored Care. https://revistia.org/files/articles/ejss_v6_i1_23/Bogoevska.pdf

²⁶ Open the Window, 2020, Report on the Necessity to Design New Day Care Services

²⁷ Dunn, A. 2018 Review and Recommendations for Change: Day Care Centres and Services for Children with Disability

²⁸ Dunn, A. 2018 Review and Recommendations for Change: Day Care Centres and Services for Children with Disability

²⁹ <https://data.unwomen.org/country/north-macedonia>

of abuse at home and place the women at the centre of the home are more prevalent among ethnic minority groups. Ethnic minority women are also underrepresented in the political life and participate less in local-policy and decision making³⁰.

Overview of Social Protection system

21. North Macedonia has a comprehensive social protection system based on four main pillars: 1) social assistance (cash transfers), 2) social services, 3) social insurance (pensions) and 4) labour programs. The legal framework for Social Protection is grounded on the constitutional right to assistance. Social Protection is led by the MLSP which is responsible for the planning, regulating, and financing of the social protection system, the Institute for Social Activities (ISA) which sets standards and supervises social service providers and the ESA which is responsible for labour market policies. At the local level, social protection system is implemented through the CSW, municipalities, and other providers³¹. A summary of the 2019 Social Protection System in Macedonia is shown in Table 1.

³⁰ USAID 2019, North Macedonia Gender Analysis Report

³¹ World Bank, Social Protection Situation Analysis, 2021

TABLE 1: A SUMMARY OF THE 2019 SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM IN MACEDONIA

Category		Benefits and Programs
Social Assistance	Cash transfer to support the poor, the vulnerable and persons with disabilities	Guaranteed Minimum Assistance
		Child Allowance and Education Allowance
		Parental allowance (means-tested)
		Disability allowance
		Compensation for assistance and care for another person
		Compensation of part-time salary
		Housing allowance
		Permanent compensation
		One-time financial assistance
		Social Assistance for the elderly
		Guaranteed Minimum Assistance
Social Services		Information and reference services
		Professional assistance and support services
		Counselling Services
		Home Services
		Community Services
		Out of family protection services
Social Insurance	Pensions	Solidarity Pay
		Mandatory pillar based on individual accounts
		Voluntary private open and occupational pension funds
Employment and ALMPS		Individual counselling
		Intermediation
		Unemployment benefits
		Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs)
		Entrepreneurship support
		Internship Program
		Financial Support for job creation
		Wage subsidy
		Work engagement
		Training for a well-known employer
		Training for demanded occupations
		Advanced IT skills training
		Youth Guarantee
Labour Market Activation of vulnerable group projects		

Source: Ozen at al., *Social Protection Situation Analysis, World Bank 2021*

22. The financing of the social protection system is favourable as it is embedded in a strong legal framework and the rights in the constitution. North Macedonia has the highest spending in social protection systems in the Western Balkans however it is well below European standards. The largest spending is

on social insurance at 9.9 percent of the GDP, a dramatic increase from 1.2 percent in 2018. Social assistance spending is below the average of Western Balkans³².

23. The legal framework has evolved since 2009 with a major reform taking place in 2019 to revamp social protection services in the country. Prior to the 2019 reform, social protection services were fragmented, and services were incoherent and did not target the most vulnerable. As a result, the pre-reform social Financial Assistance (SFA) impacted poverty reduction by only 3 percent³³.
24. The 2019 reform of Social Protection brought significant change to the delivery of **social assistance** in the country with the aim to improve user experience by providing integrated services which targeted the holistic needs of a family. The new reform introduced the Guaranteed Minimum Assistance Scheme to improve targeting, coverage and adequacy, the new Integrated Case Management support, a means-tested social pension for over 65 years of old, and a new allowance and new child allowance³⁴.
25. **Social Assistance (cash transfers)**: Since 2019, social assistance operates in complementarity with the other three pillars of social protection. As a result, low-income families can receive higher financial support in a more targeted way. This approach coupled with the reduced spending on non-effective measures, led to an increase in coverage of families benefiting from Child Allowance and other benefits. To showcase the difference in cash benefits for families pre and post reform, Table 2 presents a scenario of the type of benefits a household with two children, where both parents are unemployed, will be eligible for³⁵.

TABLE 2: PRE AND POST 2019 REFORM - CASH BENEFIT SCENARIO

Cash benefits (Single family- 2 children scenario)	2018	2019
Social financial Assistance/Guaranteed Minimal Assistance	114.8 USD	119.34 USD
Child Allowance	0	32.85USD
Education Allowance	0	29.4 USD
Total	114.8USD	181.59USD

Source: North Macedonia Case Study, UNICEF, 2020.

26. Another major achievement from the 2019 reform, was the launching of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) which enables the assessment of disability in a holistic and coordinated way. This is a significant change from the pre-reform where children and youth were assessed on a medical basis only. The ICF was piloted in 2019 and became an official state policy in 2021. A new institution, the National Body for the Assessment of the Functionality of Children and Youth under 26 Years Old, has been set up to implement and monitor this reform.
27. **Social Services** expanded its services with new provisions such as respite care, kinship care etc., while strengthening its existing services in social prevention, rehabilitation and integration, counselling³⁶. A major milestone of the 2019 reform was the introduction of the Integrated Case Management approach which saw the multi- dimensional needs and vulnerabilities on a family basis. This also ensured an integrated user experience where users would have one point of contact for all the different social benefits eligible. It also created an enabling environment for the delivery of social protection assistance

³² Ibid

³³ 2020 Integrated Social Protection Systems, North Macedonia Case Study

³⁴ World Bank, Social Protection Situation Analysis, 2021

³⁵ 2020 Integrated Social Protection Systems, North Macedonia Case Study

³⁶ Ibid

at the municipality level³⁷. The Integrated Case Management integrated a collection of information both on cash benefits and social services on a household needs basis. This information system was designed to integrate the two previous existing information platforms, dating back to 2008: *CB-MIS* which was funded by the World Bank to support cash benefits, and *Lirikus* which was supported by UNICEF to effectively record and follow-up delivery of social support and care. Despite the significant progress made, the implementation of the Integrated Case Management remains a challenge. The lack of technical capacity, work overload of the CSWs and a need to re-organize the structure and shift the mentality from various points of contact to one single case manager for a family, remain a challenge in the adequate implementation of this service. North Macedonia has currently only 30 CSW serving all municipalities countrywide.

28. **Social insurance (Pensions):** North Macedonia has a multi-pillar pension system, making it one of the two countries in the Western Balkans to have fully developed its system. Pre-reform there were issues of equity and coverage with pensions among the poorest population group. This was addressed through the new 2019 new Law on Social Insurance of the Elderly and the three pension schemes (Solidarity Pag, Mandatory pillar based on individual accounts, and voluntary private open and occupational pension funds). Despite the well set up multi-pillar system, the country faces issues of pension deficit, mainly due to the ad-hoc indexation, which undermines long term sustainability. Recent studies noted the need for a strong fiscal strategy around pension funds and a strategy to improve equity and reach among the poorest quintile³⁸.
29. **Labour Market Programs (ALMPs):** The Employment Service Agency is responsible for supporting jobseekers' transition back to the labour market. ESA offers vocational training opportunities and supports youth transition from their education to job opportunities as well as wage subsidy, internship, self-employment, and public work programs opportunities. ESA has closely collaborated with SWC through the Labor Market Activation Vulnerable Groups pilot project, to specifically target GMA recipients providing individualised support to access labour market opportunities. The services provided by ESA are an important way to address unemployment, however, bureaucratic accreditation processes limit the timely delivery of these services.

[Sustainable Development Goals](#)

30. While North Macedonia adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, the National Strategy for the Sustainable Development 2009-2030 does not include all aspects and integrated approach of the 2030 Agenda. This is because the National Strategy was developed before the formulations of the SDGs and no revisions have been made to the National Strategy since. However, the country has prepared its first Voluntary National Review, setting draft SDGs indicators and a baseline for sustainable development. These indicators remain in draft form and are not streamlined within the national strategies³⁹.
31. North Macedonia has embarked on the EU accession process. The country's policymaking is heavily influenced by the EU integration agenda. However, stronger integration with the EU accession reform and SDGs is needed given that two-third of the agendas between the SDG and EU priorities for the country are fully aligned⁴⁰. The country has developed several documents such as the Government

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ World Bank, Social Protection Situation Analysis, 2021

³⁹ UN 2020, North Macedonia Common Country Analysis for the 2021-2025 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

⁴⁰ Ibid

Programme 2021-2025, the Economic Reform Programme 2020-2022, and the National plan for Adoption of Acquis (NPAA) to help with the SDG and EU agenda. However, a comprehensive long-term national strategy and sector specific strategies that include indicators and target for the SDGs and EU integration is needed to accelerate progress.

32. Other challenges for the implementation of the SDGs include the lack of political consensus, lack of ownership of the SDGs as well as low level of awareness among local government authorities. In 2018, the National Council for Sustainable Development prioritised SDGs 1,4, 8, 13, and 16 which largely correspond with the UNDAF 2016-2020 priority areas as well. The country lacks systematic monitoring data of the SDG indicators.

COVID-19

33. In addition to the health crisis, COVID-19 brought a decrease in the economic growth in North Macedonia with the real GDP declining by 4 percent due to the impact the restrictions had on domestic and external market demands⁴¹. According to 2022 data, the unemployment rate stood at 14.8 percent while youth unemployment rate remained high at 34.8 percent. The war on Ukraine and the energy crisis has also presented a new challenge for the economy as the country is facing all -time high inflation rates⁴².
34. The pandemic also negatively impacted children. The schools in North Macedonia closed for 54 weeks compared to the 14-week average in Eastern Europe and Central Asia⁴³. The country also experienced an increase in domestic violence cases and children being subject to some form of abuse and neglect.
35. To address some of the challenges caused by the pandemic, the government of North Macedonia amended legislation to relax the eligibility criteria for GMA, reducing the paperwork required for the application process and processing applications through a unique registry which linked several key government agencies together. As a result, the government was able to expand the coverage through the social assistance program by 25 percent so that families can receive adequate and critical support⁴⁴.

3 THE EVALUATION SUBJECT

Subject of the Evaluation

36. The **subject of this evaluation** is UNICEF's contribution to the Social Protection System reform in North Macedonia during 2016-2020. This strategic thematic evaluation aims to examine UNICEF's contribution to the two major changes introduced in the country's social protection system in the period 2016-2020: a) reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services, and b) the introduction of case management in the centres for social work.
37. The 2016-2020 UNICEF Macedonia Country Programme (CP) overall goal was to support Government efforts in advancing the realisation of children's rights, with special attention paid to the most marginalised: Roma children, CWD and child victims of violence and abuse⁴⁵. Within the CP, UNICEF's work on the social protection component sought to strengthen the country's capacity to improve

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² World Bank, 2022, Poverty and Equity Brief, https://databankfiles.worldbank.org/public/ddpext_download/poverty/987B9C90-CB9F-4D93-AE8C-750588BF00QA/current/Global_POVEQ_MKD.pdf

⁴³ <https://reliefweb.int/report/turkey/impact-education-disruption-europe-and-central-asia-march-2022>

⁴⁴ World Bank, 2022, Protecting North Macedonia's Poorest from Covid's Economic Impact <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2022/03/24/protecting-north-macedonia-s-poorest-from-covid-s-economic-impacts>

⁴⁵ ToR Evaluation of UNICEF Interventions Supporting the Social Protection Reform in North Macedonia

inclusive access to integrated social protection services that tackle poverty, discrimination, and social exclusion⁴⁶.

38. The 2016-2020 UNICEF Macedonia CP is linked to the United Nations National Strategy 2016-2020 for Partnership for Sustainable Development (UNPSD) and directly supports three of its outcomes: Social Inclusion, Governance, and Gender Equality. UNICEF aimed to work with Government partners to reform a fragmented and outdated social protection system to be more effective at tackling poverty, deprivation, and social exclusion. The approach was to focus on both the 'social transfers' and 'social services' sides of the system, to eventually provide an integrated response to families with children in need⁴⁷.
39. UNICEF Macedonia's 2016-2020 programme was designed to work across themes with a range of actors to achieve results, particularly for children with disabilities and Roma children. Annual reports indicate that UNICEF invested in partnerships with the Government and CSOs aiming at supporting children and ensuring integrated social protection services. UNICEF worked closely with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and other partners (such as the World Bank, EU and UNDP) on a comprehensive reform of the country's social protection system; UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (in partnership with CSO and Academia) in the drafting of the new Social Protection Law and a major revision of the Child Protection Law. Moreover, UNICEF worked with the Government to develop and adopt protocols for the implementation of cash benefits for children. The reform doubled the overall adequacy of cash benefits, contributing to the decrease of child poverty rates. UNICEF supported the government to implement case management at Centres for Social Work and also assisted the government to measure child-focused expenditure, resource gaps and spending performance. UNICEF continued the partnership with UNDP, UNFPA and UN women for advancing the rights of people with disabilities, focusing on foster care strengthening for children with disabilities, and for securing effective access to quality services for Roma children. UNICEF has supported the piloting of a new human rights-based model of disability assessment, based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF).
40. Based on the Theory of Change (ToC) and the **Results and resources framework** (RRF) of the CP document, the interventions supporting the Social Protection Reform covered a four-year period from 2016-2020⁴⁸ and aimed at supporting integrated and child-sensitive social protection services, as well as cross-sectoral coordination to design, implement and budget for social protection and policies⁴⁹.
41. **Geographic scope:** The Social Protection interventions were **national** in scope. They focused on **systemic change** by supporting governance reforms towards the development of a national social protection system. UNICEF engaged with partners to address bottlenecks in the design and administration of the social protection system and to further advance the rights of children to quality social protection and poverty reduction⁵⁰. The Social Protection Reform support interventions were implemented in **close partnership** with line ministries (MLSP and Ministry of Finance (MoF)) and other partners at all levels of governance, World Bank, UNDP, Save the Children, NGOs, and academia, with an increased focus on multi-sectoral coordination.

⁴⁶ Annual Report 2016

⁴⁷ Annual Report 2016

⁴⁸ UNICEF Outcomes/Outputs and Indicator status report states 01 Jan 2016 as starting date and 28 Feb 2021 as end date

⁴⁹ UN Country Programme Document 2015

⁵⁰ Annual Report 2017

42. **Budget:** The overall approved budget for the Social Protection Reform support interventions, approved by the Executive Board, was USD1.71 million (USD800,000 from regular resources, and USD910,000 other resources). Based on the UNICEF Outcomes, Outputs, and Indicator Status, USD455,478 was used for expanding coverage and increasing adequacy of child benefits schemes as part of a concerted effort to improve the country's social protection system and reduce child poverty; USD509,779 was utilised for supporting the country's social welfare workforce through capacity development; USD737,184 was utilised for supporting emergency affected populations. According to the indicators report there was no progress on Output 3, and no funds were utilised⁵¹. Table 3 below outlines the budget expenditures for the Social Protection Reform support interventions.

⁵¹ UNICEF Outcomes/Outputs and Indicator status by Region/Business Area as of 4 October 2022

TABLE 3: OVERVIEW OF BUDGET EXPENDITURE FOR THE SOCIAL PROTECTION REFORM SUPPORT INTERVENTIONS

		Funds	Utilized (%)
Outcome Total budget		\$1,702,441	100%
Output 1- <i>All indicators</i>		\$455,478	100%
Output 2	<i>Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are used to follow up on social protection delivery/system</i>	\$329,770	100%
	<i>Other social protection programmes ARE adapted to address child poverty and deprivation (such as access to affordable childcare, health insurance etc)</i>	\$180,009	100%
Output added in 2018	<i>Refugees and Migrants boys and girls and other emergency affected populations supported (not included in CPD 2016)</i>	\$518,223	100%
Output added in 2018	<i>Programmatic outreach to vulnerable communities, including in emergency preparedness and response (not included in CPD 2016)</i>	\$218,961	100%
Output 3- <i>(not included in CPD 2016)</i>		\$0	0%

Source: UNICEF Outcomes/Outputs and Indicator status by Region/Business Area as of 4 October 2022

Intervention logic

43. At the onset of the CP, the Social Protection Reform support interventions had the following outcome and outputs:

44. **Outcome:** By 2020, an increased number of girls, boys and their families benefit from integrated and child sensitive social protection services and transfers that address poverty, deprivation, and social exclusion.

- **Output 1:** Social transfers are adequately planned, delivered, financed and monitored to reach the most marginalised children
- **Output 2:** Improved cross-sectoral coordination and capacities to design, implement and budget for social protection services and programs
- **Output 3:** Centres for Social Work, ISA and NGOs have capacity to strengthen the resilience of children and families, including Roma and CWD

45. In 2018, UNICEF North Macedonia conducted a light strategic review of the 2016-2020 Country Programme, together with the government and civil society partners (See [Annex 4](#) with an overview of changes made within the framework of the Light review). As a result, outputs and indicators were added and UNICEF accelerated support to reforms addressing major systemic bottlenecks to child wellbeing⁵². Consequently, Output 3 was amended, and three new outputs were added (not included in the CPD):

46. **Outcome:** By 2020, an increased number of girls, boys and their families benefit from integrated and child sensitive social protection services and transfers that address poverty, deprivation, and social exclusion

- **Output 1:** Social transfers are adequately planned, delivered, financed, and monitored to reach the most marginalised children
- **Output 2:** Improved cross-sectoral coordination and capacities to design, implement and budget for social protection services and programs
- **Output 3:** The capacities of professionals to conduct disability assessment based on ICF-CY are strengthened

⁵² Country Office Annual Report 2018

- NEW: **Output 4:** Refugees and Migrants boys and girls and other emergency affected populations supported (no indicators)
 - NEW: **Output 5:** Government budget allocations for child focused programming increased and streamlined
 - NEW: **Output 6:** Programmatic outreach to vulnerable communities, including in emergency preparedness and response (COVID) (no indicators)
47. The interventions supporting the social protection reform aimed to strengthen the country's capacity to improve inclusive access to integrated social protection services and to tackle poverty, discrimination and social exclusion. This was done by supporting policy analysis on child poverty and multidimensional deprivations and disparities, by using results-based budgeting for children in the social protection system, and by generating knowledge and data on marginalised children. Furthermore, the intervention sought to strengthen the capacity of the national social protection system to improve the resilience of children and their families through stronger linkages with child protection services, early learning, education, and health services, and building the capacities of the social protection system to provide inclusive services to CWD and their families by promoting a social model for assessment of disabilities. Finally, the intervention sought to improve the design and administration of social transfers for children and their families, with a special focus on improving the coverage for the most marginalised children⁵³.
48. The reconstructed Theory of Change for the Social Protection is included in [Annex 2](#).

Outcomes and outputs

49. UNICEF supported the Government in the full operationalization of the new social protection system, in particular in the development of protocols and manuals for professionals on case management, adjustment of the terms of reference for social workers in centres for social work to better reflect the use of case management in practice and delivery of advanced case management training to all social welfare professionals in the country. The interventions were part of a broad collaboration of UNICEF with the MLSP.
50. The interventions to support social protection reform, focused on *systemic change* by supporting governance reforms towards the development of a national social protection system, with the intention to bring about accelerated change in the way that social protection supports families across North Macedonia. The initial achievements in addressing child poverty are also based on the thorough transformation of the cash benefits schemes to which UNICEF heavily contributed, in partnership with the World Bank. The Government's comprehensive reform of the social protection and welfare systems aimed to curb high child poverty rates and lift households out of poverty through effective social transfers and support services.
51. The intervention focused on the outcome: By 2020, an increased number of girls, boys and their families benefit from integrated and child sensitive social protection services and transfers that address poverty, deprivation and social exclusion. The outcome would be achieved through three outputs focused on social transfers, cross-sectoral coordination and capacity building, and streamlined budget allocations for child focused programming.
52. UNICEF's previous study on child benefits system had identified inconsistencies faced by the most vulnerable in accessing social benefits and found that neither child protection and development nor prevention of family poverty are prioritised within the social protection system. There was a general inadequacy of budget allocations, low budgetary transparency and no effective monitoring and

⁵³ UNICEF Outcomes/Outputs and Indicator status by Region/Business Area as of 4 October 2022

evaluation. These were also a few bottlenecks identified by UNICEF that informed the new support interventions for paving the way towards an integrated social protection system. The interventions were set to work towards the establishment of an integrated social protection system that will not focus only on the disbursement of cash transfers, but link them effectively with services provided by other sectors (child protection, health, education, etc).

53. Desk research indicates that UNICEF collaborated with the Government and other development partners (World Bank, European Union, UNDP) to further the reform of the country's social protection system that was initiated in 2018, introducing new social support and care services for vulnerable children and families across the country, as well as worked towards advancing the cash benefit schemes. As a result, the number of children benefiting from poverty reduction benefits continued to grow as outreach and coverage increased. Also, the overall adequacy of cash benefits doubled.
54. UNICEF provided technical assistance and support to the MLSP in the drafting of a new Social Protection Law and a major revision of the Child Protection Law, which, among other things, regulate cash benefits, as well as the work of the social welfare workforce⁵⁴. These reforms were aimed at improving the scope, coverage and targeting of social assistance. UNICEF had an important role in the policy development processes, not just through participation in the interdisciplinary work group tasked to develop the new Social Protection Law, but also through financing and supporting key analyses, comparative assessments and simulations of potential policy scenarios and budget implications that have informed the reform.
55. Through supporting the reform of social protection, UNICEF contributed to the significant increase of children benefiting from cash transfers and the reduction of child poverty⁵⁵. As a result, compared to 2016, the number of children benefiting from poverty reduction transfers increased fivefold, including a 147% raise between 2019 and 2020⁵⁶.
56. Output 1 is that social transfers are adequately planned, delivered, financed and monitored to reach the most marginalised children. Supported by UNICEF, the Parliament of North Macedonia adopted legislation to enforce reform in the country's social protection and social welfare systems, focused on consolidating the cash benefit system and making sure that child benefits have increased coverage and adequacy, but also introducing new social support and care services and tools to manage social welfare's system response to the growing needs of vulnerable parts of the population⁵⁷.

⁵⁴ Ibid

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Country Office Annual Report 2020

⁵⁷ UNICEF Outcomes/Outputs and Indicator status by Region/Business Area as of 4 October 2022

Key activities in Output 1	Geographic scope	Key partners
Comprehensive assessment of country's cash benefit programs	Countrywide	MoLSP
Finalize, adopt and implement primary legislation on social protection		World Bank
Develop, adopt and implement secondary legislation on cash benefits focusing on families with children		Centers for social Work
Assess the impact of main child benefit programs over poverty reduction and recommend improvements		CSOs
		Academia
		Institute for social activities

57. UNICEF partnered with the MLSP and the World Bank to upgrade the country's Cash Benefit Management Information System (MIS) and merge the administration of social support and care services with the administration of cash benefits. The new and improved MIS will be an electronic information system for processing, approval, record-keeping and monitoring of social benefits and services⁵⁸.
58. Desk research indicates that UNICEF supported the government in assessing the performance of the current cash transfer programs, identifying reform options as well as fiscal space. Programs were identified that were not reaching the poor and were mainly targeting households in the higher income quintiles. These were replaced with programs that mainly target households with children living in poverty. In addition, administrative barriers were identified and removed allowing more households to benefit from several programs.
59. The government replaced the fragmented system of social benefits with a more unified Guaranteed Minimum Allowance, for which the benefit is higher, and more people are eligible, resulting in a significant increase of the number of children benefiting from social transfers. The government has also increased amounts and coverage of the child and educational allowances; introduced means-testing for the parental allowance, which should reduce inclusion of medium- and high-income families; and introduced a social safety net for those older than 65⁵⁹.
60. Output 2 is improved cross-sectoral coordination and capacities to design, implement and budget for social protection services and programs. Based on the indicator report, although capacities of institutions in the social protection system remain weak, steps were taken to improve this situation. CSW, the country's main social protection hubs, were strengthened by re-qualifying their workforce and by employing new social workers and other professional staff. UNICEF continued to work with the government in further developing the capacities of all social welfare professionals in the field of social work case management. UNICEF worked with the Institute for Social Activities (ISA) for the development

⁵⁸ Annual Report 2017

⁵⁹ UNICEF Outcomes/Outputs and Indicator status by Region/Business Area as of 4 October 2022

and delivery of a comprehensive training programme for continuous professional development of social protection professionals⁶⁰.

Key activities in Output 2	Geographic scope	Key partners
<p>Improve social services for children through introduction of case management in social protection</p> <p>A summative evaluation of ISA's Training Curriculum for Social Workers (developed and implemented with UNICEF support)</p> <p>Enhance social welfare workforce through the introduction of supervision in CSWs, mentoring and capacity development for staff</p> <p>Assess the capacities of social protection system to respond to emergencies and present recommendations for improvement</p>	Countrywide	<p>MoLSP</p> <p>Centers for social Work</p> <p>CSOs</p> <p>Academia</p>
Pilot, assess and scale-up a new functional assessment model for children with disabilities	Capital city	<p>MoLSP/ MoH/ MoES / CSWs</p> <p>Academia</p>
Strengthen capacities of professionals to conduct disability assessment based on ICF	Countrywide	<p>MoLSP</p> <p>Academia</p>

61. The introduction of case management in CSW and other institutions is considered a major prerequisite for the success of the ongoing social protection and social welfare system reform. With the support from UNICEF, the Government introduced protocols and manuals for professionals on case management and has adjusted the terms of reference for social workers in CSWs to better reflect the use of case management in practice. UNICEF delivered advanced case management training to all social welfare professionals in the country's 30 CSWs. This was also paired with a mentoring programme designed to help social workers introducing case management in their work routines. It is expected that this work will significantly contribute to providing a better-quality service to beneficiaries, decrease the caseload per social worker, and improve the linkages between social service providers on the local level.
62. UNICEF was also involved in social contracting. UNICEF partnered with the MLSP and SOS Children's Village to conduct a cost-benefit analysis and a regulatory impact assessment on the introduction of this model. This was one of the key goals defined in the national strategy for the development of social

⁶⁰ Annual Report 2016

protection is the pluralization of social services and introduction of 'social contracting' as a modality for social service delivery.

63. UNICEF supported North Macedonia to further advance towards switching to functional assessment based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health as a single entry-point for children and youth to access various support services in the fields of health, education, and social protection. As a result of the progressive advocacy, the two bodies for functional assessments based on the ICF, covering the Skopje region, and the National expert body for functional assessment that were created with UNICEF support were taken over by the state healthcare system. With support from UNICEF, training and mentoring on ICF-based functional assessments was conducted. UNICEF also supported fifteen workshops to present the new model for functional assessment to service providers – including CSW, schools and kindergartens – as well as parents in the three targeted regions.
64. UNICEF supported reforms to strengthen the design and quality of North Macedonia's foster care system for children with disabilities, and preventive measures for early intervention, family support and legal aid and assistance to families. These interventions targeting children in the largest institution for people with a disability resulted in all children being resettled in family-like care. In addition, community-based services (e.g., day-care centres for children with disabilities) were restructured to provide improved support to children and families, based on individual needs, and 51 day-care centre staff were trained on how to support parents/guardians in the process of inclusion of children with disabilities⁶¹
65. **Output 3 is that government budget allocations for child focused programming increased and streamlined.** This output was added under this outcome in late 2018, following the mid-term review of the country program. As such, aside preparatory work and internal capacity building, no significant funding was secured to support the implementation of specific activities under this output. In 2020, UNICEF strengthened its work in this field by supporting the efforts of the government in increasing public investment for children, through budget expenditure analysis and the publication of budget briefs for child-related social sectors⁶².

⁶¹ Country Office Annual Report 2018

⁶² UNICEF Outcomes/Outputs and Indicator status by Region/Business Area as of 4 October 2022

Key activities in Output 3	Geographic scope	Key partners
Support evidence generation to advocate for greater and better public investment in children and inform sector reforms	Countrywide	MoLSP
Empower citizens and communities to track spending and participate in national and local budgeting process		MoH MoES MoF Academia

4 PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Main Objectives of the Evaluation

66. Per the TOR, the evaluation is focused on both **accountability and learning** with the overarching objective of assessing UNICEF's contribution to two major changes in the country's social protection system: 1) reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services; and 2) the introduction of case management in the centers for social work. Per the Terms of Reference (TOR), the evaluation should i) identify the progress made so far in the implementation of the social protection reform; ii) assess the overall progress of reforms and progress against UNICEF programmatic commitments; iii) identify the extent to which cross-cutting strategies have contributed to and mainstreamed in the interventions and reform's processes.

67. The TOR describes four objectives for this evaluation, specifically:

- To identify the progress made so far in the implementation of the social protection reform subject to this evaluation, and overall contribution of UNICEF to the reform
- To assess against UNICEF programmatic commitments and overall progress of the reform the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and to the extent possible progress toward the impact of the UNICEF contributions to the reform of the cash benefits schemes and services, and the introduction of the case management in the centres for social work
- To identify the extent to which cross-cutting strategies such as human-rights based approach, results-based management, analysis of child vulnerability and gender equity have contributed and have been mainstreamed in the interventions and reform's processes
- To identify lessons learned and make recommendations for interventions' adjustments required to improve and accelerate the effective and sustainable implementation of the cash benefits schemes and services, as well as social work case management in the next years to ensure that children and families are cared for and supported.

Evaluation scope

68. Thematic scope: the scope of the assessment of UNICEF's contribution to the two major changes introduced in the country's social protection system in the period 2016-2020: 1) reform of the social

protection cash benefits schemes and services (i.e. Day care centers); and 2) the introduction of case management in the centres for social work. In response to the thematic scope, the evaluation will take a systems approach by assessing the evolution of the social protection system (and UNICEF's contributions) from the perspective of 1) the cash benefits schemes and Day Care center services, and 2) case management across CSWs. Such assessment will include policy/regulatory assessment (analysis of regulations and policies dealing with these elements); stakeholder and process mapping; context analysis and an analysis of external/internal factors affecting the delivery of reform results. The evaluation will assess the output and outcome level results as stipulated in the ToR, and further 'unpacked' in the reconstructed theory of change ([See Annex 2](#)). Having in mind the fact that the evaluation looks at UNICEF's support in the period between 2016-2020, the evaluation will take this as an opportunity to assess transformational potential of UNICEF's contributions to these wider reforms (outcome level results, per reconstructed ToC), and impact it has had on the most vulnerable. Impact assessment will be conducted to the extent possible through analysis of country statistical data, data on social protection coverage and access, etc. Such scope also presents some potential limitations in terms of institutional memory and availability of stakeholders, as detailed in the evaluability assessment below.

69. **Time period:** During the inception phase, the time scope was reconfirmed as 2016-2020. In light of the fact that the evaluation looks at UNICEF's contributions to system reforms, the evaluation team will conduct a comparative policy analysis (e.g., comparison between the social protection policies implemented before 2016 and in the current environment), and other analytical work as mentioned in previous paragraph.
70. **Geographic scope:** national. The evaluation covers the entirety of social protection reform implemented country wide.
71. **Evaluation framework:** The evaluation framework is developed following the DAC criteria and UNEG standards responding to relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and initial impact (to the extent possible given the relatively short timeframe after the reform). In particular, as stipulated in the TOR, "UNICEF initiatives toward policy developments related to the cash benefits schemes and services, as well as introduction of the case management in the centres for social work, including the set of laws, strategies, regulations formulated, and capacities built in respect to social protection system reform" will be assessed. The reconstructed TOC will be helpful in this regard, as it helps to present and nuance the evaluation questions and related indicators when it comes to attribution.
72. **Cross cutting areas:** The evaluation prioritises human rights, equity, and gender equality as key criteria to be mainstreamed across all evaluation questions (EQ). This will allow assessing the extent to which human rights, child rights, disability inclusion and gender equality and equity have been addressed within the programme.
73. **Evaluation questions:** Based on the review of ToR, the desk review and initial round of meetings with the UNICEF CO, the ET critically assessed the evaluation questions and proposes some changes to the evaluation question in alignment with the Evaluation scope as outlined with the TOR. A summary of the original ToR evaluation questions and the proposed changes is shown in Table 4. The EQ revision was conducted to ensure that the evaluation objectives and scope, the OECD-DAC criteria above, the key evaluation focus areas and additional elements raised during the inception phase are presented. Elaboration of these EQs, specific lines of inquiry and indicators under the relevant EQs is provided in the detailed Evaluation Matrix ([Annex 3](#)).

TABLE 4: OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND PROPOSED CHANGES

Evaluation Objective (ToR)	Proposed changes	Comments
Relevance		
<p>1. How relevant were the Government social protection policies and programs to the needs of the children and their families, especially to the most vulnerable children⁶³?</p>	<p>EQ 1. How relevant were the UNICEF's interventions to Government social protection policies and programs and to the needs of the children and their families, especially to the most vulnerable children?</p>	<p>Having in mind that the EQ 2 is focusing on relevance of UNICEF's support to government priorities, it is proposed that this EQ 1 focuses on the relevance of UNICEF's interventions to the needs of the most vulnerable children.</p>
<p>2. To what extent do the intended outcome and the relevant outputs address the priorities identified in the national strategic documents relevant for social protection of children including the National Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion (2010-2020) and the Employment and Social Reform Programme 2020?</p>	<p>EQ 2. To what extent do UNICEF's intended outcome and the relevant outputs address the priorities identified in the national strategic documents relevant for social protection of children including the National Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion (2010-2020) and the Employment and Social Reform Programme 2020?</p>	<p>The reference to UNICEF is added to ensure that the EQ aligns with the requested scope.</p>
Coherence		
<p>3. To what extent social protection programs for children are implemented in coherence with other governmental sectoral policies?</p>	<p>EQ 3. To what extent are UNICEF's social protection interventions for children implemented in coherence with other UNICEF's CPD intervention areas?</p>	<p>The reference to UNICEF is added to ensure that the EQ aligns with the requested scope.</p>
<p>4. Has there been any duplication of efforts among UNICEF's own interventions and interventions delivered by other organizations or entities in contributing to the outcomes?</p>	<p>EQ 4. Has there been any duplication of efforts among UNICEF's own interventions and interventions delivered by other organisations or entities in contributing to the outcomes?</p>	<p>No change.</p>
Effectiveness		

⁶³ In the CPD, the most marginalised groups were stated to be: Roma children, CWD and child victims of violence and abuse (CPD, p. 5)

Evaluation Objective (ToR)	Proposed changes	Comments
<p>5. Have the UNICEF supported programs and interventions contributed to reducing bottlenecks in ensuring effective coverage of children and their families? To what extent capacity-building activities supported by UNICEF contributed to effective implementation of the social protection reform interventions?</p>	<p>EQ 5. Have the UNICEF supported interventions contributed to reducing bottlenecks and to creating an enabling environment (institutional, political and legislative context) for social protection coverage of poor and vulnerable children and their families?</p>	<p>Broken down in two EQs as the two questions are distinct. Also the EQ 5 and EQ 6 combined into revised EQ 5 here.</p>
	<p>EQ 6. To what extent capacity-building activities supported by UNICEF contributed to effective implementation of the social protection reform interventions?</p>	
<p>6. To what extent has UNICEF contributed to creating an enabling environment (institutional, political and legislative context) for social protection conducive to effective coverage of poor and vulnerable children?</p>		<p>Merged with EQ 5 above.</p>
<p>7. To what extent are the existing social protection benefits for children and their families adequate and equity focused? Are there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection of children and their families?</p>	<p>EQ 7. To what extent have UNICEF interventions contributed to adequacy and equity focus of the existing social protection benefits for children and their families?</p>	<p>The original EQ requests assessment of government's programmes – which is outside the scope of the evaluation. The ET proposes that the EQ refocuses on contribution of UNICEF's interventions which are in the focus.</p>
	<p>EQ 7a. To what extent are the existing social protection benefits for children and their families adequate and equity focused? Are there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection of children and their families?</p>	<p>The ET proposes to keep this question as a forward looking one, to point to recommendations for UNICEF.</p>
<p>Efficiency</p>		

Evaluation Objective (ToR)	Proposed changes	Comments
8. Were UNICEF programme budgets and resources (human, financial and technical) adequately used for addressing priority bottlenecks?	EQ 8. Were UNICEF Social Protection support interventions budgets and resources (human, financial and technical) adequately used for addressing priority bottlenecks?	No change.
9. Which social protection programs for children and their families have been the most efficient in meeting the needs of the children (by program type, by target population, by inequities)?	EQ 9. Which UNICEF's social protection support interventions for children and their families have been the most efficient in meeting the needs of the children (by program type, by target population, by inequities)?	The reference to UNICEF is added to ensure that the EQ aligns with the requested scope.
Sustainability		
10. Are legal, institutional/administrative and financial mechanisms established to ensure monitoring and evaluation as well as sustainability of the results (policies, strategies, services)?	EQ 10. Has UNICEF established legal, institutional/administrative and financial mechanisms to ensure monitoring and evaluation as well as sustainability of the results (policies, strategies, services)?	The reference to UNICEF is added to ensure that the EQ aligns with the requested scope.
11. Are the mechanisms used to finance social protection spending consistent with the objectives of the programs they are financing? What are the potentials for expanding the existing benefits or introduce new ones?	EQ 11. To what extent are the mechanisms for financing social protection spending which were supported by UNICEF in partnership with other development partners consistent with the objectives of the programs they are financing? EQ11a. What are the potentials for expanding the existing benefits or introduce new ones?	The reference to UNICEF is added to ensure that the EQ aligns with the requested scope.
Impact		
12. Are there early indications that the reforms of family and child focused benefits and reformed social services have contributed to social inclusion of children and their families?	EQ 12. Are there early indications that the reforms of family and child focused benefits and reformed social services have contributed to social inclusion of children and their families?	No change.
13. What positive/negative, intended, or unintended	EQ 13. What positive/negative, intended, or unintended outcomes have	No change.

Evaluation Objective (ToR)	Proposed changes	Comments
outcomes have the interventions contributed to so far?	UNICEF's interventions contributed to so far?	
Cross-cutting issues		
14. To what extent have the interventions contributed to gender equality, non-discrimination and disability inclusiveness?	EQ 14. To what extent have UNICEF's interventions contributed to gender equality, non-discrimination and disability inclusiveness?	No change.

5 METHODOLOGY

Evaluability assessment

74. Evaluability usually “consists of checking whether an evaluator using appropriate evaluation methods and techniques will be capable, in the time allowed and at a cost compatible with existing constraints, to answer evaluative questions with a strong probability of reaching useful conclusions. In some formulations it also includes an assessment of the likelihood of evaluation outputs being used”⁶⁴. Besides looking at data availability, reliability, and validity, and CP log frames, the evaluability assessment included analysis of logistical or time constraints which may influence evaluation data collection activities. During the inception phase, the ET has used this assessment as basis for further analysis of evaluability, resulting in confirmation of some of the identified constraints, also proposing measures to mitigate the challenges identified.

75. In terms of **data availability**, a variety of UNICEF CP documents have been shared with the ET including planning and monitoring data on social protection interventions as well as the results frameworks. Review of available documentation shows that the results framework for the social protection portfolio changed multiple times, with numerous revisions of the outputs and their respective indicators, some of which were done during the Light Strategic Review in 2018 (as presented in Tables 1 and 2 in [Annex 4](#)). The social protection interventions did not include a ToC. The changes in the results framework over time create potential evaluation constraints, from the perspective of the lack of coherent documentary records on the implementation and more importantly progress in terms of delivery of output level results. Besides, changes in the indicators, and in the case of most recently revised Output 3 indicator, creates evaluability constraint as there is no established baseline or target value. To overcome this challenge, the ET reconstructed a TOC for the social protection interventions implemented over the reference period, as the basis for evaluative assessment.

76. To fully assess the extent to which UNICEF succeeded to achieve its intended outputs and outcomes in support to national social protection reform efforts, the ET will use the ToC and UNICEF’s outputs and the associated indicators (descriptors) to determine the type of information that could be sourced from secondary sources and the areas which require primary data collection to respond to evaluation questions (EQs). Based on that, the ET will gather documentary evidence on main output and outcome

⁶⁴ European Commission, “EVALSED: The resource for the evaluation of Socio-Economic Development”, September 2013, page 100.

level results from available UNICEF's annual reports and other type of monitoring data, other available studies and reports (both by UNICEF, national or other sources); perceptions of UNICEF team; national stakeholders, UN agencies and other development partners, and beneficiaries to the extent possible. Data gathered from these sources will contribute to evidence of performance and main drivers promoting or hindering UNICEF's contributions and generate related conclusions and recommendations.

77. **Temporal scope** of the evaluation includes the period between 2016-2020, which in itself presents an evaluability challenge. This is because of the timelapse between the finalization of the reference activities and the evaluation process, which can present a challenge when it comes to availability of historical records, institutional memory and ability of stakeholders to recollect the activities and their related outputs and transformative potential. To overcome this constraint, the ET will conduct a comprehensive document review and prepare well in advance of the primary data collection to be able to prompt some questions/remind interlocutors of activities as basis for discussion.
78. Another limitation may potentially come from **CO staff changes**. To mitigate this potential challenge, the ET has already started conducting interviews where possible with former staff besides the current UNICEF team.
79. When it comes to primary data availability, the breadth of scope of the activities within different components of the component and a broad array of communities and social welfare services and institutions that have participated in elements of different UNICEF interventions create some challenges to the establishment of the sample that could provide illustrative evidence to assist generalizing findings. Considering this fact, the ET, in consultation with UNICEF CO, decided on a sample that may be the most feasible considering the scope of the evaluation and the coverage (see section "Consultation and Selection Strategy"). This sample may result in some **data access and representativeness issues**. This challenge will be mitigated through triangulation with documentary evidence and key informant interviews at different levels and with different stakeholders, which will assist to produce reliable evidence for the targeted evaluation criteria.
80. Initial document review and first round of interviews reconfirms that the evaluability may be constrained for the above-mentioned reasons. Still, the ET believes that the evaluation can be confidently undertaken given the documentation already compiled, interviews conducted thus far as well as interviews, group discussions and site observations to be undertaken. The in-country field mission, particularly visits to targeted regions and communities, will assist the ET to understand the full scope of UNICEF's support and to evidence factors for success. These measures will substantially enhance evaluability.
81. To conclude, apart from some constraints highlighted above, UNICEF's social protection interventions are evaluable and information (already available and which could be collected) is sufficient to implement the evaluation methodology detailed in the following section of the Inception Report.

EVALUATION DESIGN AND APPROACH

82. The evaluation methodology is guided by the Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)⁶⁵ and the 2018 UNICEF [Evaluation Policy](#),⁶⁶ and employs a theory-based approach, whereby the primary focus of the assessment is on understanding cause-effect interactions between

⁶⁵ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>

⁶⁶ <https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/>

individual components and the CP's desired outcomes. The theory-based approach aims to generate both an understanding of what has worked, but also an understanding of why it has worked.

83. A systems approach will be followed to ensure that all elements of the social protection system (i.e., 1) reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services (Day care centers); and 2) the introduction of case management in the centres for social work, in which UNICEF has played a role, are systematically included in the evaluation. This approach will also allow for analysis of performance of social protection interventions within the give policy environment pertaining social protection reforms and in light of support provided by other actors. This will help with contribution analysis. As such, the evaluation will assess internal and external factors and their interaction, complexities and influences on effectiveness of intended outcomes and impacts.
84. The evaluation is guided by the following approaches and principles:
85. **Naturalistic Inquiry:** The timeframe of UNICEF's social protection support interventions in scope of this evaluation is between 2016-2020, which indicates that the certain period of time passed since its initiation and finalisation within which UNICEF's intervention have undergone some adaptations from the initial design and also the global COVID-19 pandemic and other arising needs in the country. This requires deeper review of historical records to establish the timeline of activities and external/internal factors affecting implementation and achievement of results. Naturalistic approach can serve as a helpful principle to track contributions during the longer timeline, with some time passing between the finalisation of activities and their evaluation. Naturalistic inquiry will rely on semi-structured interview guides and FGD guides that allow for flexibility to explore unexpected dimensions or identify shifts that might have occurred but have not been captured in programme documentation. The guides (enclosed in [Annex 5](#)) are intended to elicit reflections and feedback from stakeholders on UNICEF's performance from the perspective of the relevant TOC to assess the degree that the ToC align with the stakeholders' implicit theories of use and to identify potential adjustments or programmatic gaps. Consequently, semi-structured interview guides and historical review are important tools.
86. **Contribution Analysis.** Contribution analysis is an approach for inferring the degree to which UNICEF's social protection support interventions actions have contributed to the perceived outcomes.
87. The evaluation will use the ToC as the foundation of a contribution analysis.⁶⁷ The evaluation will assess each aspect of UNICEF's work in improving the social protection system (and specifically 1) reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services (Day care centers); and 2) the introduction of case management in the centres for social work) and determine the role that other agencies have played (e.g. World Bank). This will support the generation of a plausible argument for contributions of UNICEF's Social Protection Reform support interventions. Within this framework and in alignment with systems approach, the evaluation team will assess the changing behaviours and dynamics within the social protection system that have emerged, thanks, inter alia, to UNICEF's support.
88. As such, the assessment of interacting systems at individual, organizational, regulatory and institutional levels will be conducted within the wider operational context in North Macedonia. This will be done by analysing how UNICEF's contributions at individual level (capacity strengthening); organizational (modeling of approaches, mechanisms, etc.); regulatory (advisory, policy advocacy, evidence generation) and institutional (supporting institutional reforms, e.g., at CSW levels) implemented within the complex operational framework led to changing behaviours and the sustaining of the reform gains in medium to long term. This contribution analysis will help to understand the linkage to observed

⁶⁷ Gagnon, Yves-Chantal. (2010). *The Case Study as Research Method: A Practical Handbook*. Presses de l'Université du Québec

effects of support interventions and will play a role in conclusions regarding effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability.

89. **Appreciative Inquiry.** Principles of appreciative inquiry converge with a utilisation focus, and naturalistic inquiry and participation and empowerment principles. The additional contribution to shaping the evaluation methodology beyond the implications already covered in the previous paragraphs includes the strength-based, positive approach focus. This can be seen in the refinement of the TOR questions and in the development of the lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations.
90. **Utilisation focus:** The evaluation's utilisation focus prioritises the end use of the evaluation products and recognises that attributing results to interventions is generally complex and not always feasible. This evaluation is designed to be utilisation-focused and consultative, maximising the value of the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations for the intended users and supporting lessons learning for future interventions. This includes significant and continuous consultation with key stakeholders on adjustments to evaluation objectives, design, and analysis to be most useful for ongoing programming needs. The key additional element is the inclusion and empowerment principles in the implementation of the evaluation – including in the data collection and data analysis phases to help increase the ownership and contribution of the evaluation exercise itself to larger development objectives.
91. Adhering to the United Nations Evaluation Ethics Principles: All members of the ET will abide by the 2020 UNEG norms and standards, the 2007 UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct as well as the principles of 'do no harm'. The methodology is guided by UNEG Ethical standards and UNICEF evaluation guide to shape the evaluation approaches to ensure that the exercise does not harm participants either during or after the evaluation process. The UNEG guidance on Gender (UNSWAP) - specifically the Evaluation performance indicator (EPI) - will inform the shape of the evaluation approach to ensure adequate representation of gender considerations in the evaluation processes and assessment of results. The humanitarian principles provide consideration regarding how the methods will ensure neutrality, impartiality, and independence in the development of findings and recommendations. Based on these parameters, an evaluation matrix was developed for the evaluation describing the key questions and sub-questions, their links to the OECD/DAC criteria, relevant indicators, and the data collection methods to be used to address these questions ([Annex 3](#)).
92. The evaluation applies a mixed-method approach⁶⁸, i.e., a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The evaluation focuses on assessing the strategies applied in the current Country Programme to identify its relevance/appropriateness, effectiveness, and sustainability. In addition to OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, the evaluation will prioritise human rights, equity and gender equality as key criteria.

Evaluation Information Sources

93. In line with the use of mixed methods approach, the evaluation will draw on three general sources of information that can be collected through this exercise across different levels of stakeholders. The specific methodological adaptations and tool development to gather information from these sources are shaped by the evaluation principles described below. The evaluation will rely on these elements from the four information sources:

⁶⁸ See Stern et al (2012), "Broadening the range of designs and methods for impact evaluations", DFID, Working Paper 38.

94. Pre-existing **qualitative** information from UNICEF’s annual reports and other UNICEF or external documentation (governmental legislation and policies, donor reports, external research, among others),

95. Pre-existing **quantitative** information including:

- UNICEF’s outcome, output and activity level indicators and annual monitoring data
- National level social protection indicators and official statistical data in relation to social welfare over the reference period (2016-2020) (e.g., social assistance indicators, poverty statistics, etc.) . Table 5 below presents ET’s analysis based on the UNICEF’s Updated Indicators from 22 November 2018 and national social protection system documentation.

TABLE 5 NATIONAL LEVEL SOCIAL PROTECTION INDICATORS

Output	Indicator 1	Indicator 2	Indicator 3	Indicator 4	Indicator 5
Social transfers are adequately planned, delivered, financed and monitored to reach the most marginalised children	Increase of total social expenditure/social transfers based on ESPROSS (2016 vs last available data) (source: Secondary data/desk review)	Increase of govt funding for GMA (source: primary data (KIIs) and secondary data (desk review))	Increase of coverage of GMA (2016 vs 2020) (source: primary data (KIIs) and secondary data (desk review))	UNICEF social protection funding/cash transfers for marginalised/vulnerable households (2016 baseline vs 2020) (Source: primary data quantitative and qualitative UNICEF/KII)	
Improved cross-sectoral coordination and capacities to design, implement and budget for social protection services and programs	Number of social services provided at the local level for disabled children, street children and other vulnerable children (baseline in 2016 vs 2020) (source: Primary qualitative and quant data (KIIs/survey))	Number of vulnerable children/children without parental care in foster families (baseline in 2016 vs 2020) (source: Secondary data/desk review/national level data)	Number of vulnerable children using small group homes (baseline no of children in institutions vs number of children in small group homes in 2020) (source: Secondary data/desk review)/national level data		
Government budget allocations for child focused programming increased and streamlined	Increase of govt. funding for child protection, i.e. child allowance, special child allowance (2016 vs 2020) (source: primary data (KIIs) and secondary data (desk review))	Increase of coverage of CA, SCA (2016 vs 2020) (source: primary data (KIIs) and secondary data (desk review))	increase of funding and coverage of cct/educational allowance (2016 vs 2020) (source: primary data (KIIs) and secondary data (desk review))	UNICEF social protection funding/cash transfers for disabled children (2016 baseline vs 2020) (Source: primary data quantitative and qualitative UNICEF/KII)	UNICEF social protection funding/cash transfers for Roma children (2016 baseline vs 2020) (Source: primary data quantitative and qualitative UNICEF/KII)

SOURCE: ET

96. Primary quantitative information to be collected through online survey with representatives of Centers of Social Work in the selected regions/municipalities.
97. Primary **qualitative** information including:
- Key informant Interviews (KIIs) with central level stakeholders (Government, UNICEF, UN agencies, donors, development partners)
 - KIIs with regional and local level stakeholders (CSW, social workers, social service providers, and so forth)
 - Focus Group Discussions with service providers and affected populations (parents) (within the field visits)
98. The **pre-existing documentation** includes studies and assessments sponsored/conducted by UNICEF during the reference period as well as numerous government's policies, strategies, and frameworks, as well as other studies, assessments or reports (See [Annex 8](#)). This pre-existing qualitative information within the documentation will be extensively used to illustrate UNICEF's performance in support of the social protection reform and will be used as a basis for developing hypotheses to be tested during primary data collection.
99. In terms of **pre-existing quantitative information**, for this evaluation, the ET will rely on national demographic/social protection data as well as UNICEF's monitoring data at outcome, output and activity level and their respective indicators.
100. Building on the pre-existing data, **the primary quantitative information** will be collected through an online survey for CSWs which will include the entire 'universe' of CSWs in North Macedonia. The online survey questionnaire is included in Annex 5. **Qualitative information** will be collected by the evaluation team during the **primary data collection phase, which will take place in country on April 24th- May 5th 2023**. It will include:
101. Qualitative information from a wide range of stakeholders regarding the performance of UNICEF's Social protection interventions implemented in the period between 2016-2020 and their respective outcomes and, where possible, impact potential. The stakeholder map is presented in the overview of data consultation strategy below. The full stakeholder analysis described in Annex 4 provides an overview of stakeholders associated with UNICEF and their interest in the evaluation.

Data collection approach and methodology

102. Data will be collected using multiple methods for collecting, structuring, processing and analysis of data as appropriate. Such methods will include:
- Stakeholder mapping – the ET has already initiated a comprehensive mapping of stakeholders engaged in the social protection reforms, to help understand the different support interventions, influences and contributions to the reform agenda, but also to help create a sample of stakeholders to be consulted within the evaluation process.
 - Context mapping – the ET has started mapping contextual issues already in the inception report as provided in the Context analysis. This process will continue throughout the desk review and primary data collection with the aim to provide a framework for analysis of external factors influencing the advancement of the reforms.
 - Portfolio mapping – the ET has embarked in and will continue conducting an in-depth and structured documentary review of UNICEF's social protection and child protection portfolio (the latter pertaining to the support to day-care centres) and applied implementation approaches, results and processes;

- Policy analysis – the ET will conduct an unstructured desk analysis of policy documents and legislative frameworks pertaining social protection (in particular, diversification of social services, systematisation of social protection processes and data management).

103. These mapping exercises and a wider desk review will include an analysis of results from M&E systems and data at national and subnational levels; aggregation and analysis of data through contribution analysis to determine factors which promoted or impeded the progress against intended results and attribution analysis to the extent possible; analysis of sustainability strategies and systemic barriers to sustainability; in-depth interviews and group discussions; site observation during site visits to the sampled localities.

104. The combination of data collection methods and techniques will be chosen to ensure best utility depending on the scope and focus of the EQs and indicators. During both the inception and field phases, the ET will continuously adapt the techniques and instruments for qualitative and quantitative data collection as required to maximise data collection efforts.

Data collection methods

105. As noted above, the evaluation will apply the following primary data collection methods: 1) KIIs, 2) FGDs, 3) site observations and 4) online survey for CSWs. The bulk of the primary qualitative data will be conducted via semi-structured KII with a range of stakeholders mentioned above and detailed in table 5 below and [Annex 6](#). Seeking information from diverse stakeholders is intended to promote the participation of different groups and to avoid bias through triangulation. Based on the stakeholder mapping, the ET envisages (individual and group) interviews with at least 40 Key informants, including at least 20 key interlocutors at the national level and at least 20 interlocutors at the local level and 30 key informants to be engaged in FGDs (See Sample Size Paragraph). The semi-structured key informant interview guides are presented in [Annex 5](#).

106. The ET will organise FGD with community members (parents) and social service providers in each of the six municipalities included in the sample section of this evaluation (Figure 1). The ET will aim to organize at least one FGD with community members (with parents in six municipalities) and two FGD with service providers in each municipality. There will be a total of 3 FGDs in sampled communities. The purpose of FGDs will be to elicit reflection on wider contextual issues to bring in the voice of communities, their perception of UNICEF's contributions to the reform, from the perspective of service provision, and its relevance against the identified community needs.

107. The FGDs may also serve as a sounding board for the ET in testing hypotheses and triangulation of data collected through document review. Participants will be invited based on ensuring uniformity among each of the different sub-groups and the purpose of obtaining their views, seeking equity in participation. Specific groups to be engaged in the FGDs will be sampled once the final sample is agreed with UNICEF. The participants will be invited to a central area of the community and include not more than 10 people per group. The discussions will take no longer than 1.5 hours. The ET will not conduct group discussions with the final beneficiaries of the project: children or adolescents.

108. During the field missions, ET will conduct site observations of UNICEF's supported activities in sampled communities. Detailed site observations plan will be finalised once the sample is confirmed.

Data collection tools

- Key Informant Interview Guide – UNICEF
- Pre-mission Questionnaire – UNICEF CO team
- Key Informant Interview Guide – Central level government

- Key Informant Interview Guide – Sub-national government institutions and service providers
- Key Informant Interview Guide – Development partners (UN agencies, donors, other development partners)
- Focus Group Discussion Guide – local level service providers
- Focus Group Discussion Guide - parents)
- Online survey for the CSW

109. These guides are based on the questions outlined in the evaluation matrix and are sufficiently general to be applied in interviews and FGDs, allowing for adaptations as appropriate to the expertise and relevance of the stakeholders to the programme under review.

Consultation and Sampling strategy

110. Consultations with stakeholders will be undertaken with a primary emphasis on understanding the qualitative aspects of the social/child protection and social policy components. The Evaluation Team will apply a purposive sampling approach to interviews, selecting the most relevant stakeholders, against the following criteria: level of engagement in and familiarity with UNICEF’s interventions in support to Social Protection Reform; familiarity and participation in UNICEF’s social protection/child protection and/or social policy programming, familiarity and participation in the national social protection reform activities; ability to share the perspectives and priorities of their respective institutions in relation to UNICEF’s engagement. Specific categories of stakeholders can be clustered into three different tiers of stakeholders connected with the CP, and further elaborated in Table 7 below. These are:

- UNICEF (Regional Office (RO), CO staff) and implementing partners;
- National, regional and local level government (line ministries, Centers for social work, social service providers and other institutions delivering social services);
- UN and development partners. These stakeholders can provide complementary insights into UNICEF’s support and results.
- Local level stakeholders and Affected Populations (parents, social workers, NGOs, service providers),
- It was agreed that children and adolescents will not be included in primary data collection within this evaluation.

Table 6 presents an overview of each stakeholder/stakeholder group, their interest in the evaluation, how they may use the findings, and how they will be involved in the evaluation process.

TABLE 6: OVERVIEW OF STAKEHOLDERS PER INVOLVMENT AND USE OF FINDINGS

Stakeholder group	Type of stakeholder	Type of involvement in the evaluation process	Stage	Tool	Use of findings
<i>UNICEF</i>	Country Office	Data collection, inquiries of key interest, consulting on findings, briefed with presentation on the draft and final report	All stages	Semi-structured Interviews	Instrumental use (directly informing decisions, follow-up, etc.); Conceptual use (i.e. redefinitions of targets, indicators, etc.)
<i>UNICEF</i>	Regional office	Linkages between UNICEF’s regional priorities and UNICEF CO support to social	Inception phase	Semi-structured Interviews	Conceptual use

		protection in the reference period			
<i>Government and public authorities</i>	Government officials	Inquiries of key interest, briefed with presentation on the final report	Field phase	Semi-structured Interviews	Potential for legislation utilization (if future decisions are based on the evaluative evidence)
	Local authorities	Inquiries of key interest, briefed with presentation on the final report	Field phase	Semi-structured Interviews	Potential for legitimate utilization (if future decisions are based on the evaluative evidence)
	Other public authorities and service providers (social service providers, employment centre)	Inquiries of key interest, briefed with presentation on the final report	Field phase	Semi-structured Interviews Online survey	Symbolic use
<i>Civil Society</i>	National and local	Inquiries of key interest, briefed with presentation on the final report	Field phase	Semi-structured Interviews	Symbolic use
<i>Development Partners</i>	Multilateral and international stakeholders (UN, EU, WB)	Inquiries of key interest, briefed with presentation on the final report	Field phase	Semi-structured Interviews	Symbolic use
<i>Affected population</i>	Parents, vulnerable households	Inquiries of key interest	Field phase	Focus Group Discussions	Potential Indirect use (if instrumental use enhances the conditions of the affected population)

111. In particular, to provide the beneficiary outlook on social and child protection interventions implemented by the UNICEF, the focus groups will prompt questions to 1) social service providers, and 2) parents regarding UNICEF's support to services to children with disabilities, children without parents and parental care, as well as children living in socially vulnerable households (i.e. beneficiaries of the guaranteed minimum assistance, child allowance, Roma, etc.). There will be 10 participants in each of the three focus groups (total of 30 respondents, out of which 20 service providers and 10 parents), as well as 26 responses in online survey with the representatives of 26 CSW from all selected municipalities. Participants in the focus group discussion will be identified based on the information received from the key informant interviews and in close coordination with the UNICEF office in Skopje and CSW in the selected municipalities. The ET will aim to have an equal gender representation among participants in the focus groups.

112. The online survey will be distributed across the network of CSWs in North Macedonia and will allow for collecting quantitative data and feedback on social protection reforms more generally, UNICEF's contribution to behavioural change (at individual, organizational and institutional level) and contextual issues and interlinkages of investments in the reform within complex operational environment.

113. The process of recruiting stakeholders from different institutional and beneficiary levels will follow a standard procedure to ensure an informed consent to participate in the evaluation. Participation in the evaluation will be voluntary and opinions will be presented in the report in an anonymous manner.

114. Interviews and group discussions will be used not only for data collection and qualitative insights, but also for checking the perceived priorities for the continuation of reforms in the areas of UNICEF's work. These will be very useful for informing the recommendations of the evaluation based on an open and participatory process started during the Data Review and Collection Phase.

115. When it comes to the field visits, the sampling criteria for the selection of key informants in the sites to visit will be:

- **Information richness** - are the respondents sufficiently familiar with the activities to provide insights from different perspectives including gender, ethnicity, disability, or regional/local dynamics?
- **Accessibility** - can the stakeholders be accessed by the evaluation team?
- **Coverage:** The team will select locations that present – as much as is feasible – the diversity in terms of North Macedonia regional context, UNICEF's interventions and situations impacting beneficiaries, as well as balancing rural and urban experiences of beneficiaries. Special attention will be given to adequate representation of beneficiary groups, particularly any marginalised or vulnerable groups and the identification of factors for success/best practices. More in detail (potential criteria):
 - A mix of urban and rural localities
 - Municipalities with predominantly higher Poverty and Multidimensional Poverty rates
 - Multi-ethnic municipalities
 - Municipalities with Centres of Social Work where case management is implemented in practice
 - Municipalities with day care centers
- **Realistic:** The team will propose a realistic sample that is feasible within the time and budget constraints.

116. **Sample size:** The evaluation will include consultations with 40 Key informants who will be interviewed (20 national and 20 local stakeholders), and approximately 30 key informants to be engaged in FGDs (10 parents and 20 service providers) (Table 5). As already indicated, the KII's will be conducted with representatives of the UNICEF Country Office, other UN agencies in the country, governmental agencies (central and local), international development partner organisations, and civil society organisations. Such mix of KII's is expected to provide a realistic input about the evaluation. In addition, three focus groups are expected to provide beneficiary views and more direct insight into main benefits as well as future needs of the UNICEF's social/child protection programming in the country. In each selected municipality, representatives of the local government, centres of social work and civil society organisations will be interviewed.

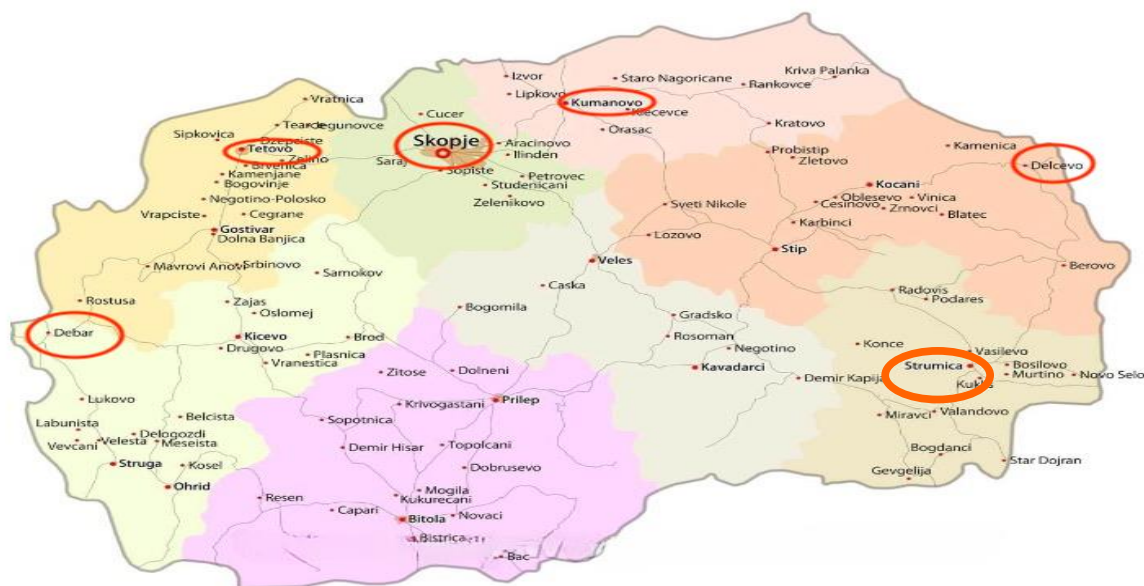
TABLE 7: ESTIMATED NUMBER OF EVALUATION PARTICIPANTS

Key Informant Interviews	Focus groups						Online survey
	No. of focus groups	Total number of respondents	Focus group 1 Parents of children with disabilities, clients of day care centers	Focus group 2 Professionals (social workers, etc.) at the day care centers for children with disabilities	Focus group 3 Social Workers, Small Group Homes for children without parents and	Centers of Social Work	

						parental care.	
Number	40	3	30	10	10	10	26

117. **Geographic areas:** Following the potential criteria, out of eight country regions, the sampling would include municipalities from six regions (Skopje region, East Region, Northeast region, Southwest region, Southeast region and Polog Region). Out of them 4 are urban (Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo and Strumica) and 2 rural (Debar and Delcevo) municipalities. All the selected municipalities are multi-ethnic municipalities. Three of the selected regions are among those with highest multidimensional poverty rates based on calculations of Multi Indicator Cluster Survey (2018-2019)⁶⁹. The Eastern region has the highest multidimensional poverty index i.e. 6.08%, closely followed by the Polog and Skopje regions with 4.32% and 3.89%, respectively. In the Southeast region every fourth child under the age of 5 is multidimensionally poor. Based on the official statistics⁷⁰, in 2021 the Northeast region had the higher at risk of poverty (AROP) and highest at risk of poverty and social exclusion rate (AROPE) with 38.7% and 59.6% respectively. In all Centers of Social Work in the selected municipalities the case management is effectively implemented. All selected municipalities have day care centers for children/ persons with disabilities.

FIGURE 1: SELECTED REGIONS AND MUNICIPALITIES FOR FIELD WORK



Data analysis

118. Once the primary data collection is finalised, the ET will embark on data analysis and synthesis of evidence and findings. The ET will apply specific methods for analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collected. An overview of these methods and tools is presented ahead in Table 7.

⁶⁹ UNICEF (2021); Child poverty in North Macedonia: Towards a better understanding of its complexity and multidimensional nature, Skopje: UNICEF.

⁷⁰ Ministry of Local Self Government (2021); Strategy for Regional Development of North Macedonia 2021-2031 (in Macedonian language). Available at: <https://mls.gov.mk/files/Strategija-Za-RRR.pdf> (based on data from the State Statistical Office).

119. Team members will internally share and review notes together as a basis for reflection on main areas of intervention and performance of UNICEF through descriptive and comparative quantitative analysis, thematic narrative analysis, qualitative iterative data analysis and contribution analysis. All methods will be triangulated both internally and across methods as feasible. The analysis will take place against the analytical framework in the following ways: across the analytical fields, which are drawn from the Evaluation Matrix; common trends, contradictions and differences will be sought out and explored; b) the different pathways of contribution at different levels of results will be tracked, identified and triangulated; explanatory factors related to the operating space, environment, design of the approach and implementation of related Social Protection Reform support interventions will be assessed; gaps in information will be identified and reported.

120. Formulation of conclusions, lessons and recommendations will be based on the evidence presented in the report. The synthesis phase will culminate in a draft final report which will be submitted to UNICEF according to the agreed schedule (described ahead in Section 6).

TABLE 8: PROPOSED DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

Thematic Narrative Analysis	The evaluation team will apply thematic narrative analysis throughout the structured desk review to enable identification of key themes covered by UNICEF's support to social protection reform that are of relevance to the indicators outlined in the evaluation matrix.
Descriptive Quantitative Analysis	The evaluation team will apply descriptive quantitative analysis of quantitative data collected through document review of available monitoring data, reports and external sources with cross tabulation for evaluation indicators, but also criteria of interest (such as type of activity, right holder group, geographic location, etc.) where relevant. The analysis will allow, where possible, to identify trends across criteria (women, men, children and other rights-holders, especially the most marginalised (and in particular marginalised ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, poor households)
Qualitative iterative data analysis	Qualitative iterative data analysis will allow to connect and structure key thought units related to each evaluation question deriving from stakeholder interviews into clusters and identifying the key themes within each cluster. These will form emergent themes from each category for further analysis. Triangulation of data will be conducted to determine if inputs are coming from multiple sources and stakeholder levels and multiple stakeholder categories. Observations or comments that only come from a single source or a single category of stakeholder will be given less weight during the building of the analysis. Findings highlighted in the report will be those emerging from multiple actors and across multiple stakeholder categories.
Contribution Analysis	The Theory of change will form the basis for the contribution analysis which will assist in assessing the degree to which UNICEF's engagement in the social protection reform has contributed to the perceived outcomes. Assessment of performance and achieved results will be conducted based on the Intervention Logic, accompanied with analysis of external factors influencing results and underlying assumptions. This type of analysis will assist in interlinking the findings and will help lead to definition of conclusions regarding efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability.
Triangulation	This evaluation utilises two types of triangulation that will serve to highlight any inconsistencies between document analysis and the feedback from key informants, i.e., how external parties perceive the results of the measures undertaken by UNICEF. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Method triangulation ● Data sources triangulation Attribution of results could be difficult since this is not a type of evaluation study where a counterfactual can be observed or estimated. At the same time, triangulation of evidence will be possible through the combination of qualitative data collected from different sources and the desk

review of documents and previous research which will enable the evaluation team to reach meaningful conclusions. Qualitative data will be collected from several stakeholders from UNICEF; central and subnational government institutions, implementing partners, donor organisations, local communities, as well as other multilateral organisations. Many documents are also made available by UNICEF to the evaluation team which assist in filling information gaps. Lastly, quantitative data from beneficiaries is available through baseline studies as well as other data sources. These sources of information will be useful in triangulating evidence and hence the understanding contribution to results.

Ethical considerations

121. The ET will adhere to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards⁷¹ and UNICEF guidelines in particular with respect to independence of judgement, impartiality, honesty and integrity, accountability, respect, the protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects and communities, informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, avoidance of risks, harm to, and burdens on those participating in the evaluation, accuracy, completeness and reliability of report, transparency. [Annex 7](#) includes text relating to verbal informed consent which will be used for KIIs and FGDs. Ethical clearance will be sought from the Ethics Review Board (ERB) ahead of the data collection phase.
122. Further, the ET will be sensitive to religious beliefs and practices, gender roles, disability, ethnicity, manners, culture, and local customs, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and marginalised groups). ET will also ensure that the evaluation results do no harm to participants or their communities. Each ET member will act with integrity and honesty in their relationships with all stakeholders.
123. None of the ET members were involved in the design, implementation or monitoring of the UNICEF's social protection interventions nor have they any conflicts of interest. Concrete ethical measures and safeguards are presented in Table 8 below. These issues will be monitored and managed during the implementation of the evaluation. If any additional ethical issues arise during the implementation of the evaluation, they will be recorded and managed in consultation with the Evaluation Manager.
124. **Data Management:** Only interviewees will be present during interviews or FGD, and evaluators will ensure that any person not directly concerned does not attend to the discussions. Interviews will not be recorded, and notes will be carefully taken and stored in a password protected folder. Both quantitative and qualitative information will be maintained on KonTerra's secure drive until six months after the finalisation of the report, at which time it will be deleted to protect individuals further from possible identification. If UNICEF gives clearance, it can be deleted straight after the finalisation of the report.

⁷¹ UNEG. 2020. Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. Available at <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866>.

TABLE 9: ETHICAL MEASURES AND SAFEGUARDS

Phases	Ethical issues/Risks	Safeguards
Inception and desk review	Confidentiality and data protection	The ET will not quote or name any individual as the source of any information or opinion. The ET will ensure confidentiality of all data and information received and will take thorough precautions to prevent the access of any unauthorised persons to them.
Primary data collection	Voluntary engagement and Confidentiality	During the field phase at the beginning of each interview/group discussion, the ET will explain the purpose of evaluation and confidentiality measures and ask the Key informants to provide their consent to participate in the evaluation. This will ensure that the participation of each stakeholder is voluntary. ET will respect people's right not to engage or stop the interview, should Key informants decide so at any point of interview. Interviewees will be informed at the start of the interview regarding the purpose of the evaluation, assurances of voluntary participation, and confidentiality of all responses.
	Do no harm principle and data protection	The ET will apply the principle of "do no harm" – both for the ET and evaluation participants together with the standard ethical requirements of any evaluation data collection process. The ET will not use audio or video recordings of KIIs and FGDs. All the notes taken by ET will be stored on a Konterra secured server with password protection. No compensation for participation in the evaluation process is envisaged. Any potential personal identifiers will be removed from the data prior to analysis. Data analysis will be carried out only with the ET members to ensure confidentiality. Data compiled in the report will be aggregated so that individual responses cannot be traced to specific locations or individuals.
	Language Considerations for Participants	The ET will consider language barriers and aspire to conduct interviews without translation in the language of the participants. An ET member, proficient in local languages will help with translation in cases of need to avoid external translation service.
	Interviewing underage children	Interviews and group discussions with children and adolescents will not be organised.
	Female Participation Considerations and Gender Norms	The ET will ensure that both women and men will have the opportunity to voice their opinions and feedback. The ET will ensure that gender roles are respected and will provide space for women to share their views in a safe and enabling environment.
Data analysis, Reporting and Dissemination	Honesty and integrity	The ET commits to accurately present procedures, data and findings in the reports. Validity of data and findings will be tested using multiple methods and data sources, allowing for triangulation. This approach will avoid bias.

Source: ET.

Risks and assumptions

125. Certain risks to the evaluation have been mapped and presented in Table 9 below. These issues will be monitored and managed during the implementation of the evaluation and during the field mission. All issues that might arise will be recorded and managed in consultation with the Evaluation Manager.

TABLE 10: RISKS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Risk (probability)	Potential Impact	Mitigation and preventative measures
Lack of institutional memory when it comes to UNICEF's interventions due to time lapse between the end of the cycle (2016-2020) and the evaluation (Medium)	High	To avoid this, the ET will undertake a detailed documentary review and timeline mapping to ensure stocktaking of implemented activities and achieved results in preparation for the primary data collection. The ET will closely liaise with UNICEF CO to ensure that a sound stakeholder map (including current and former officials and actors) and related schedule is put in place to provide for wider coverage of stakeholders with knowledge of UNICEF's contributions. The ET will ensure that confidentiality and data protection measures are communicated clearly from the beginning to ensure all participants feel safe.
The evaluation design and data collection tools do not yield robust evaluation results. (Low)	Medium	The ET will always adopt a reflective approach during the evaluation. The TL will monitor the evaluation process to ensure any necessary adjustments are made, particularly seeking alternatives to any occurrence that might prevent planned data collection approach. Throughout the process, constant communication with the UNICEF will be maintained to ensure that challenges are identified and addressed as soon as possible.
Interviewees are reluctant to share their true standpoints or tend to provide biased rather than critical responses (e.g., parents or service providers, etc.). (Medium)	High	The ET will use a variety of triangulation methods to ensure that the respective area of inquiry where potential for biased response or halo effect is noted is fully analysed. Interview guides include areas of inquiry to ensure that similar questions or areas are prompted with these different stakeholders. Triangulation of data received from these sources, including documentary evidence, will be conducted to ensure that full stock of views, examples, and evidence is collected to provide for balanced assessment. Limitations concerning the reliability of data or data collection tools will be made explicit.
Inconclusive evidence on some of the EQs, particularly related to outcome and impact level contributions. (Medium)	High	The ET will remain transparent where evidence may not be conclusive and will apply triangulation methods to mitigate where possible.
Internal team issues (sickness, resignation, non-performance etc.) (Medium)	Medium	The ET will invest efforts to ensure smooth implementation of assignment even in cases where some internal team issues arise.

Source: ET.

6 EVALUATION WORKPLAN AND LOGISTICS

Timeframe and logistics

126. A summary of the overall evaluation schedule is presented in Table 10. Table 11 includes a summary of the in-country field phase evaluation schedule.

TABLE 11: EVALUATION SCHEDULE

Phases, Deliverables and Timeline	Dates
Phase 1 - Inception	
Initial Inception Interviews	2-9 th February
Inception Report Draft 0 submission to UNICEF	17 th February
UNICEF QA and Ethical Clearance Feedback	24 th February
Inception Report Draft 1 inclusive of QA feedback	3 rd March-12 April
UNICEF ERG/EM Feedback	20 April
Final IR for Approval	21 April
Phase 2 – Data collection	
Data collection – online and in-person data collection	24 April- 5 th of May
Internal Evaluation Team Data Analysis Workshop and Findings and conclusions building	8-10 th May
Debriefing with UNICEF (virtual)	12 May
Phase 3 - Data Analysis and Reporting	
Submission ER Draft 0	15th June
UNICEF QA/EM Feedback D0	22 nd June
Submission ER Draft 1	31 st June
UNICEF Stakeholder Feedback to D1	12 th July
Validation meeting with UNICEF and stakeholders (virtual)	TBD/July
Submission ER Final	end of July
Final ER for approval	end July

127. The evaluation field mission schedule is presented in table 10 below.

TABLE 12: SUMMARIZED EVALUATION SCHEDULE – PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION PHASE

Days/dates	Team member	Location	Stakeholders
7 days/ 24 April- 5th May	Zehra Kacapor-Dzihic	Skopje, Delcevo	<u>Central government/ MLSP</u> : 1. Jovana Trencoska; 2. Sofija Spasovska; 3. Dusan Tomsic; 4. Drita Aslani; <u>NGOS's and Donors</u> : 5. Mila Carovska; 6. Elvis Memeti; 7. Elizabeta Kunovska <u>Social Services (provision and supervision)</u> : 8. Daniela Stanojevska; 9. Bojana Simonovikj; 10. Biljana Nevcheva. <u>Focus groups discussion</u> : 11. Parents of children with disabilities, clients of day care centers

7 days/ 24 April- 5th May	Blerta Perolli Shehu	Online Debar	<u>UNICEF</u> : 1. Patrizia DiGiovanni; 2. Artur Ayvazov; 3. Aleksandar Nikolov; 4. Olimpija Markovska; 5. Aleksandar Lazovski. <u>UN Agencies</u> : 6. Rossana Dudziak; 7. Afrodita Shalja; 8. Suzana Ahmeti Janjic <u>NGO's</u> : 9. Natasa Pavikjevikj Stojmenovska, 10. Blagica Petreski. <u>Focus groups discussion</u> : 11. Professionals (social workers, etc.) at the day care centers for children with disabilities
7 days/ 24 April- 5th May	Erisa Pereira	Online	<u>UNICEF RO: 1.; 2.</u> <u>Donors/Development Partners</u> : 3. Bojana Naceva; 4. Nafi Saracini; 5. David Oberhuber. <u>Local Municipality</u> : 6. Marija Risova Mutlular <u>NGOS's</u> : 7. Suzana Tuneva Paunovska <u>Focus groups discussion</u> : 8. Social Workers,
8 days/ 24 April- 5th May	Maja Gerovska Mitev	Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo, Delcevo, Strumica	<u>Social services</u> : 1. Vlatko Mitev; 2. Tanja Georgievska; 3. Ismail Merimovski; 4. Magdalena Veselinovska <u>Municipalities</u> : 5. Suzana Petrovska; 6. Coki Ristovski; 7. Hekuran Duka; 8. Vesna Avramovska <u>NGO's</u> : 9. Open the Windows; 10. Macedonian Young Lawyers Association; 11. Poraka for persons with intellectual disabilities, Delcevo; 12. Red Cross Tetovo; 13. Red Cross Debar; 14. Day care center Delcevo; 15. Day care center Delcevo

Support and information required from UNICEF

128. Throughout the evaluation, the ET may require support from UNICEF. At present, the following key areas of support have been identified:

- Additional documentation and data to be provided as per data request shared by the ET during the inception phase
- Invitation letter to be sent to all potential KIs to introduce the evaluation
- Facilitation of permissions and approvals required for data collection
- Availability for frequent meetings with the evaluation team – continue regular meetings to troubleshoot and obtain follow-up/information documents as needed in real time.
- Organising the in-person data collection, securing the appropriate venues for the FGDs and supporting the ET with the logistics (transport) during the data collection

Roles and responsibilities

129. The ET consists of three international evaluators and one national evaluator, with each person having specific responsibilities within the evaluation. Table 12 presents an overview of main roles of the evaluation team members.

TABLE 13: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

Team Members	Primary Role	Specific tasks within the Evaluation	Deliverables
Zehra Kacapor-Dzihic	Team Leader	<p>Design the evaluation approach, and methodology</p> <p>Ensure evaluation incorporates gender and equity analysis in its design and that team members are prepared for applying it throughout the evaluation</p> <p>Coordinate evaluation process and lead the team – ensure that team members' activities are properly coordinated and that the team members can contribute to data collection, analysis, and conclusion development.</p> <p>Represent the team in meetings</p> <p>Oversee collection and analysis of field and desk data (interviews, discussion groups meetings, literature)</p> <p>Lead the process for drafting and revision of the inception package, feedback presentation and draft and final evaluation reports in line with established standards</p> <p>Present preliminary findings to the key stakeholders from the evaluation reference group.</p> <p>Provide feedback as needed on the evaluation process</p>	<p>Draft Inception Package</p> <p>Finalise Inception Package</p> <p>Lead evaluation field mission</p> <p>Lead Exit Debriefing</p> <p>Draft Evaluation Report</p> <p>Final Evaluation Report</p>
Blerta Perolli-Shehu	International Specialist	<p>Coverage: Output 3</p> <p>Conduct desk review</p> <p>Contribute to inception process</p> <p>Contribute to methodology design and lead the tool development,</p> <p>Ensure that gender issues are addressed in coverage areas</p> <p>Conduct fieldwork and participate in meetings with evaluation team and stakeholders</p> <p>Contribute to drafting / revision of evaluation products: inception package, feedback presentation, evaluation report(s);</p>	<p>Conduct desk review</p> <p>Liaise with team lead on field mission logistics and stakeholder identification</p> <p>Contribute to Inception Package</p> <p>Provide feedback for finalising Inception Package</p> <p>Participate in evaluation field mission</p> <p>Participate in Exit Debriefing Presentations</p> <p>Contribute to drafting Evaluation Report</p> <p>Provide feedback to final Evaluation Report</p>

		<p>Contribute to the data analysis and drafting of the final report</p> <p>Provide feedback as needed on the evaluation process.</p>	
Erisa Yzeiraj Pereira	International Specialist Evaluation Manager	<p>Coverage: Output 2</p> <p>Conduct desk review</p> <p>Contribute to inception process</p> <p>Contribute to methodology design and lead the tool development, Ensure that gender issues are addressed in coverage areas</p> <p>Conduct fieldwork and participate in meetings with evaluation team and stakeholders</p> <p>Contribute to drafting / revision of evaluation products: inception package, feedback presentation, evaluation report(s);</p> <p>Contribute to the data analysis and drafting of the final report</p> <p>Provide feedback as needed on the evaluation process.</p>	<p>Conduct desk review</p> <p>Liaise with team lead on field mission logistics and stakeholder identification</p> <p>Contribute to Inception Package</p> <p>Provide feedback for finalising Inception Package</p> <p>Participate in evaluation field mission</p> <p>Participate in Exit Debriefing Presentations</p> <p>Contribute to drafting Evaluation Report</p> <p>Provide feedback to final Evaluation Report</p>
Maja Gerovska Mitev	National Evaluator	<p>Coverage: Output 1</p> <p>Conduct desk review</p> <p>Contribute to inception process</p> <p>Contribute to methodology design and lead the tool development, Ensure that gender issues are addressed in coverage areas</p> <p>Conduct fieldwork and participate in meetings with evaluation team and stakeholders</p> <p>Contribute to drafting / revision of evaluation products: inception package, feedback presentation, evaluation report(s);</p> <p>Contribute to the data analysis and drafting of the final report</p> <p>Provide feedback as needed on the evaluation process.</p>	<p>Conduct desk review</p> <p>Liaise with team lead on field mission logistics and stakeholder identification</p> <p>Contribute to Inception Package</p> <p>Provide feedback for finalising Inception Package</p> <p>Participate in evaluation field mission</p> <p>Participate in Exit Debriefing Presentations</p> <p>Contribute to drafting Evaluation Report</p> <p>Provide feedback to final Evaluation Report</p>

7 QUALITY ASSURANCE

130. The following processes, entities and expertise will be applied to the evaluation to ensure high quality throughout:
- Application of GEROS. The evaluation team will use the UNICEF evaluation checklist and GEROS standards (2017) for each report produced (i.e., inception report, draft/final report).
 - Activities to support data reliability, consistency, and accuracy. The methodology as described is designed to support data reliability through mixed methods, diverse stakeholder engagement, and triangulation, which includes the following:
 - Drawing information from a diverse range of stakeholders to enhance accuracy and reliability of data.
 - Ensuring stakeholders are relevant and represent true key informants.
 - Ensuring interview guides focus on interviewees' expected areas of expertise and in the quality of questioning in the key informant interview guides as well as the on-line survey (for example, ensuring questions are not leading, assumptions are explicit, research biases are mitigated, etc.).
131. **KonTerra supervision and expertise.** KonTerra is ultimately responsible to UNICEF for the quality of the evaluation products and will ensure the quality of data (validity, consistency, and accuracy) throughout. KonTerra will conduct quality assurance of all products by QA experts with experience with UNICEF's QA systems and standards. KonTerra will also make the necessary amendments at their own expense, to bring the evaluation products to the required quality level in the case of any standards that are not being met by the evaluation team.
132. **The UNICEF Evaluation Manager** will provide quality assurance for the evaluation process and all deliverables (inception report, preliminary findings presentation and draft report). The evaluation manager will liaise with UNICEF's internal ethical review structures to ensure their review and quality assurance support including sign-off.
133. **An evaluation reference group (ERG)** is established by the UNICEF North Macedonia CO, composed of relevant key stakeholders. It will provide input, guidance, and feedback on the draft deliverables to ensure that the evaluation is appropriate, relevant and useful for the intended objectives. The ERG will also be the primary audience for the exit debriefing presentation conducted at the end of the field phase (beginning of mid-May-date TBC) to present preliminary findings and conclusions. The ERG will provide immediate feedback to the preliminary findings which the evaluation team will take into consideration in the development of the final evaluation report. The ERG will also review proposed recommendations and provide feedback on feasibility and relevance to the context. The final composition of the ERG is at the discretion of UNICEF. UNICEF will coordinate the ERG inputs throughout the evaluation process and act as the link between the evaluation team and the ERG.
134. In regard to ethical clearance from the ERB, the evaluation does not intend to interview children, youth, or vulnerable groups. Therefore based on the guidance from UNICEF Macedonia, no ethical clearance is required.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for a Contractor

Evaluation of UNICEF Interventions Supporting the Social Protection Reform in North Macedonia (December 2022)

Basic Information

Title of the evaluation	Evaluation of UNICEF interventions supporting the social protection reform
Office	CO North Macedonia
Date	December 12, 2022
Type of consultancy	Institutional contract

UNICEF is the agency of the United Nations mandated to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.

The overall goal of the previous UNICEF Country Programme Document (2016-2020) for North Macedonia was to support Government efforts in advancing the realization of children's rights, with special attention paid to the most marginalized: Roma children, children with disabilities and child victims of violence and abuse. To this end, the programme focused on reducing disparities in access to quality services for marginalized children, fostering cross-sectoral cooperation, promoting inclusion, tolerance, and respect for multiculturalism and diversity among the various segments of the population. The key programme priorities included young child well-being, education and early learning, prevention of and response to violence against children, social protection, and child rights monitoring. According to the results framework, in the field of Social Protection, by end of 2020 UNICEF should have contributed to increased number of girls, boys and their families benefiting from integrated and child-sensitive social protection services and transfers that address poverty, deprivation and social exclusion.

Context and Background

UNICEF has been continuously highlighting child poverty in the political agenda in North Macedonia and voicing out the need for coherent policy response that would overcome the existing challenges within the social protection system underlined in multiple assessments. The detrimental impact of poverty on children's development and life prospects has been well evidenced. Poor and socially excluded children, living in large households and in rural areas of underdeveloped regions, as well as Roma children are at greater risk of remaining isolated, further vulnerable to limited access to education and health care services.¹ Thus poverty goes beyond family income. A UNICEF study has shed light on the multidimensional aspects of child poverty, highlighting that deprivations in education, early childhood development, nutrition, safety, and love and care are among the top contributors to the multidimensional child poverty in the country.²

Based on household income data from the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC), North Macedonia is more unequal than its aspirational peers. According to the State Statistical Office,³ the general at-risk-of-poverty rate in 2015, prior the start of implementation of the UNICEF Country Programme Document (2016-2020), was 21.5 percent; for children it was 28.6 percent, while most exposed to the risk of poverty were households with two adults and three or more children (52.2 percent). In the pre-pandemic 2019, the poverty rate in the country stood at almost the same level as in 2015 (21.6 percent), but the at-risk-of-poverty rate for children declined slightly to 27.8 percent, and for households with two adults and three or more children it has declined significantly to 44.7 percent. The socio-economic effects of COVID-19 have largely wiped out the gradual improvements, raising the overall at-risk-of-poverty rate in 2020 to 21.8 percent, for children to 30.3 percent and for households with two adults and three or more children to 45.6 percent.

The initial achievements in addressing child poverty are also based on the thorough transformation of the cash benefits schemes to which UNICEF heavily contributed, in partnership with the World Bank. The Government's comprehensive reform of the social protection and welfare systems aimed to curb high child poverty rates and lift households out of poverty through effective social transfers and support services. In 2017, the new Minister of Labor and Social Policy invited UNICEF and the World Bank to participate in an interdisciplinary work group on developing a new Social Protection Law. This reform involved cooperation with other development partners (European Union, UNDP), which also contributed technical assistance and funding to finalize the major reform of the country's social protection system. UNICEF provided technical assistance and support to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in the drafting of a new Social Protection Law and a major revision of the Child Protection Law, which, among other things, regulate cash benefits, as well as the work of the social welfare workforce.

In October 2019, UNICEF, the World Bank and the Government organized a Regional Conference on Responsive Social Protection Solutions that brought together academics, researchers, practitioners, decision makers and activists to jointly discuss obstacles and solutions for responsive social protection support, resulting in political commitments from decision makers.

In the course of 2019, the new Law on Social Protection was adopted, while the Law on Children Protection was subjected to major amendments. Relevant bylaws continued to be enacted in 2020. These reforms were aimed at improving the scope, coverage and targeting of the social assistance. UNICEF had an important role in the policy development processes, not just through participation in the interdisciplinary work group tasked to develop the new Social Protection Law, but also through financing and supporting key analyses, comparative assessments and simulations of potential policy scenarios and budget implications that have informed the reform. The new Law on Social Protection introduced the Guaranteed Minimum Assistance (GMA), replacing the fragmented system of social benefits. Furthermore, it promoted the development of various and flexible social services provided by multiple stakeholders in the communities where children live (such as personal assistants for children with disabilities, respite care, assisted living, foster care, counselling). Another innovation was the introduction of case management aimed to support the delivery of integrated social and child protection services in the Centers for Social Work and promote activation of GMA beneficiaries into work. The case management system at the Centers for Social Work fosters the creation of an integrated registration process for benefits and services, with the Case Manager as the sole focal point, and the adoption of a tailored approach based on the assessed needs of an individual, their family and community. Social services also underwent significant change with the 2019 Social Protection law: a wide new range of community based social services that were previously inexistent were offered (respite care, kinship care, personal assistance, half-way houses, etc), while several existing services were extended and strengthened (social prevention, rehabilitation and integration, counselling).

The amendments of the Law on Children Protection facilitated access to the child allowance for the families with children who have low disposable income and resulted in transformation of the parental allowance through a more balanced distribution of the financial resources within the one-off financial assistance for a new-born child, by progressively increasing the amounts of the allowances for the first, second, and third child. Another novelty was the introduction of the education allowance for

school-age children (in primary and secondary schools) coming from families with lower disposable income and for children of recipients of guaranteed minimum assistance, so as to support the parents in the settlement of school costs.

UNICEF supported the Government in the full operationalization of the new social protection system, in particular in the development of protocols and manuals for professionals on case management, adjustment of the terms of reference for social workers in centers for social work to better reflect the use of case management in practice and delivery of advanced case management training to all social welfare professionals in the country.⁴ UNICEF also partnered with UNDP to make sure that the new case management approach was also introduced in employment centers and with employment facilitators country wide.⁵

As a result of the social protection system reform, compared to 2016, the number of children benefiting from poverty reduction transfers increased.⁶ Furthermore, the reform significantly increased the overall adequacy of cash benefits, contributing to initial the decrease in the child poverty rates. The services provided by the centers for social work, the country’s main social protection hubs, were improved with the introduction of case management that allowed social workers to have a holistic view of the needs of each of the beneficiaries, greater understanding of compounding vulnerabilities and building of trust between social workers and their beneficiaries.

An initial analysis carried out by the World Bank⁷ in 2022 also suggests that the social policies reform is bearing fruit. The analysis notes that the reforms related to cash benefits are advancing well and can be effective, but their success and sustainability depends on implementation to ensure that all eligible people are reached. Similarly, initial progress is being noted regarding the reforms considering social services, and the case management system in the centers for social work is considered to offer significant benefits. Nevertheless, it underlines the need for further analysis that would confirm that the reforms are achieving the objectives set and lead to the identification of second order reform priorities.

The Object of the Evaluation

The evaluation intends to evaluate UNICEF North Macedonia contribution to the Social Protection System reform in North Macedonia during 2016-2020. The interventions, subject to the evaluation are part of a broad collaboration of UNICEF with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, as embedded in the in UNICEF country program documents and operationalized through UNICEF own resources and other interventions supported by third parties. The interventions related to the Social Protection System reform are outlined in the 2016-2020 CPD aiming to achieve the following outcome and outputs:

Outcome:	By 2020, an increased number of girls, boys and their families benefit from integrated and child sensitive social protection services and transfers that address poverty, deprivation and social exclusion
Output:	Social transfers are adequately planned, delivered, financed and monitored to reach the most marginalized children
Output:	Improved cross-sectoral coordination and capacities to design, implement and budget for social protection services and programs
Output:	Government budget allocations for child focused programming increased and streamlined

On output level, indicators, targets and baseline have been established, except for the third output for which an indicator has been developed, but baseline and target will need to be reconstructed.

Purpose, Scope and Objectives of the Evaluation

This strategic thematic evaluation aims to examine the UNICEF’s contribution to the two major changes introduced in the country’s social protection system in the period 2016-2020:

- a) reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services,⁸ and
- b) the introduction of case management in the centers for social work.

The purpose of the evaluation encompasses:

- a) fulfilling UNICEF’s accountability towards national government and institutions, children and families, donors, and other relevant stakeholders by providing information on the use of resources and achievement of results that are measurable to-date in regard to the reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services, as well as the introduction of case management in the centers for social work
- b) identifying missing opportunities and remaining challenges to inform/recommend decision- makers on actions to be undertaken in the future for effective and sustainable implementation of the cash benefits schemes and services, as well as the case management in the centers for social work

- c) generating knowledge and evidence on achievements, lessons learned and recommendations in establishing and maintaining a human/child rights, equity, and gender sensitive approach throughout the social protection reform in North Macedonia

The scope of the evaluation is defined by:

- a) Level of change: UNICEF initiatives toward policy developments related to the cash benefits schemes and services, as well as introduction of the case management in the centers for social work, including the set of laws, strategies, regulations formulated, and capacities built in respect to social protection system reform.
- b) Theory of change: the evaluation will examine UNICEF results against the activities, outputs and outcomes as outlined in the Country Program Document (CPD) and other related documents, based on reconstructed theory of change.
- c) Implementation time-period: UNICEF initiatives undertaken during the period 2016-2020;
- d) Evaluation criteria used to guide the evaluation thematically: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and initial impact (to the extent possible given the relatively short timeframe after the reform).

The specific objectives of the evaluation are to⁹:

- a) ~~Identify the progress made so far in the implementation~~ Identify the progress made so far in the implementation of the social protection reform subject to this evaluation, and overall contribution of UNICEF to the reform
- b) Assess against UNICEF programmatic commitments and overall progress of the reform the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and to the extent possible progress toward the impact of the UNICEF contributions to the reform of the cash benefits schemes and services, and the introduction of the case management in the centers for social work
- c) Identify the extent to which cross-cutting strategies such as human-rights based approach, results-based management, analysis of child vulnerability and gender equity have contributed and have been mainstreamed in the interventions and reform's processes
- d) Identify lessons learned and make recommendations for interventions' adjustments required to improve and accelerate the effective and sustainable implementation of the cash benefits schemes and services, as well as social work case management in the next years to ensure that children and families are cared for and supported.

The evaluation has both summative and formative purpose. With the policy framework component being at place to date, the evaluation will tend to take the summative approach. However, whilst the reform has embarked in 2019 in an important stage of policy implementation, the formative approach to evaluation will be handy to identify what could be mitigated in this regard, and the indication of the current bottlenecks may be associated with recommendations towards policy improvements.

Users of the evaluation will be:

Audience of the evaluation	Intended use of the evaluation
Primary audience	
UNICEF North Macedonia Country Office	UNICEF will use the evaluation to inform UNICEF programming related to social protection including better plan for the implementation of the Country Programme; improve partnerships with the government, particularly the development and review of workplans. UNICEF will draw upon the findings of the evaluation to adjust its advocacy approaches to influence government policies, strategies, and funding priorities related to child-sensitive social protection, child poverty measurement and analysis and more equitable public finance for children.

Ministry of Labor and Social Policy,	The evaluation will guide UNICEF's government counterparts to make strategic adjustments in key policies, including areas where collaboration can be strengthened, as well as support and inform the design of new Government programs related to social protection
Centers for Social Work, Institute of Social Affairs	The evaluation will inform UNICEF and the national counterparts on areas where collaboration needs to be strengthened to ensure effective implementation of the social protection reform and relevant inter sectoral coordination.
Implementing partners from civil society and other development partners such as other UN entities, including the World Bank	Changes/modifications in the advocacy approaches by UNICEF and civil society leading toward the implementation of a responsive social protection system

The findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the evaluation will be first validated internally and with the key stakeholders through the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG). The evaluation report will be placed in the public domain – together with a management response to follow up on recommendations.

The purpose of the ERG will be to facilitate the participation of relevant stakeholders in the design and scope of the evaluation, raising awareness of the different information needs, providing information and quality assurance throughout the process and in supporting the dissemination of the evaluation results. The ERG is expected to provide feedback during the evaluation process and on the deliverables; comment on the evaluation approach and methods and facilitate access to data and information. The Reference Group members will be expected to:

- Be a sounding board for feedback during the evaluation
- Enable access to key informants during the evaluation process
- Participate in an inception report presentation
- Review and comment on inception report
- Participate in the presentation of evaluation preliminary findings
- Participate in follow up interviews with evaluators as relevant
- Review and comment on draft evaluation report
- Review and comment on final evaluation report

Evaluation Framework/Questions

The evaluation framework is shaped along the lines of the DAC¹⁰ criteria, and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards¹¹ to which UNICEF adheres, and the evaluation is expected to respond to the following evaluation questions:

Relevance

1. How relevant were the Government social protection policies and programs to the needs of the children and their families, especially to the most vulnerable children?
2. To what extent do the intended outcome and the relevant outputs address the priorities identified in the national strategic documents relevant for social protection of children including the National Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion (2010-2020) and the Employment and Social Reform Programme 2020?

Coherence:

3. To what extent social protection programs for children are implemented in coherence with other governmental sectoral policies?
4. Has there been any duplication of efforts among UNICEF's own interventions and interventions delivered by other organizations or entities in contributing to the outcomes?

Effectiveness:

5. Have the UNICEF supported programs and interventions contributed to reducing bottlenecks in ensuring effective coverage of children and their families? To what extent capacity-building activities supported by UNICEF contributed to effective implementation of the social protection reform interventions?
6. To what extent has UNICEF contributed to creating an enabling environment (institutional, political and legislative context) for social protection conducive to effective coverage of poor and vulnerable children?
7. To what extent are the existing social protection benefits for children and their families adequate and equity focused? Are there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection of children and their families?

Efficiency:

8. Were UNICEF programme budgets and resources (human, financial and technical) adequately used for addressing priority bottlenecks?
9. Which social protection programs for children and their families have been the most efficient in meeting the needs of the children (by program type, by target population, by inequities)?

Sustainability:

10. Are legal, institutional/administrative and financial mechanisms established to ensure monitoring and evaluation as well as sustainability of the results (policies, strategies, services)?
11. Are the mechanisms used to finance social protection spending consistent with the objectives of the programs they are financing? What are the potentials for expanding the existing benefits or introduce new ones?

Impact

12. Are there early indications that the reforms of family and child focused benefits and reformed social services have contributed to social inclusion of children and their families?
13. What positive/negative, intended, or unintended outcomes have the interventions contributed to so far?

Cross-cutting issues:

14. To what extent have the interventions contributed to gender equality, non-discrimination and disability inclusiveness?

Evaluation questions will be further refined by the evaluation team during the inception phase and in consultation with the Evaluation Reference Group – to focus on the questions that, if well answered, have the greatest potential to impact on policies, strategies and future programming.

Methodology, Ethical Considerations and Limitations

The evaluation methodology will be guided by the Evaluation Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group¹² (UNEG), as well as in line with UNICEF's Evaluation Policy¹³, UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluations and Data Collection and Analysis¹⁴ and UNICEF's reporting standards. The detailed methodology will be fully designed by the evaluation team as part of the inception phase (report). The methodology should aim to utilize the best mix of data gathering tools to yield the most reliable and valid answers to the evaluation questions and generate maximum learning within the limits of resources and availability of data.

In order to serve its purpose, the evaluation may apply contribution analysis, and have a utilization focused approach, including, but not limited to: mapping of situation and contextual analyses, barriers and bottlenecks; structured desk analysis of policy documents and legislative frameworks; reconstruction of the Theory of Change; analysis of UNICEF output and outcome reports, including the achievement of the targets; in-depth interviews and focus groups.

Sampling criteria for participants in the evaluation will be proposed by the evaluation team in the inception report. The evaluation will assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and initial impact of the UNICEF's interventions based on the reconstructed Theory of Change and the indicators used for monitoring performance and attainment of estimated results as defined in the CPD.

A core evaluation framework, containing criteria of analysis, will be developed for the evaluation questions at the inception phase (report), against which data will be gathered and analyzed. Evaluation questions outlined in the TOR are expected to be reformulated, regrouped and streamlined on the basis of the logic model reflected by the reconstructed Theory of change and will be assigned to specific evaluation criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact).

Methods for ensuring validity and reliability at analysis stage will include: Triangulation – to confirm and validate results reached by different methods.

Complementarity - to explain and understand findings obtained by one method by applying a second.

Interrogation - where diverging results emerge from the application of different methods – these will need to be interrogated to either reconcile, or explain, the differences apparent.

The methodology will include the following elements and stages:

- c) **Desk Review** of existing documentation, evaluation reports, all relevant UNICEF programme documents, research and studies; laws, government strategies and policy documents, primary and secondary data reports; initial validation of resources and final definition of the scope for the evaluation
- d) Based on the desk review, the evaluation team will develop an **Inception Report** that includes:
 - ✓ A reconstructed Theory of Change, based on the available information in the Think Piece accompanying the preparation of the 2016-2020 Country Programme
 - ✓ A summary of initial findings against the evaluation questions derived from the desk review
 - ✓ Recommended methodological approach to this assignment, which takes into account the difference in the sector, approaches and development/maturity of the programs, including elements of both formative and summative evaluation approaches
 - ✓ Data collection and analysis instruments, and the identification of any ethical considerations, if relevant
 - ✓ Refined evaluation questions, responding to the specificities of the context and supported by detailed evaluation matrix
 - ✓ Propose any necessary revisions in the budget for the evaluation
- e) **Country mission(s)** – The evaluation team will meet with the Evaluation Reference Group, gather additional evidence, conduct key informant interviews, including with key stakeholders and partners, organize focus groups, draft and present initial findings before the end of the mission.
- f) **Evaluation Report** - The evaluation team will develop an analytical report that summarizes evidence gathered during the desk review and the data collection, drawing higher level conclusions, identifying promising practices and important lessons learned. The draft evaluation report will be presented to UNICEF Country Office as a first step in validating the findings and conclusions and refining the recommendations so that they are both strategic and useful. Subsequently, the report will be presented to the Evaluation Reference Group for the same purposes.

The methodology must be agreed upon between UNICEF and the evaluators, with consultation of relevant counterparts, prior to the start of the evaluation.

In addition to the elements required in the Inception Report listed above, UNICEF will identify an initial list of the key stakeholders to be met by the evaluation team; nevertheless, during the inception and fieldwork phase, team members will be able to reach out to additional stakeholders and informants, within available resources and time.

To facilitate the evaluation process, UNICEF will assist with the organization of meetings with the relevant government authorities, development partners, institutions, key stakeholders and beneficiaries. UNICEF will be responsible for preparing and coordinating the full agenda of the evaluation in consultation with partners and stakeholders.

Human Rights and Ethical Considerations:

The evaluation should be guided by principles the Results-Based Management and Human Rights Based Approaches to programming and evaluation. The entire process and deliverables of the evaluation should be sensitive to gender equity, and human rights aspects, mostly child rights. The evaluation team will commit to fully adhere to the required ethical principles/standards for data collection, as specified in the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluations and Data Collection and Analysis¹⁵.

Ethical approval by UNICEF Ethical Review Board may be required for the inception report, in case data collection will involve sensitive questions or have vulnerable categories of population, including children as participants in the evaluation.

The evaluation team will ensure to exercise independent judgement and operate in an impartial and unbiased manner. The final report should be credible, based on reliable data and observations, and provide a comprehensive and balanced presentation of the evidence. During data collection, any sensitive issues or concerns, including conflicts of interest, will be raised with UNICEF as soon as they are identified. During data collection, attention will be paid to ensure that the evaluation process is ethical, by ensuring to:

- a) Identify the need for and securing necessary approval.
- b) Avoid any harm to participants and respect full confidentiality. The privacy and safety of respondents should be a priority. Respondent participation should be voluntary, without undue burden, free from any duress, consensual and furnished with written consent where possible. For the safety and security of the evaluation team, the necessary training and on-the-ground support will be provided by UNICEF in North Macedonia (if needed), to avoid any issues of safety.
- c) Respect respondents' dignity, vulnerabilities and cultural sensitivities. Development and use of data collection instruments should be performed to take into account the variances in ethnicities, gender, disability, age and other variables like socio-economic categories of those engaged in any form during the implementation of the evaluation.
- d) Select fairly and in a representative manner the respondents. The evaluation team should define and document the criteria for selections of any participants in the evaluation.

Limitations to the evaluation.

At this stage, several limitations have been identified, as described below. Additional limitations are expected to be identified by the evaluation team at the inception phase.

- a) A clear and comprehensive theory of change linking results with UNICEF's contribution over the years is missing. In addition, there is a scarcity of indicators, including baseline and target data that address specifically the social protection reform.
- b) The desk review will be dependent on explicit evidence contained in planning and reporting documents of UNICEF and Government of North Macedonia, including the disaggregated data.
- c) The effects of COVID-19 on household income and the temporary social protection response measures may distort the analysis of the initial effects of the social protection reform.

To address some of these limitations, the evaluation will use information provided through the existing documentation and evaluation reports and validate key determinants of inequity and trends at outcome level.

In close collaboration with UNICEF, main counterparts, and based on preliminary desk review, the Theory of Change is to be retro-actively re-constructed, including baselines and targets where needed. In case of persistent information gaps, a more qualitative appraisal will be used, applying contribution analysis at different levels. A mixed-method approach will be utilized to make use of available qualitative and quantitative sources and ensure cross-checking/triangulation of information.

Please refer to Annex A for a preliminary list of the documents available, as well as a stakeholder list in Annex B. At a next stage the evaluation approach will be further narrowed down, examining all programme interventions and their impact, including UNICEF's specific role. The evaluation team will assess whether collecting disaggregated data is feasible given the data limitations.

Expected Deliverables, Timeframe, Responsibilities and Reporting Requirements

Expected deliverables:

Evaluation Deliverable	Deadlines	Indicative # of working days
1. Kick-off meeting for the evaluation	One week after start of the contract	1
2. Desk Review for the Inception Report	Six weeks after the kick-off meeting (draft Inception Report to be submitted)	10
3. Inception Report ¹⁶ (draft and final version; approx. 20 pages excluding annexes)		12
4. Discussion of the draft Inception Report with the Evaluation Reference Group	Two weeks after preliminary approval of Inception Report	1
5. Additional desk review, data collection and analysis	Eight weeks after the approval of the Inception Report	35
6. Draft Evaluation Report [30-35 pages, excluding the Executive Summary (max. 5 pages) and annexes]	Eight weeks after the finalization of the data collection and analysis	35
7. Final Evaluation Report ¹⁷ (including iterations for feedback)	Four weeks after approval of the Draft Evaluation Report	7
8. Validation workshop with the Evaluation Reference Group	Two weeks after the preliminary approval of the Final Evaluation Report	2
Total		103

Responsibilities

The evaluation is commissioned and will be managed by UNICEF Country Office in North Macedonia. The evaluation team will report to the UNICEF Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. UNICEF has the responsibility to manage and support the evaluation and provide overall quality assurance to the process and deliverables, as well as develop an explicit communication strategy for the evaluation, including the dissemination plan and expected use of findings for advocacy. Support to the evaluation team will include regular communication, feedback and discussion on the progress of the assignment. UNICEF will be responsible to share and collect feedback in due time on the deliverables. The Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) will foster/enable the participation of relevant stakeholders (Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Centers for Social Work, Ministry of Finance, other relevant government institutions, representatives of civil society organizations working in the area of the evaluation theme, other development partners providing support in the area of social protection system and experts) in the design and scope of the evaluation, to raise awareness of the different information needs, to provide information quality assurance throughout the process and support the dissemination of the evaluation results.

The evaluation team will be responsible to undertake all agreed tasks in a timely manner and delivering quality results as per those specified in this TOR. The evaluation team leader will be responsible to guide and coordinate the work of other team members.

Reporting requirements

- g) From the beginning of the assignment, the evaluation team and UNICEF Child Rights Monitoring Specialist will agree on monthly updated workplan to keep up to date with the process of evaluation implementation
- h) Deliverables/Reports to be submitted to UNICEF according to the timelines agreed during the inception phase based on the tentative timeframe explained above in this TOR.
- i) Once the documents are prepared and delivered, UNICEF shall hold the Intellectual property right of the documents and the related materials.

- j) The structure of the Inception Report (max. 25 pages) should encompass (at least) the following components/chapters: Introduction; Context/Object of the Evaluation; Evaluation Objectives and Scope; Theory of Change; Stakeholders Analysis; Evaluation Framework with a detailed matrix (questions, data sources, judgement criteria, etc.); Methodology (evaluation approach, methods for data collection and analysis, limitations and ethical considerations); Preliminary findings from the desk review (list of documents reviewed and planned to be reviewed); Workplan, including detailed field work with responsibilities and timelines; Proposed structure of the Final Evaluation Report; Annexes (draft instruments for data collection).
- k) The structure of the Final Evaluation Report (max. 35-40 pages excluding Executive Summary and Annexes) should be guided by the UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Reports Standards¹⁸.

All documents produced should be child-sensitive, and in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other legal documents on human rights. All deliverables will be submitted in English, the content of which should be well structured, coherent and evidence based.

Report writing, terminology, publication and citation guidelines of UNICEF should be followed as outlined in Global Evaluation Report Oversight System (GEROS).¹⁹ Necessary guidelines will be provided by UNICEF North Macedonia. In addition, UNICEF North Macedonia will contribute to the review of the inception report, the draft and final reports to ensure they meet UNICEF's quality assurance and ethical standards. UNICEF North Macedonia will also provide technical advice and support to the evaluation process.

Evaluation Ethics

The evaluation should follow UN Evaluation Group Norms and Standards²⁰ – including ensuring that the planned evaluation fully addresses any ethical issues. The consultants should also adhere to UNICEF's Evaluation Policy²¹ and to UNICEF Reporting Standards²². Evaluation team members will sign a no conflict-of-interest attestation.

Location, Duration and Budget

- a) Country mission trips are expected as per indicative schedule outlined in this TOR
- b) All travel plans, and duration of the stay in the country will be based on the agreed implementation plan, updated on monthly basis by the UNICEF Child Rights Monitoring Specialist and the evaluation team
- c) The evaluation team is responsible for the international and local travel arrangements, including travel insurance and accommodation. Travel days are not included as working days.
- d) Office space during country mission, if/when needed, will be provided by UNICEF

The exact dates for starting and ending the contract will be specified upon contract award.

- a) Tentative starting period: End of December 2022
- b) Foreseen ending period: September 2023

Qualifications and specialized knowledge/experience requirements

The evaluation is expected to be carried out by an evaluation company with experience in evaluations, research, studies, data collection and reporting. The evaluation team should be comprised as a mixture of at least one international and one or more national members. All team members should have substantive expertise in leading or conducting evaluations and should not have any conflict of interest with respect to UNICEF and/or national programs and activities in support of social protection reform.

The evaluation team is expected to include members who together form an appropriate balance of expertise and practical knowledge in the following areas:

- Social Policy
- Social protection/Social assistance

- Public Planning and Finance

1. The **team leader** will be responsible for managing the evaluation and delivering the final reports, as well as for communication with UNICEF and counterparts, the final presentation of the results. The team leader should be involved in all phases of the evaluation, coordinating inputs for all the deliverables, including participation in some of the data collection processes and presentation of the results. Other team members will be responsible, inter alia, for the evaluation design, desk review, data collection, quality control, analysis of some sections of the report, implementation and logistics.

Required Qualifications:

- Advanced university degree and/or academic background in Social Sciences, Economics, Public Policy, Political Science or a related field
- At least 10 years of proven record in managing project/program evaluations in areas relevant to social protection and child wellbeing
- Extensive experience in designing evaluations, conducting qualitative analysis and surveys, data analysis and report writing
- Proven background and extensive professional experience in social protection issues
- Ability to work within the international and multicultural environment
- Very good communication and presentation skills with government and community members
- High analytical and conceptual skills and ability
- Good knowledge of computer applications
- Fluency in written and spoken English

Roles and responsibilities for all team members

1. All team members are requested to refer attentively to the documentation made available, including the TOR, context information and information on and preparatory analysis of UNICEF's interventions.
2. All team members are requested to familiarize themselves with UNICEF's global normative products in the substantive areas for which they are responsible. These are available on the UNICEF website www.unicef.org.
3. Complementary to the evaluation TOR, the evaluation team leader will prepare a number of orienting documents and tools (including an evaluation matrix) in discussion with the evaluation team. These documents should be read by all team members and will be used as a framework for guiding the questions to be asked and data to be gathered during the evaluation.
4. All team members will contribute to concisely written inception report and draft evaluation report.

Roles and Responsibility – Team Leader

The Team Leader has the overall responsibility for the **Evaluation of UNICEF Interventions Supporting the Social Protection Reform in North Macedonia** looking at the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and initial impact of UNICEF's key interventions. Specifically, the tasks of the Team Leader include:

- Guide the extensive desk review of existing information on the context, national policies and priorities and UNICEF's work, including all relevant programme and project documents and reports, previous studies, research and evaluations
- Develop and provide detailed methodological guidance for the team and coaching them in the tools and approach to be used for data gathering and analysis
- Facilitate meetings/interviews with national counterparts and implementing partners
- Provide guidance in preparing evaluation deliverables
- Follow the methodology described in the TOR, prepare checklists as appropriate and consult with the team members as necessary on methodological issues
- Coordinate with the evaluation team to consolidate inputs from them and ensure timely delivery of evaluation products

- Manage the evaluation work plan, respecting deadlines for specific activities and inputs described in the work plan
- Maintain a high level of communication with the other team members
- Conduct interviews with a range of key stakeholders and informants
- Visit accessible field sites and interview field staff and ultimate beneficiaries, as appropriate and feasible
- Assess UNICEF's work government and other partners' contribution and comparative advantage in the context of existing policies, plans and emerging issues
- Contribute to the team's analysis and discussion of evaluation questions and issues common to the whole team
- Lead the consolidation of the teams' inputs for the debriefing session(s) and in the presentation of the draft findings to stakeholders
- Submit the Inception Report upon completion of the Desk Review phase, the Draft and Final evaluation reports (ERs) and the power point presentation on the main findings and recommendations emerging from the evaluation.

Companies responding to the tender should plan to hire interpreters separately as necessary.

Note that both the Inception report and the draft Evaluation report will be subject to an external quality assurance review prior to being cleared by UNICEF as final deliverables.

Submitting of proposals and evaluation criteria for assessing bids

Interested companies are requested to submit their technical and financial proposals no later than **23 December 2022**.

For any questions related to the TOR, please contact the UNICEF Child Rights Monitoring Specialist at mnashoku@unicef.org by December 20, 2022, the latest.

The bidders are requested to provide a:

- Technical proposal, with the following elements:
 - The understanding of the assignment by the proposer
 - Description of the organization and its organizational experience with similar projects (samples of relevant work could be attached)
 - Client references, with a focus on similar projects
 - List of the proposed team for the assignment with a description of the role of key personnel in the assignment, their relevant experience and qualifications (CVs should be attached)
 - Proposed Methodology and Approach, including, but not limited to approach to implementation of the tasks, work plan and timeframe, detailed sampling methods, monitoring and evaluation and quality control mechanism
- Financial proposal in USD with all-inclusive cost. In all cost implications bidders, should factor the cost of the required service/assignment. Estimated cost for travel should be included in the financial proposal. Travel cost shall be calculated based on economy class travel, regardless of the length of travel. Costs for accommodation, meals and incidentals shall not

exceed applicable daily subsistence allowance (DSA) rates, as promulgated by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). Unexpected travels shall also be treated as above. A detailed financial proposal should be structured by deliverables listed in deliverables table. Associated costs should be itemized per: i) fees for national and international experts; team members and researchers; ii) material costs; iii) translation services; and iv) other. The financial proposal shall be in the following format:

Activity	Days	Rate per day	Total Price w/out VAT
1. (Budget heading)			
1.1. (Budget line)			
1.2. (Budget line)			
.....			
Subtotal			
2. (Budget heading)			
2.1. (Budget line)			
2.2. (Budget line)			
.....			
Subtotal			
GRAND TOTAL			

The required documents should be submitted to the UNICEF country office, no later than 23 December 2022 in the following manner:

- l) Technical proposal in PDF with all required documents in the order described above should be sent to skopje@unicef.org
- m) Financial proposal in PDF should be sent to amicevska@unicef.org

After the opening, each proposal will be assessed first on its technical merits and subsequently on its price. The proposal with the best overall value, composed of technical merit and price, will be recommended for approval. UNICEF will set up an evaluation panel composed of technical and procurement staff and their conclusions will be forwarded to the internal UNICEF Contracts Review Committee, or other relevant approving authority.

The evaluation panel will first evaluate each response for compliance with the requirements of the request for proposal (RFP) procedure of UNICEF. Responses deemed not to meet all of the mandatory requirements will be considered non-compliant and rejected at this stage without further consideration. Failure to comply with any of the terms and conditions contained in this RFP, including provision of all required information, may result in a response or proposal being disqualified from further consideration.

The overall weighting between technical and price evaluation will be as follows: The technical component will account for 70% of the total points allocated and the financial component will account for 30% of the total points allocated.

The assessed technical score must be equal to or exceed 42 (that is, sixty percent) of the total 70 points allocated to the technical evaluation in order to be considered technically compliant and for consideration in the financial evaluation.

The proposals will be evaluated against the following technical criteria:

Item	Technical Evaluation Criteria	Max. Points Obtainable
1.	Company and Personnel	30
1.1.	Range and depth of organizational experience with similar projects	10
1.2.	Client references	5
1.3.	Key personnel: relevant experience and qualifications of the proposed team for the assignment	15

2.	Proposed Methodology and Approach e.g. Work plan showing detail sampling methods, project implementation plan in line with the project	40
2.1.	The understanding of the assignment by the proposer	5
2.2.	Proposed methodology, including detailed sampling methods, monitoring and evaluation and quality control mechanism	20
2.3.	Proposed approach to implementation of the tasks as per the ToR, including work plan and timeframe	15
	TOTAL TECHNICAL SCORES	70

Administrative issues

Management of the Evaluation

The evaluation will be managed by the UNICEF Child Rights Monitoring Specialist, who will be responsible for the day-to-day oversight and management of the evaluation and for the management of the evaluation budget. The evaluation manager will ensure the quality and independence of the evaluation and guarantee its alignment with UNEG Norms and Standards and Ethical Guidelines and other relevant procedures, provide quality assurance on the relevance of the evaluation findings and conclusions, and the implement ability of recommendations, and contribute to the dissemination of the evaluation findings and follow-up on the management response. The evaluation manager will work in collaboration with programme sections of UNICEF North Macedonia, as well as the UNICEF regional evaluation team. Additional quality assurance will be provided by the external quality assurance facility set up by the ECA Regional Office. The Final Evaluation report will be approved by the UNICEF Country Office Representative.

An Evaluation Reference Group will be established to guide and oversee the implementation of the evaluation, providing expert advice as needed. The ERG will include external experts and representatives of the key stakeholders but will be chaired or co-chaired by the UNICEF Office. The ERG is expected to provide feedback during the evaluation process and on the deliverables; comment on the evaluation approach and methods and facilitate access to data and information.

UNICEF Child Rights Monitoring Specialist will be the key focal point for the evaluation team.

The Evaluation Section in the Regional Office will provide support to the evaluation team throughout the process.

Payment Schedule

All payment terms will be indicated in the contract upon selection of the successful applicant.

40 % of the payment is due after the delivery of the final inception report

40 % of the payment is due after the submission of the draft evaluation report

20% of the payment is due after the integration of any final comments and corrections to the final evaluation report

The inception report and the evaluation report will be considered final after satisfactory review by the external review facility and the approval of the Evaluation Reference Group.

o **Annex A: Preliminary List of Documents to be Reviewed**

Document No	Type of Document	Title	Author
1	Report	Final Report on Integrated Case Management Training conducted by UNICEF and UNDP	Mashura Akilova, Yamile M. Martí
2	Programme Document	Improving Social Service Through Case Management and Social Work Supervision	UNICEF CO; Association of Social Workers of Macedonia

3	Final Report	Improving Social Service Through Case Management and Social Work Supervision	Association of Social Worker of Macedonia
4	Standard Operating Procedures; Manual; Forms	Integrated case management	Association of Social Workers of Macedonia
5	Educational material	Educational material on integrated case management	Association of Social Workers of Macedonia
7	Concept Note	Regional Conference on "Responsive social protection solutions: empowering children, families and communities to end poverty"	UNICEF CO
8	Brief	Regional Conference on "Responsive social protection solutions: empowering children, families and communities to end poverty"	UNICEF CO
9	Policy study	Analysis of the public spending on education and on social protection of children in the country	Blagica Petreski, Marjan Petreski
10	Policy brief	Public spending on education and on social protection of children in the country	Blagica Petreski, Marjan Petreski
11	Case study	Integrated Social Protection Systems Country Case Study - North Macedonia	Oxford Policy Management
12	Analysis	Analysis on cash benefits for children	Prof. Dr. Suzana Bornarova
13	Country report	Analysis and recommendations for a more equitable and efficient child benefit system	UNICEF CO

Annex B: Indicative stakeholders list

Ministry of Labor and Social Policy Ministry of Finance

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Education and Science Institute for Social Activities Social Work Centers

Employment Service Agency Employment Centres

UN Resident Coordination Unit

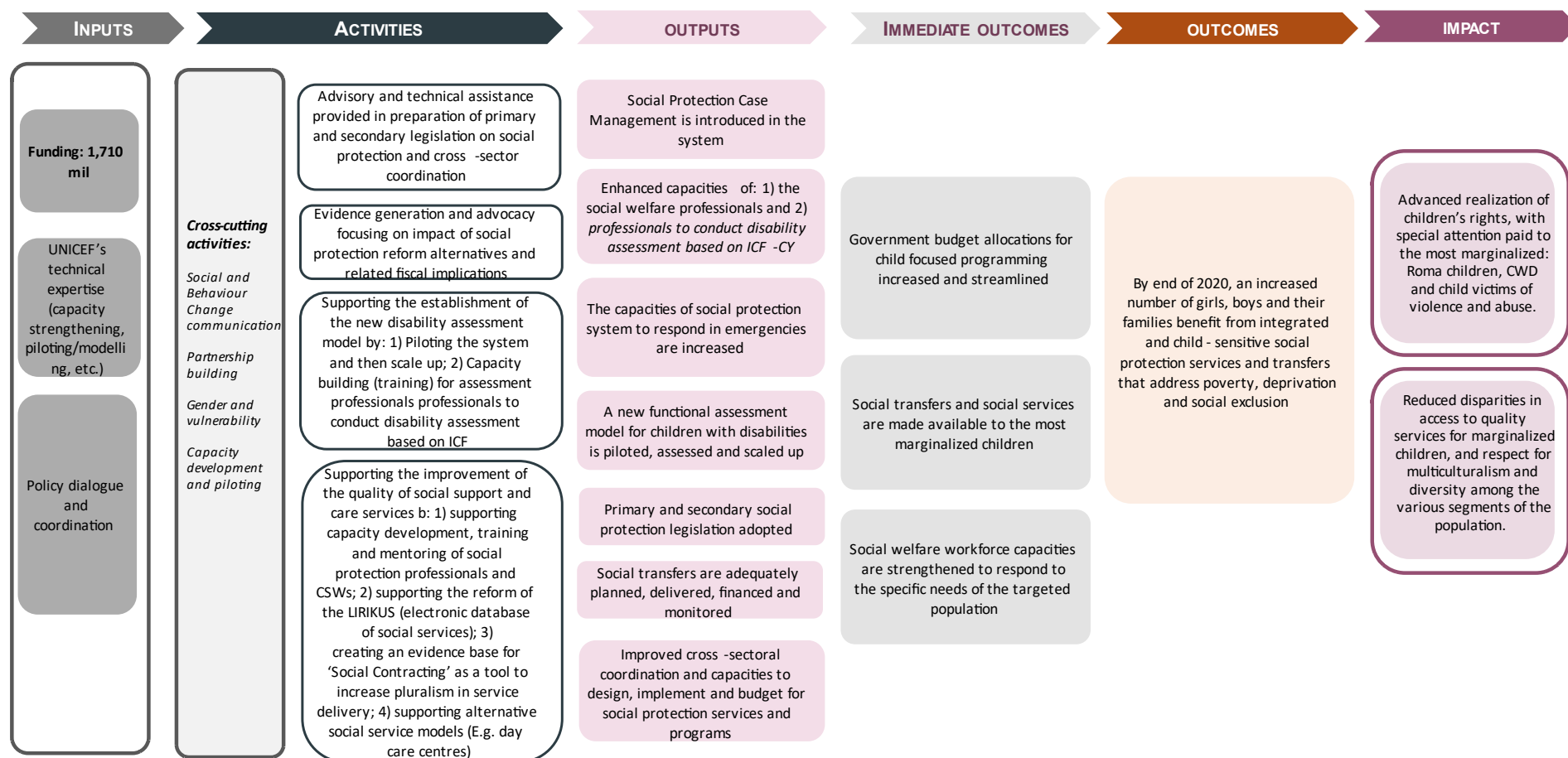
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) World Bank

International Labor Organization (ILO) European Union Delegation

Institute for Social Work and Social Policy, Faculty of Philosophy, Skopje Civil Society Organizations

Annex 2: Theory of Change



Assumptions

- Proactive engagement from government stakeholders
- Availability of financial and human resources
- Uninterrupted pipeline, and sufficient funding available
- availability and sufficient capacity of cooperating partners
- National commitment to strengthen their delivery in line with the national plans
- National and subnational level institutions remain open to capacity building initiatives and willing/available to participate/attend CB initiatives
- Levels of political stability that do not deteriorate in national disasters or other types of disruption
- Mutual interest in partnership building between the Government, UNICE partners and the donors

Annex 3: Evaluation Matrix

#	Evaluation Question	Judgement Indicators	Sources of Information	Data collection techniques	Data analysis
Relevance					
EQ 1.	How relevant were UNICEF's interventions to the needs of the children and their families, especially to the most vulnerable children?	<p>1.1 Evidence and examples of conducted needs assessments and situational analyses of children in North Macedonia and their use in informing the design and implementation of UNICEF's social protection interventions within the reference period</p> <p>1.2 Outputs and outcomes of UNICEF's social protection interventions are responsive to observed critical bottlenecks for the realisation of rights and meeting the needs of the main vulnerable groups—in terms of the enabling environment (policies, legislation, institutional mechanisms and measures), and supply and quality of services</p> <p>1.3 Perceptions of stakeholders on the</p>	<p>UNICEF's CPD, UNICEF's social protection support interventions documentations, Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data</p> <p>National development policy, legislative and strategy documents</p> <p>Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks</p> <p>Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: 	<p>Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison</p> <p>Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions</p> <p>Field observations</p> <p>Online survey</p>	<p>Document review of existing studies identifying main challenges in North Macedonia</p> <p>Document review identifying analyses pertaining government capacity gaps and bottlenecks in provision of social protection services and UNICEF's interventions</p> <p>Comparative analysis of main statistical data and UNICEF's programming documents</p> <p>Document review and comparative analysis of UNICEF's documentation, National Strategies and Plans</p> <p>Qualitative iterative data analysis of the KIIs with key stakeholders</p> <p>Qualitative iterative data analysis of the KIIs with key stakeholders</p> <p>Quantitative data analysis of online survey</p> <p>Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p>

		relevance of measures included within UNICEF's social protection interventions with the needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups and its evolution over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government at central and subnational level • UNICEF CO+RO, donors and development Partners • Community groups (community leaders, partners, social service providers) 		
EQ 2	To what extent do UNICEF's intended outcomes and the relevant outputs address the priorities identified in the national strategic documents relevant for social protection of children including the National Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Social	<p>2.1 Degree to which the objectives and results of UNICEF's Social Protection interventions were aligned with national social sector priorities and frameworks</p> <p>2.2 Evidence of alignment and contribution of UNICEF's social protection interventions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the National Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion (2010-2020), and 	UNICEF's CPD, social protection support interventions documentation, Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data National development policy, legislative and strategy documents Studies and analytical reports produced by	<p>Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison</p> <p>Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions</p> <p>Field observations</p> <p>Online survey</p>	<p>Document review of existing studies identifying main challenges in North Macedonia</p> <p>Document review identifying analyses pertaining government capacity gaps and bottlenecks in provision of social protection services and UNICEF's interventions</p> <p>Comparative analysis of main statistical data and UNICEF's programming documents</p>

	<p>Inclusion (2010-2020) and the Employment and Social Reform Programme 2020?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Employment and Social Reform Programme 2020 <p>2.3 Degree of matching between UNICEF's envisaged results of support to 1) the case management in social services, 2) the support to disability assessment, 3) quality of social services and 4) evidence generation on public investment in children and reduction of child poverty, with national objectives and needs as outlined in government policies, strategies and plans</p> <p>2.4 Perception of government officials on the degree of alignment of UNICEF's support to social protection reform interventions with national policies, strategies and plans, as well as capacity gaps and bottlenecks</p>	<p>UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks</p> <p>Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government at central and subnational level • UNICEF CO+RO, donors and development Partners 		<p>Document review and comparative analysis of UNICEF's documentation, National Strategies and Plans</p> <p>Qualitative iterative data analysis of the KIIs with key stakeholders</p> <p>Qualitative iterative data analysis of the KIIs with key stakeholders</p> <p>Quantitative data analysis of online survey</p> <p>Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p> <p>Contribution analysis</p>
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COHERENCE

<p>EQ 3.</p>	<p>To what extent are UNICEF's social protection programs for children implemented in coherence with other UNICEF's CPD intervention areas?</p>	<p>3.1 Internal coherence between social protection interventions (e.g. Support to legislation development, piloting of social services, capacity strengthening of professionals, etc.)</p> <p>3.2 Degrees of interactions/synergies and mutual leverage between the social protection support interventions areas and UNICEF's child protection, education, health portfolios;</p>	<p>UNICEF's CPD, social protection interventions documentation, reports on implementation of other UNICEF's portfolios; Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data National development policy, legislative and strategy documents Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks</p> <p>Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF CO+RO, donors, key government stakeholders 	<p>Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison</p> <p>Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions</p>	<p>Document review identifying iterative themes and comparison between UNICEF's and other development partners' documentation</p> <p>Qualitative iterative data analysis of the KIIs with key stakeholders</p> <p>Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p>
<p>EQ 4.</p>	<p>Has there been any duplication</p>	<p>4.1 Degree to which UNICEF effectively coordinated</p>	<p>UNICEF's CPD, social protection support</p>	<p>Document Review to</p>	<p>Document review identifying iterative themes and comparison between UNICEF's</p>

	<p>of efforts among UNICEF's own interventions and interventions delivered by other organizations or entities in contributing to the outcomes?</p>	<p>with other UN agencies, donors and development partners to avoid overlaps, leverage contributions and catalyse contributions to social protection reform</p>	<p>interventions documentation, Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data National development policy, legislative and strategy documents Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks</p> <p>Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government at central and subnational level • UNICEF CO+RO, donors and development Partners 	<p>identify themes among documentation sources for comparison</p> <p>Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions Online survey</p>	<p>and other development partners' documentation</p> <p>Qualitative iterative data analysis of the KIIs with key stakeholders</p> <p>Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p>
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EFFECTIVENESS					
EQ 5.	Have the UNICEF supported programs and interventions contributed to reducing bottlenecks and to creating an enabling environment (institutional, political and legislative context) for social protection coverage of poor and vulnerable children and their families?	<p>5.1 Evidence from pre-existing and quantitative data regarding sufficient achievement of intended outputs and outcomes when it comes to reducing bottlenecks to effective coverage of children and their families, i.e.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative solutions • Costed policies • Institutional mechanisms (CSW, disability assessments) • Social services • Stakeholder perceptions regarding results as having been achieved and contributing to overall positive change in North Macedonia • Degree and type of drivers that promoted SP support interventions implementation • Degree and type of hindering factors affecting SP support 	<p>UNICEF's CPD, social protection interventions documentation, reports on implementation of other UNICEF's portfolios; Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data National development policy, legislative and strategy documents Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks</p> <p>Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF CO+RO, donors, key government stakeholders • Community groups (community 	<p>Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison</p> <p>Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions</p> <p>Field observations</p> <p>Online survey</p>	<p>Document review of existing studies identifying main challenges in North Macedonia</p> <p>Document review identifying analyses pertaining government capacity gaps and bottlenecks in provision of social protection services and UNICEF's interventions</p> <p>Policy analysis</p> <p>Comparative analysis of main statistical data and UNICEF's programming documents</p> <p>ToC analysis and contribution analysis tracing activities to results.</p> <p>Qualitative Iterative Data Analysis</p> <p>Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p>

		interventions implementation	leaders, partners, social service providers)		
EQ 6.	To what extent capacity-building activities supported by UNICEF contributed to effective implementation of the social protection reform interventions?	<p>6.1 Degree of change in government's capacity to design of an integrated social protection framework with appropriate administrative systems and operations</p> <p>6.2 Degree of change in terms of delivery of effective, tailored-to-needs social protection to every citizen of North Macedonia</p> <p>6.3 Degree of government capacity to establish and test the disability assessment procedures and service delivery design based on ICF norms.</p> <p>6.4 Degree of social service providers to provide quality and accessible services to the most vulnerable groups</p>	<p>UNICEF's CPD, social protection interventions documentation, reports on implementation of other UNICEF's portfolios; Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data</p> <p>National development policy, legislative and strategy documents</p> <p>Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks</p> <p>Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF CO+RO, donors, key 	<p>Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison</p> <p>Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions</p> <p>Field observations</p> <p>Online survey</p>	<p>Document review of existing studies identifying main challenges in North Macedonia</p> <p>Document review identifying analyses pertaining government capacity gaps and bottlenecks in provision of social protection services and UNICEF's interventions</p> <p>Policy analysis</p> <p>Comparative analysis of reform processes prior to 2016 and 2022/23</p> <p>ToC analysis and contribution analysis</p> <p>Qualitative Iterative Data Analysis</p> <p>Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p>

			government stakeholders Community groups (community leaders, partners, social service providers)		
EQ 7.	To what extent have UNICEF interventions contributed to adequacy and equity focus of the existing social protection benefits for children and their families?	7.1 Evidence of UNICEF's contribution to the adequacy and equity focus of the existing social protection benefits for children and their families	UNICEF's CPD, social protection interventions documentation, reports on implementation of other UNICEF's portfolios; Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data National development policy, legislative and strategy documents Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks Data collected through	Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions Field observations Online survey	Document review of existing studies identifying main challenges in North Macedonia Document review identifying analyses pertaining government capacity gaps and bottlenecks in provision of social protection services and UNICEF's interventions Policy analysis Comparative analysis of reform processes prior to 2016 and 2022/23 ToC analysis and contribution analysis Qualitative Iterative Data Analysis Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF CO+RO, donors, key government stakeholders • Community groups (community leaders, partners, social service providers) 		
7a.	To what extent are the existing social protection benefits for children and their families adequate and equity focused? Are there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection of children and their families?	7a.1 Evidence and examples of a) adequacy and b) equity of existing social protection benefits for children and their families 7a.2 Evidence and examples of outstanding gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection of children and their families	documentation, reports on implementation of other UNICEF's portfolios; Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data National development policy, legislative and strategy documents Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners,	Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions Field observations Online survey	Document review of existing studies identifying main challenges in North Macedonia Document review identifying analyses pertaining government capacity gaps and bottlenecks in provision of social protection services and UNICEF's interventions Policy analysis Comparative analysis of reform processes prior to 2016 and 2022/23 ToC analysis and contribution analysis

			<p>government or think tanks</p> <p>Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF CO+RO, donors, key government stakeholders • Community groups (community leaders, partners, social service providers) 		<p>Qualitative Iterative Data Analysis</p> <p>Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p>
EFFICIENCY					
EQ 8.	<p>Were UNICEF programme budgets and resources (human, financial and technical) adequately used for addressing priority bottlenecks?</p>	<p>8.1 Degree of adequacy of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgets • Material • Human resources <p>vis-à-vis the volume of tasks carried out</p> <p>8.2 Proportion of UNICEF's social protection interventions that demonstrate implementation on schedule and per planned budget</p>	<p>UNICEF's CPD, social protection interventions documentation, reports on implementation of other UNICEF's portfolios; Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data</p> <p>National development policy, legislative and strategy documents</p>	<p>Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison</p> <p>Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions</p>	<p>Qualitative Iterative Data Analysis</p> <p>Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p>

		8.3 Stakeholder perceptions that the implementation of activities was sufficiently timely, efficient and appropriate to context requirements.	<p>Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks</p> <p>Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF CO+RO, donors, key government stakeholders 	<p>Field observations</p> <p>Online survey</p>	
EQ 9.	Which UNICEF's social protection programs for children and their families have been the most efficient in meeting the needs of the children (by program type, by target population, by inequities)?	<p>9.1 Evidence and examples of UNICEF's social protection intervention(s) that demonstrated efficiency in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ enhancing evidence base on child poverty ○ achieving CO annual social protection target ○ reducing transaction costs, ○ leveraging investments in provision of 	<p>UNICEF's CPD, social protection support interventions documentation, Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data</p> <p>National development policy, legislative and strategy documents</p> <p>Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks</p>	<p>Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison</p> <p>Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions</p> <p>Field observations</p> <p>Online survey</p>	<p>Qualitative Iterative Data Analysis</p> <p>Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p>

		<p>services to the children,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ resource mobilization efforts and partnership arrangements, <p>9.2 Stakeholder perceptions that the implementation of specific activities have been more efficient in comparison to others in the palette of UNICEF's social protection support interventions</p>	<p>Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government at central and subnational level • UNICEF CO+RO, donors and development Partners • Community groups (community leaders, partners, social service providers) 		
SUSTAINABILITY					
EQ 10.	Are legal, institutional/administrative and financial mechanisms established to ensure monitoring and evaluation as well as	<p>10.1 The design, implementation and monitoring processes and mechanisms that are established across the social protection system in North Macedonia are sound</p> <p>10.2 Evidence and examples of adopted strategies and policies that provide</p>	UNICEF's CPD, social protection support interventions documentation, Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data	<p>Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison</p> <p>Semi-Structured Interviews and</p>	<p>Document review of existing studies identifying main challenges in North Macedonia</p> <p>Document review identifying analyses pertaining government capacity gaps and bottlenecks in provision of social protection services and UNICEF's interventions</p>

	sustainability of the results (policies, strategies, services)?	foundations for equitable and adequate social protection of the most vulnerable 10.3 Evidence and examples of institutionalized mechanisms, financial allocations and adequate human resources that enable sustainable provision of social services	National development policy, legislative and strategy documents Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks Data collected through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government at central and subnational level • UNICEF CO+RO, donors 	group discussions Field observations Online survey	Policy analysis Comparative analysis of reform processes prior to 2016 and 2022/23 ToC analysis and contribution analysis Qualitative Iterative Data Analysis Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis
EQ 11.	To what extent are the mechanisms for financing social protection spending which were supported by UNICEF consistent with the objectives of the programs	11.1 Comparative evidence of change in Government's Legislative and policy framework in the social sector prior and post SP support interventions implementation 11.2 Evidence and examples of consistency of planning and budgeting mechanisms and practices with the	UNICEF's CPD, social protection support interventions documentation, Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data National development policy, legislative and strategy documents	Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison Semi-Structured Interviews and	Document review of existing studies identifying main challenges in North Macedonia Document review identifying analyses pertaining government capacity gaps and bottlenecks in provision of social protection services and UNICEF's interventions Policy analysis

	<p>they are financing? What are the potentials for expanding the existing benefits or introduce new ones?</p>	<p>objectives of the social protection programs they are financing 11.3 Perceptions that UNICEF has facilitated consistency between the mechanisms for financing social protection spending with the objectives of the social protection programs</p>	<p>Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government at central and subnational level • UNICEF CO+RO, donors and development Partners • Community groups (community leaders, partners, social service providers) 	<p>group discussions Field observations Online survey</p>	<p>Comparative analysis of reform processes prior to 2016 and 2022/23 ToC analysis and contribution analysis Qualitative Iterative Data Analysis Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p>
IMPACT					
EQ 12.	<p>Are there early indications that the reforms of family and child</p>	<p>12.1 Evidence from pre-existing and quantitative data regarding progress towards achievement of</p>	<p>UNICEF's CPD, social protection support interventions documentation, Annual</p>	<p>Document Review to identify themes among</p>	<p>Document review of existing studies identifying main challenges in North Macedonia</p>

	<p>focused benefits and reformed social services have contributed to social inclusion of children and their families?</p>	<p>intended outcomes and overall goals of the UNICEF's CPD 12.2 Degree of contribution to the changes in terms of achievement of integrated and sustainable social protection system 12.3 Observable change in terms of initial capacity of the government to improve social protection coverage for all children, in particular the most vulnerable, across North Macedonia 12.4 Examples of main results achieved by the JP and most salient success stories</p>	<p>management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data National development policy, legislative and strategy documents Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government at central and subnational level • UNICEF CO+RO, donors and development Partners • Community groups (community leaders, partners, social 	<p>documentation sources for comparison</p> <p>Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions Field observations Online survey</p>	<p>Document review identifying analyses pertaining government capacity gaps and bottlenecks in provision of social protection services and UNICEF's interventions</p> <p>Policy analysis</p> <p>Comparative analysis of reform processes prior to 2016 and 2022/23</p> <p>ToC analysis and contribution analysis Qualitative Iterative Data Analysis Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p>
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			service providers)		
EQ 13.	What positive/negative, intended, or unintended outcomes have UNICEF's interventions contributed to so far?	13.1 Examples of unexpected positive results of the SP support interventions. 13.2 Examples of unintended negative results. 13.3 Evidence of strategies to mitigate potential risks	UNICEF's CPD, social protection support intervention documentation, Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data National development policy, legislative and strategy documents Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks Data collected through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government at central and subnational level • UNICEF CO+RO, donors and development Partners 	Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions Field observations Online survey	Document review of existing studies identifying main challenges in North Macedonia Document review identifying analyses pertaining government capacity gaps and bottlenecks in provision of social protection services and UNICEF's interventions Policy analysis Comparative analysis of reform processes prior to 2016 and 2022/23 ToC analysis and contribution analysis Qualitative Iterative Data Analysis Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community groups (community leaders, partners, social service providers) 		
CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES					
EQ 14.	To what extent have UNICEF's interventions contributed to gender equality, non-discrimination and disability inclusiveness?	<p>14.1 Objectives and results of UNICEF's social protection interventions are responsive to observed critical bottlenecks for inclusion of persons with disabilities, gender equality and non-discrimination</p> <p>14.2 Evidence that UNICEF maintained strong adherence to principles of accessibility, non-discrimination, participation and inclusiveness of persons with disabilities, gender equality</p>	<p>UNICEF's CPD, social protection support interventions documentation, Annual management plans, Progress and Performance reports, indicator data</p> <p>National development policy, legislative and strategy documents</p> <p>Studies and analytical reports produced by UNICEF or other development partners, government or think tanks</p> <p>Data collected through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders as follows: 	<p>Document Review to identify themes among documentation sources for comparison</p> <p>Semi-Structured Interviews and group discussions</p> <p>Field observations</p> <p>Online survey</p>	<p>Qualitative Iterative Data Analysis</p> <p>Triangulation between data sources, data collection techniques, and data types according to principles of iterative analysis</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government at central and subnational level• UNICEF CO+RO, donors and development Partners• Community groups (community leaders, partners, social service providers)		
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[Annex 4: Review of the changes of the Results chain over the reference period of the evaluation](#)

Table 1: Changes in Outputs and Indicators over the period under evaluation

CPD	2018 indicator table	GD_08 Indicators Report Macedonia 2016-2021	TOR
<p>Outcome: By end of 2020, an increased number of girls, boys and their families benefit from integrated and child-sensitive social protection services and transfers that address poverty, deprivation and social exclusion.</p>	<p>By end of 2020, an increased number of girls, boys and their families benefit from integrated and child-sensitive social protection services and transfers that address poverty, deprivation and social exclusion.</p>	<p>Indicator 1 (CPD)⁷²: % of boys and girls identified as having a disability using the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health – Children and Youth (ICF-CY) assessment Baseline (2014): 0% Target (2020): 90%, with equal gender and ethnic distribution.</p>	<p>By 2020, an increased number of girls, boys and their families benefit from integrated and child sensitive social protection services and transfers that address poverty, deprivation and social exclusion.</p>
		<p>Standard Indicator (Indicator report 2018) - Number of children living in poverty according to (a) International extreme poverty line; (b) National monetary poverty lines or (c) National multidimensional poverty lines Baseline (2016): 28.6 Target (2020): 25</p>	
		<p>(Indicator report 2018) % of children receiving child benefits Baseline (2013): 3.8 Target (2020): 10</p>	
		<p>(Indicator report 2018) % of children receiving child allowance Baseline (2013): 1% Target (2020): 6%</p>	
<p>Output 1: Social services and transfers are adequately planned, delivered, financed and monitored to reach the most marginalized children</p>	<p>Social services and transfers are adequately planned, delivered, financed and monitored to reach the most marginalized children</p>	<p>Standard Indicator - 1.2 National government measurement of child poverty using monetary measures Baseline (2016): yes Target (2020): yes</p>	<p>Social transfers are adequately planned, delivered, financed and monitored to reach the most marginalized children</p>
		<p>Standard Indicator - Cash transfers: Cash transfer system DESIGNED including expanding coverage and improving inclusion of children (e.g design,</p>	

⁷² Only one added

		targeting, beneficiary selection, cash delivery and overall financing) Baseline (2017): no Target (2020): yes	
		New law on social protection in line with international standards developed and adopted Baseline (2017): no Target (2020): yes	
		Number of children covered by government cash transfer programmes Baseline (2014): 33540 Target (2020): 40000	
Output 2: Improved cross-sectoral coordination and capacities to design, implement and budget for social protection policies and programmes	Improved cross- sectoral coordination and capacities to design, implement and budget for social protection policies and programmes	Standard Indicator - 2.8 M and E: Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are used to follow up on social protection delivery/system Baseline (2015): no Target (2020): yes	Improved cross-sectoral coordination and capacities to design, implement and budget for social protection services and programs
Output 3: Centres for Social Work, ISA and NGOs have capacity to strengthen the resilience of children and families, including Roma and CWD	The capacities of professionals to conduct disability assessment based on ICF-CY are strengthened	Standard Indicator - 2.11 Other social protection programmes ARE adapted to address child poverty and deprivation (such as access to affordable child care, health insurance etc) Baseline (2016): no Target (2020): yes	Assumed that this was merged into Output 2
No	Output 4: Refugees and Migrants boys and girls and other emergency affected populations supported (not included in CPD)	No indicators	No
No	Output 5: Government budget allocations for child focused	Standard Indicator - 3.2 Evidence generated on budgets and their linkages to child outcomes to	Government budget allocations for child focused programming increased and streamlined

	programming increased and streamlined (not included in CPD)	improve budget allocations/expenditure for children Baseline (2016): initiating Target (2020): advanced	
No	Output 6: Programmatic outreach to vulnerable communities, including in emergency preparedness and response (COVID) (not included in CPD)	No indicators	No
Output (AR 2016/17): Strengthened Resilience of Marginalized children and families, including Roma and children with disabilities		No	No
Output (AR 2016/17): Refugees and migrant boys and girls are protected from the winter harsh conditions		No	NO

Table 2: Changes in the social protection outcome area made within the framework of the Light Strategic Review in 2018

Current results 2016 – 2020	Action	Proposed ‘new’ results 2018 - 2020	Explanation	Relevant regional and standard Indicators and flagship commitments per sector ⁷³
Outcome 4: By end of 2020, an increased number of girls, boys and their families benefit from integrated and child-sensitive social protection services and transfers that address poverty, deprivation and social exclusion.				<p>(Reg) Percentage of children living in poverty in all its dimensions.</p> <p>(Reg) Number of countries with nationally owned measurement and reporting on child poverty</p> <p>(Reg) Number of social workers per 100,000 population</p> <p>(Std) Number of children living in poverty according to (a) International extreme poverty line; (b) National monetary poverty lines or (c) National multidimensional poverty lines</p>
Output 4.1: Social services and transfers are adequately planned, delivered, financed and monitored to reach the most marginalized children	KEEP - rephrase	Output 4.1 Social transfers are adequately planned, delivered, financed and monitored to reach the most marginalized children	Deleting “services” for clarity in this output. Work on services is now included with more focus and clarity under the next output (4.2) under this same outcome.	<p>(Std) National government measurement of child poverty using monetary measures</p> <p>(Std) Proportion of children covered by government cash transfer programmes (number of children and % of total)</p>
Output 4.2: Improved cross-sectorial coordination and capacities to design, implement and budget for	KEEP - rephrase	Output 4.2 Improved cross-sectorial coordination and capacities to design, implement and budget for social protection services and programs	Again, strong work on-going – just changing “policies” to services to better reflect focus of cooperation.	(Std) Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are used to follow up on social protection delivery/system

⁷³ Key: “Reg” – Regional Flagship Indicator; “Std” = Global Standard Indicator; “CS” = country specific indicator

social protection policies and programs				
Output 4.3: CSWs, ISA and NGOs have capacity to strengthen the resilience of children and families, including Roma and children with disabilities	KEEP	Output 4.3 CSWs, ISA and NGOs have capacity to strengthen the resilience of children and families, including Roma and children with disabilities	Work on-going	(Std) Other social protection programmes ARE adapted to address child poverty and deprivation (such as access to affordable child care, health insurance etc)
Emergency (2016) Output 4.4 Refugees and Migrants boys and girls are protected from the winter harsh conditions	DELETE		Developed for emergency response action in 2016-2017. No longer relevant.	
	NEW	Output 4.4 Government budget allocations for child focused programming increased and streamlined.	New and dynamic dialogue and action on public finance for children, budget transparency, budget allocations for children	(Std) Public spending on social protection from domestic resources as a proportion of national budget

Annex 5: Data collection instruments

KII- Interview Guide UNICEF Representatives

This guide shall serve as basis for interviews and discussions with Key informants.

We are an evaluation team commissioned to carry out the evaluation of UNICEF interventions supporting the Social Protection Reform in North Macedonia. The evaluation assesses UNICEF's performance and contribution to social protection sector reform in North Macedonia. The evaluation will focus mainly on the two major changes introduced in the country's social protection system in the period 2016-2020: a) reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services, and b) the introduction of case management in the centres for social work. The findings and lessons learned of the evaluation will be used to improve UNICEF's intervention of the implementation of the cash benefits schemes and services as well as social work case management in the next years to ensure that children and families are cared for and supported.

We are asking you to participate in the evaluation because you are in a position to contribute a relevant and valuable perspective on the functioning of UNICEF's Social protection interventions. If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed by members of the evaluation team for approximately 1 hour.

Participation is voluntary: Your participation in the interview is voluntary. You can withdraw from the interview after it has begun, for any reason, with no penalty. Participating or not in the interview will not affect the benefits to the organizations or your engagement with UNICEF.

Risks and benefits: This review is designed to help improve UNICEF's Social protection interventions by learning from the perspectives of everyone involved. You may not benefit personally from being in this research review. There may be uncommon or previously unknown risks. You should report any problems to [_____].

Confidentiality: The reports from this and the other meetings will collect and summarize the views and opinions of participants without connecting them to specific individuals and without using names at any time. Any report of this research will be presented in a way that makes it as difficult as possible for anyone to determine the identity of individuals participating in the evaluation.

If you have any questions, now or at any time in the future, you may call _____

Are you willing to be part of this discussion? (verbal response only requested)

Respondent: _____

Title and Function: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

Evaluation Questions and Sub-Questions	Interview Questions ⁷⁴
0. GENERAL Questions - What have been the most noted results, successes, challenges of UNICEF's Social Protection work?	
0.1 Role	1. What is your current position at UNICEF and in what ways have you interacted with SP?
0.2 Results	2. Thinking back during the previous phase of the SP interventions (2016-2020), what changes have you seen in the SP system as a result of UNICEF's SP interventions ?
0.3 Strengths and weaknesses	3. What do you see SP as being particularly good at in this intervention? 4. What do you see SP as being particularly weak at in this intervention?
1. RELEVANCE	
1.1. How relevant were UNICEF's interventions to the needs of the children and their families, especially to the most vulnerable children?	5. To what extent the objectives and results of the SP were aligned with identified needs of children and their families? 6. Did this intervention remain appropriate throughout changes in context (i.e. COVID-19)? a. Did the intervention focus on the right things? b. Were there any gaps/significant needs not addressed yet? 7. What adjustments were needed to be made, if any, to SP to keep it relevant to the changing needs of its target population? 8. Thinking about the different types of support provided by UNICEF's Social protection interventions during 2016-2022, (e.g. cash benefits schemes, case management in the centers for social work, etc.) - How significant and relevant were these various types of interventions, if at all, for meeting the needs of vulnerable children?
1.2. To what extent did UNICEF's intended outcome and the relevant outputs address the priorities identified in the national strategic documents relevant for social protection of children including the National Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion (2010-2020) and the Employment and Social Reform Programme 2020?	9. To what extent were UNICEF's Social protection interventions in line with North Macedonia government and national priorities ? a. To what extent did UNICEF's envisaged results match with the needs outlined in government policies, strategies and plans? 10. To what extent were SP's interventions in line with the National Strategy to reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion and the Employment and Social Reform Programme? 11. Were SP's implementation strategies relevant to the context in North Macedonia? If not, why were they not relevant?
2. COHERENCE	
2.1. To what extent were UNICEF's Social protection interventions for children implemented in coherence with other UNICEF's CPD intervention areas?	12. To what extent did UNICEF's Social protection interventions coordinate with and build on synergies with Education, Child protection, and Health programmes?

⁷⁴ Not all questions can be asked in all interviews. Different sections will need to be prioritized from different stakeholders.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What are some good examples that you have seen of successful inter-sector synergy with UNICEF's CPD interventions? b. What may be some key barriers to better inter-sectoral coordination and strategic synergy? <p>13. How did SP adjust its focus to ensure coherence?</p>
2.2. Has there been any duplication of efforts among UNICEF's own interventions and interventions delivered by other organizations or entities in contributing to the outcomes?	<p>14. To what extent did UNICEF actively participate and promote coordination mechanisms with development partners and other UN agencies to avoid overlaps and leverage contributions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Do you have any examples of synergies with other agencies and partners? b. What have been some key barriers to better coordination and strategic synergy with other actors?
3. EFFECTIVENESS	
3.1 Have UNICEF's Social protection interventions contributed to reducing bottlenecks and to creating an enabling environment (institutional, political and legislative context) for social protection coverage of poor and vulnerable children and their families?	<p>15. What were the key UNICEF's Social protection interventions' results achieved under the programme priorities?</p> <p>16. To what extent, if at all, did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to reducing bottlenecks to effective coverage of children and their families?</p> <p>17. To what extent, if at all, did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to provision of accessible and quality Daycare center services?</p> <p>18. What were the driving factors that promoted implementation of UNICEF's Social protection interventions? What were the hindering factors affecting implementation of UNICEF's Social protection interventions?</p> <p>19. To what extent do you assess results of UNICEF's Social protection interventions as having been achieved and contributing to overall positive change in North Macedonia? Can you please provide some examples?</p>
3.2 To what extent capacity-building activities supported by UNICEF contributed to effective implementation of the social protection reform interventions?	<p>20. To what extent do you see the different MLSP stakeholders increased capacity to design and implement an integrated social protection framework with appropriate systems and operations?</p> <p>21. To what extent do you see the relevant MoLSP stakeholders increased capacity to establish and test the disability assessment procedures and service delivery based on ICF norms?</p> <p>22. To what extent do you see Social service providers increased capacity to provide quality and accessible services to the most vulnerable groups (Daycare centers)? Can you please provide some examples?</p>
3.3 To what extent have UNICEF interventions contributed to adequacy and equity focus of the existing social protection	<p>23. To what extent did UNICEF's Social protection interventions effectively contribute to ensuring that the SP services were equitable and adequate for children and their families?</p>

benefits for children and their families?	
3.4 To what extent are the existing social protection benefits for children and their families adequate and equity focused? Are there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection of children and their families?	24. Are the existing social protection benefits for children and families adequate and equitable? Can you provide some examples? Were there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection?
4.0 EFFICIENCY	
3.1 Were UNICEF's Social protection interventions budgets and resources (human, financial and technical) adequately used for addressing priority bottlenecks?	<p>25. How would you assess the operational, human and financial resources within UNICEF's Social protection interventions? To what degree are they sufficient to ensure adequate implementation of the activities in the context, including during the pandemic?</p> <p>26. To what extent were planned activities and outputs delivered within the intended timeframe?</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. What effect did any significant delays have on the results of UNICEF's Social protection interventions?</p> <p>27. To what extent were planned activities and outputs efficient and appropriate to context requirements?</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. Were there particular types of planned activities that struggled with timeliness or efficiency more than others? Which ones?</p>
3.2 Which UNICEF's social protection programs for children and their families have been the most efficient in meeting the needs of the children (by program type, by target population, by inequities)?	<p>28. How much did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to enhancing UNICEF's efficiency in terms of:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. enhancing evidence base on child poverty</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b. achieving CO annual social protection target</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">c. reducing transaction costs,</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">d. leveraging investments in provision of services to the children,</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">e. resource mobilization efforts and partnership arrangements?</p> <p>29. What specific interventions or activities under SP would you characterize as more efficient than others? What contributed to these interventions being more efficient than others?</p>
4. SUSTAINABILITY	
4.1. Are legal, institutional/administrative and financial mechanisms established to ensure monitoring and evaluation as well as sustainability of the	<p>30. How sound were the design and implementation of the Social Protection interventions in North Macedonia?? Does the design and implementation contribute to the sustainability of the SP initiatives?</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. Can you offer any examples in institutional capacity (local and national) for sustainability</p>

<p>results (policies, strategies, services)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Can you offer any examples in Partners (CSW, Daycare centers, etc.) capacity for sustainability c. Can you offer any examples in monitoring, evaluation and data management capacity for sustainability d. Can you offer any examples in Resourcing (allocations of national budgets and/or donor resources) capacity for sustainability <p>31. Which models and initiatives have the greatest amount of priority from the North Macedonian Institutions?</p> <p>32. Which models and initiatives have the least amount of priority from North Macedonian Institutions?</p> <p>33. Which of the models and initiatives do you see as most scale-able to the North Macedonia context? Why or why not?</p> <p>34.</p>
<p>4.2 To what extent are the mechanisms for financing social protection spending which were supported by UNICEF consistent with the objectives of the programs they are financing? What are the potentials for expanding the existing benefits or introduce new ones?</p>	<p>35. What are some of the comparative evidences of change in Government's Legislative and policy framework in the social sector prior and post UNICEF's Social protection interventions implementation?</p> <p>36. In terms of sustaining UNICEF's Social protection interventions' results long term, is there any evidence of consistency of planning and budgeting mechanism against the SP programs they are financing?</p>
<p>5. IMPACT</p>	
<p>5.1. Are there early indications that the reforms of family and child focused benefits and reformed social services have contributed to social inclusion of children and their families?</p>	<p>6. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the changes in terms of achievement of integrated and sustainable social protection system?</p> <p>7. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the capacity of the government to improve social protection coverage for all citizens, in particular the most vulnerable, across North Macedonia? Could you please provide some examples?</p> <p>8. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the improvement of social services, in particular Day care centers across North Macedonia?</p> <p>9. What are some examples of main results achieved by the SP interventions and most salient success stories?</p> <p>10. Why these activities were successful/what were the enabling factors?</p>
<p>5.2 What positive/negative, intended, or unintended outcomes have UNICEF's interventions contributed to so far?</p>	<p>37. What have been some important unintended consequences from SP Interventions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. If there were any unintended negative outcomes, which were the three most important ones? How were they handled?

	<p>b. If there were any unintended positive outcomes, which were the three most important ones? How were they handled?</p>
<p>11. Cross- Cutting Issues</p>	
<p>11.1.To what extent have UNICEF's interventions contributed to gender equality, non-discrimination and disability inclusiveness?</p>	<p>38. How have Gender, disability, or equity issues been integrated into the implementation of the Social protection interventions? What could be done to better integrate these issues?</p> <p>a. Could you provide some examples how UNICEF SP intervention has maintained strong adherence to the principles of accessibility, non-discrimination, and inclusiveness?</p>

KII- Interview Guide- NATIONAL LEVEL INSTITUTIONS

This guide shall serve as basis for interviews and discussions with Key informants.

We are an evaluation team commissioned to carry out the evaluation of UNICEF interventions supporting the Social Protection Reform in North Macedonia. The evaluation assesses UNICEF's performance and contribution to the social protection sector reform in North Macedonia. The evaluation will focus mainly on the two major changes introduced in the country's social protection system in the period 2016-2020: a) reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services, and b) the introduction of case management in the centres for social work . The findings and lessons learned of the evaluation will be used to improve UNICEF's intervention of the implementation of the cash benefits schemes and services as well as social work case management in the next years to ensure that children and families are cared for and supported.

We are asking you to participate in the evaluation because you are in a position to contribute a relevant and valuable perspective on the functioning of UNICEF's Social protection interventions. If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed by members of the evaluation team for approximately 1 hour.

Participation is voluntary: Your participation in the interview is voluntary. You can withdraw from the interview after it has begun, for any reason, with no penalty. Participating or not in the interview will not affect the benefits to the organizations or communities or your engagement with UNICEF.

Risks and benefits: This review is designed to help improve UNICEF's Social protection interventions by learning from the perspectives of everyone involved. You may not benefit personally from being in this research review. There may be uncommon or previously unknown risks. You should report any problems to [_____].

Confidentiality: The reports from this and the other meetings will collect and summarize the views and opinions of participants without connecting them to specific individuals and without using names at any time. Any report of this research will be presented in a way that makes it as difficult as possible for anyone to determine the identity of individuals participating in the evaluation.

If you have any questions, now or at any time in the future, you may call _____

Are you willing to be part of this discussion? (verbal response only requested)

Respondent: _____

Title and Function: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

1. GENERAL	
1.1. Role and connection	1. What is your current position and in what ways have you interacted with UNICEF SP Interventions?
1.2. Results	2. Thinking back to 2016, what changes have you seen in the situation of children in North Macedonia as a result of UNICEF SP interventions?
1.3. Changes	3. What have been some of the key changes in UNICEF's way of working since the beginning (since 2016)? What has stayed the same?
1.4. Strengths and weaknesses	4. What do you see UNICEF as being particularly good at in SP? 5. What do you see UNICEF as being particularly weak at in SP?
2. RELEVANCE	
2.1 How relevant were UNICEF's interventions to the needs of the children and their families, especially to the most vulnerable children?	6. To what extent the objectives and results of the UNICEF's SP were aligned with the national sector priorities and frameworks? 7. Did UNICEF's intervention remain appropriate throughout changes in context (i.e. COVID-19)? a. Did the intervention focus on the right things? b. Were there any gaps/significant needs not addressed yet?
2.2 To what extent did UNICEF's intended outcome and the relevant outputs address the priorities identified in the national strategic documents relevant for social protection of children including the National Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion (2010-2020) and the Employment and Social Reform Programme 2020?	8. To what extent were SPs interventions in line with North Macedonia Government's priorities ? 9. To what extent were SP's interventions in line with the National Strategy to reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion and the Employment and Social Reform Programme? 10. Were SP's implementation strategies relevant to the context in North Macedonia? If not, why were they not relevant?
3. COHERENCE	
3.1. Has there been any duplication of efforts among UNICEF's own interventions and interventions delivered by other organizations or entities in contributing to the outcomes?	11. To what extent did UNICEF actively participate and promote coordination mechanisms with the government stakeholders and partners to avoid overlaps and leverage contributions? a. Do you have any examples of synergies with other agencies and partners? 12. Have you encountered any projects implemented by other donors/partners on the same subject? Do you have an example of successful synergies?
4. EFFECTIVENESS	
4.1 Have UNICEF's Social protection interventions contributed to reducing bottlenecks and to creating an enabling environment (institutional, political and legislative context) for social	13. To what extent, if at all, did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to reducing bottlenecks to effective coverage of children and their families? 14. To what extent, if at all, did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to provision of accessible and quality Daycare center services?

<p>protection coverage of poor and vulnerable children and their families?</p>	<p>15. What were the driving factors that promoted implementation of UNICEF’s Social protection interventions? What were the hindering factors affecting implementation of UNICEF’s Social protection interventions?</p> <p>16. To what extent do you assess results of UNICEF’s Social protection interventions as having been achieved and contributing to overall positive change in North Macedonia?</p> <p>17. To what extent the COVID-19 affected the achievement of intended results contributing to/reversing the expected impact of UNICEF’s Social protection interventions?</p>
<p>4.2 To what extent capacity-building activities supported by UNICEF contributed to effective implementation of the social protection reform interventions?</p>	<p>18. How did UNICEF’s SP contribute to strengthen the government capacity to design and implement an integrated social protection framework with appropriate systems and operations?</p> <p>19. How did UNICEF’s SP contribute to strengthen the government capacity to provide accessible and quality social services - Daycare centers?</p> <p>20. How did UNICEF’s SP contribute to the disability assessment procedures and service delivery based on ICF norms?</p>
<p>4.3 To what extent have UNICEF interventions contributed to adequacy and equity focus of the existing social protection benefits for children and their families?</p>	<p>21. To what extent did UNICEF’s Social protection interventions effectively contribute to ensuring that the SP services were equitable and adequate for children and their families?</p>
<p>4.4 To what extent are the existing social protection benefits for children and their families adequate and equity focused? Are there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection of children and their families?</p>	<p>22. Are the existing social protection benefits for children and families adequate and equitable? Can you provide some examples?</p> <p>23. Were there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection?</p>
<p>5. EFFICIENCY</p>	
<p>5.1 Were UNICEF’s Social protection interventions budgets and resources (human, financial and technical) adequately used for addressing priority bottlenecks?</p>	<p>24. Were the available financial, material and human resources adequate to meet the set objectives, including in times of the pandemic?</p>
<p>5.2 Which UNICEF’s Social protection interventions for children and their families have been the most efficient in meeting the needs of the children (by intervention</p>	<p>25. What specific interventions or activities under SP would you characterize as more efficient than others? What contributed to these interventions being more efficient than others?</p>

type, by target population, by inequities)?	
6 SUSTAINABILITY	
Are legal, institutional/administrative and financial mechanisms established to ensure monitoring and evaluation as well as sustainability of the results (policies, strategies, services)?	<p>26. In your opinion, were the design and implementation of the Social Protection interventions in North Macedonia sound?</p> <p>27. What was the envisioned sustainability in the short and long term? What can promote sustainability in the short and long term?</p> <p>28. What were some of concrete changes in national policies, regulations, and plans that can sustain achieved SP results?</p>
7 IMPACT	
7.1 Are there early indications that the reforms of family and child focused benefits and reformed social services have contributed to social inclusion of children and their families?	<p>29. How have vulnerable groups, including women, children and persons with disabilities benefited (directly and indirectly) from the UNICEF SP interventions</p> <p>30. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the changes in terms of achievement of integrated and sustainable social protection system?</p> <p>31. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the capacity of the government to improve social protection coverage for all citizens, in particular the most vulnerable, across North Macedonia?</p> <p>32. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the improvement of social services, in particular Day care centers across North Macedonia?</p>
7.2 What positive/negative, intended, or unintended outcomes have UNICEF's interventions contributed to so far?	<p>33. What have been some important unintended consequences from SP Interventions?</p> <p>a. If there were any unintended negative outcomes, which were the three most important ones? How were they handled?</p> <p>b. If there were any unintended positive outcomes, which were the three most important ones? How were they handled?</p>
8 Cross- Cutting Issues	
8.1 To what extent have UNICEF's interventions contributed to gender equality, non-discrimination and disability inclusiveness?	<p>34. To what extent the UNICEF's SP design, implementation, and monitoring have been responsive to the critical bottlenecks for inclusion of persons with disability, gender quality and non-discrimination?</p> <p>a. Could you provide some examples how UNICEF SP intervention has maintained strong adherence to the principles of accessibility, non-discrimination, and inclusiveness?</p>

KII- Interview Guide- LOCAL LEVEL INSTITUTIONS, SERVICE PROVIDERS

This guide shall serve as basis for interviews and discussions with Key informants.

We are an evaluation team commissioned to carry out the evaluation of UNICEF interventions supporting the Social Protection Reform in North Macedonia. The evaluation assesses UNICEF's performance and contribution to the social protection sector reform in North Macedonia. The evaluation will focus mainly on the two major changes introduced in the country's social protection system in the period 2016-2020: a) reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services, and b) the introduction of case management in the centres for social work . The findings and lessons learned of the evaluation will be used to improve UNICEF's intervention of the implementation of the cash benefits schemes and services as well as social work case management in the next years to ensure that children and families are cared for and supported.

We are asking you to participate in the evaluation because you are in a position to contribute a relevant and valuable perspective on the functioning of UNICEF's Social protection interventions. If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed by members of the evaluation team for approximately 1 hour.

Participation is voluntary: Your participation in the interview is voluntary. You can withdraw from the interview after it has begun, for any reason, with no penalty. Participating or not in the interview will not affect the benefits to the organizations or your engagement with UNICEF.

Risks and benefits: This review is designed to help improve UNICEF's Social protection interventions by learning from the perspectives of everyone involved. You may not benefit personally from being in this research review. There may be uncommon or previously unknown risks. You should report any problems to [_____].

Confidentiality: The reports from this and the other meetings will collect and summarize the views and opinions of participants without connecting them to specific individuals and without using names at any time. Any report of this research will be presented in a way that makes it as difficult as possible for anyone to determine the identity of individuals participating in the evaluation.

If you have any questions, now or at any time in the future, you may call _____

Are you willing to be part of this discussion? (verbal response only requested)

Respondent: _____

Title and Function: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

1. GENERAL	
1.1. Role and connection	1. What is your current position and in what ways have you interacted with UNICEF SP Interventions?
1.2. Results	2. Thinking back to 2016, what changes have you seen in the situation of children in North Macedonia as a result of UNICEF SP interventions?
1.3. Changes	3. What have been some of the key changes in UNICEF's way of working since the beginning (since 2016)? What has stayed the same?
1.4. Strengths and weaknesses	4. What do you see UNICEF as being particularly good at in SP? 5. What do you see UNICEF as being particularly weak at in SP?
2. RELEVANCE	
2.1. How relevant were UNICEF's interventions to the needs of the children and their families, especially to the most vulnerable children?	6. To what extent the objectives and results of the UNICEF's SP were aligned with identified needs of children and their families? 7. Did UNICEF's interventions remain appropriate throughout changes in context (i.e. COVID-19)? 8. Did UNICEF's Social protection interventions respond to your institutions'/ beneficiaries' needs? What was missing?
2.2. To what extent did UNICEF's intended outcome and the relevant outputs address the priorities identified in the national strategic documents relevant for social protection of children including the National Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion (2010-2020) and the Employment and Social Reform Programme 2020?	9. To what extent were UNICEF's Social protection interventions in line with North Macedonia Government's priorities ? 10. To what extent were SP's interventions in line with the National Strategy to reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion and the Employment and Social Reform Programme?
3. COHERENCE	
3.1. Has there been any duplication of efforts among UNICEF's own interventions and interventions delivered by other organizations or entities in contributing to the outcomes?	11. Have you encountered any projects implemented by other donors/partners on the same subject? Do you have an example of successful synergies?
4. EFFECTIVENESS	
4.1 Have UNICEF's Social protection interventions contributed to reducing bottlenecks and to creating an enabling environment (institutional, political and legislative context) for social protection coverage of poor and vulnerable children and their families?	12. To what extent, if at all, did SP contribute to reducing bottlenecks to effective coverage of children and their families? 13. To what extent, if at all, did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to provision of accessible and quality Daycare center services? 14. What were the driving factors that promoted implementation of UNICEF's Social protection interventions? What were the hindering factors affecting implementation of UNICEF's Social protection interventions?

	<p>15. To what extent do you assess results of UNICEF's Social protection interventions as having been achieved and contributing to overall positive change in North Macedonia?</p> <p>16. To what extent the COVID-19 affected the achievement of intended results contributing to/reversing the expected impact of the SP?</p>
<p>4.2 To what extent capacity-building activities supported by UNICEF contributed to effective implementation of the social protection reform interventions?</p>	<p>17. To what extent did UNICEF's intervention help increase your institution's capacity to design and implement an integrated social protection framework with appropriate systems and operations?</p> <p>18. To what extent UNICEF's intervention help increase your institution's capacity to establish and test the disability assessment procedures and service delivery based on ICF norms?</p> <p>19. To what extent, if at all, did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to institutional capacity for provision of accessible and quality Daycare center services?</p>
<p>4.3 To what extent have UNICEF interventions contributed to adequacy and equity focus of the existing social protection benefits for children and their families?</p>	<p>20. To what extent did UNICEF's Social protection interventions effectively contribute to ensuring that the SP services were equitable and adequate for children and their families?</p>
<p>4.4 To what extent are the existing social protection benefits for children and their families adequate and equity focused? Are there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection of children and their families?</p>	<p>21. Are the existing social protection benefits for children and families adequate and equitable? Can you provide some examples?</p> <p>22. Were there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection?</p>
5. EFFICIENCY	
<p>5.1 Were UNICEF's Social protection interventions budgets and resources (human, financial and technical) adequately used for addressing priority bottlenecks?</p>	<p>23. In your opinion, did UNICEF implement efficiently the activities in which you engaged in terms of time management, accuracy, quality? What was missing</p>
<p>5.2 Which UNICEF's Social protection interventions for children and their families have been the most efficient in meeting the needs of the children (by program type, by target population, by inequities)?</p>	<p>24. Can you offer some examples on specific activities under SP support interventions implemented by UNICEF that were very efficient?</p> <p>25. How does UNICEF's support compare with support implemented by other development partners? What is the added value? What could UNICEF change?</p>
6. SUSTAINABILITY	
<p>Are legal, institutional/administrative and</p>	<p>26. In your opinion, were the design and implementation of the Social Protection interventions in North Macedonia sound?</p>

<p>financial mechanisms established to ensure monitoring and evaluation as well as sustainability of the results (policies, strategies, services)?</p>	<p>27. What was the envisioned sustainability in the short and long term? What can promote sustainability in the short and long term?</p> <p>28. What were some of the concrete changes in national policies, regulations, and plans that can sustain achieved SP results?</p>
<p>7. IMPACT</p>	
<p>7.1. Are there early indications that the reforms of family and child focused benefits and reformed social services have contributed to social inclusion of children and their families?</p>	<p>29. How have vulnerable groups, including women, children and persons with disabilities benefited (directly and indirectly) from the SP?</p> <p>30. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the changes in terms of achievement of integrated and sustainable social protection system?</p> <p>31. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the capacity of the government to improve social protection coverage for all citizens, in particular the most vulnerable, across North Macedonia?</p> <p>32. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the improvement of social services, in particular Day care centers across North Macedonia?</p>
<p>7.3 What positive/negative, intended, or unintended outcomes have UNICEF's interventions contributed to so far?</p>	<p>33. What have been some important unintended consequences from SP Interventions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. If there were any unintended negative outcomes, which were the three most important ones? How were they handled? b. If there were any unintended positive outcomes, which were the three most important ones? How were they handled?
<p>8. CROSS- CUTTING ISSUES</p>	
<p>8.1. To what extent have UNICEF's interventions contributed to gender equality, non-discrimination and disability inclusiveness?</p>	<p>34. To what extent the UNICEF's SP design, implementation, and monitoring have been responsive to the critical bottlenecks for inclusion of persons with disability, gender quality and non-discrimination?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Could you provide some examples how UNICEF SP intervention has maintained strong adherence to the principles of accessibility, non-discrimination, and inclusiveness?

KII- Interview Guide- CSOs

This guide shall serve as basis for interviews and discussions with Key informants.

We are an evaluation team commissioned to carry out the evaluation of UNICEF interventions supporting the Social Protection Reform in North Macedonia. The evaluation assesses UNICEF's performance and contribution to the social protection sector reform in North Macedonia. The evaluation will focus mainly on the two major changes introduced in the country's social protection system in the period 2016-2020: a) reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services, and b) the introduction of case management in the centres for social work . The findings and lessons learned of the evaluation will be used to improve UNICEF's intervention of the implementation of the cash benefits schemes and services as well as social work case management in the next years to ensure that children and families are cared for and supported.

We are asking you to participate in the evaluation because you are in a position to contribute a relevant and valuable perspective on the functioning of UNICEF's Social protection interventions. If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed by members of the evaluation team for approximately 1 hour.

Participation is voluntary: Your participation in the interview is voluntary. You can withdraw from the interview after it has begun, for any reason, with no penalty. Participating or not in the interview will not affect the benefits to the organizations or communities or your engagement with UNICEF.

Risks and benefits: This review is designed to help improve UNICEF's Social protection interventions by learning from the perspectives of everyone involved. You may not benefit personally from being in this research review. There may be uncommon or previously unknown risks. You should report any problems to [_____].

Confidentiality: The reports from this and the other meetings will collect and summarize the views and opinions of participants without connecting them to specific individuals and without using names at any time. Any report of this research will be presented in a way that makes it as difficult as possible for anyone to determine the identity of individuals participating in the evaluation.

If you have any questions, now or at any time in the future, you may call _____

Are you willing to be part of this discussion? (verbal response only requested)

Respondent: _____

Title and Function: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

6. GENERAL	
1.5. Role and connection	1. What is your current position and in what ways have you interacted with UNICEF SP Interventions?
1.6. Results	2. Thinking back to 2016, what changes have you seen in the situation of children in North Macedonia as a result of UNICEF SP interventions?
1.7. Changes	3. What have been some of the key changes in UNICEF's way of working since the beginning (since 2016)? What has stayed the same?
1.8. Strengths and weaknesses	4. What do you see UNICEF as being particularly good at in SP? 5. What do you see UNICEF as being particularly weak at in SP?
7. RELEVANCE	
2.3 How relevant were UNICEF's interventions to the needs of the children and their families, especially to the most vulnerable children?	6. To what extent the objectives and results of the UNICEF's SP were aligned with the national sector priorities and frameworks? 7. Did UNICEF's intervention remain appropriate throughout changes in context (i.e. COVID-19)? a. Did the intervention focus on the right things? b. Were there any gaps/significant needs not addressed yet?
2.4 To what extent did UNICEF's intended outcome and the relevant outputs address the priorities identified in the national strategic documents relevant for social protection of children including the National Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion (2010-2020) and the Employment and Social Reform Programme 2020?	8. To what extent were SPs interventions in line with North Macedonia Government's priorities ? 9. To what extent were SP's interventions in line with the National Strategy to reduce Poverty and Social Inclusion and the Employment and Social Reform Programme? 10. Were SP's implementation strategies relevant to the context in North Macedonia? If not, why were they not relevant?
8. COHERENCE	
8.1. Has there been any duplication of efforts among UNICEF's own interventions and interventions delivered by other organizations or entities in contributing to the outcomes?	11. To what extent did UNICEF actively participate and promote coordination mechanisms with the government stakeholders and partners to avoid overlaps and leverage contributions? a. Do you have any examples of synergies with other agencies and partners? 12. Have you encountered any projects implemented by other donors/partners on the same subject? Do you have an example of successful synergies?
9. EFFECTIVENESS	
4.5 Have UNICEF's Social protection interventions contributed to reducing bottlenecks and to creating an enabling environment (institutional, political and	13. To what extent, if at all, did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to reducing bottlenecks to effective coverage of children and their families? 14. To what extent, if at all, did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to provision of accessible and quality Daycare center services?

<p>legislative context) for social protection coverage of poor and vulnerable children and their families?</p>	<p>15. What were the driving factors that promoted implementation of UNICEF's Social protection interventions? What were the hindering factors affecting implementation of UNICEF's Social protection interventions?</p> <p>16. To what extent do you assess results of UNICEF's Social protection interventions as having been achieved and contributing to overall positive change in North Macedonia?</p> <p>17. To what extent the COVID-19 affected the achievement of intended results contributing to/reversing the expected impact of UNICEF's Social protection interventions?</p>
<p>4.6 To what extent capacity-building activities supported by UNICEF contributed to effective implementation of the social protection reform interventions?</p>	<p>18. How did UNICEF's SP contribute to strengthen the government capacity to design and implement an integrated social protection framework with appropriate systems and operations?</p> <p>19. How did UNICEF's SP contribute to the disability assessment procedures and service delivery based on ICF norms?</p> <p>20. To what extent, if at all, did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to increased institutional capacity for provision of accessible and quality Daycare center services?</p>
<p>4.7 To what extent have UNICEF interventions contributed to adequacy and equity focus of the existing social protection benefits for children and their families?</p>	<p>21. To what extent did UNICEF's Social protection interventions effectively contribute to ensuring that the SP services were equitable and adequate for children and their families?</p>
<p>4.8 To what extent are the existing social protection benefits for children and their families adequate and equity focused? Are there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection of children and their families?</p>	<p>22. Are the existing social protection benefits for children and families adequate and equitable? Can you provide some examples?</p> <p>23. Were there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection?</p>
<p>10. EFFICIENCY</p>	
<p>8.2 Were UNICEF's Social protection interventions budgets and resources (human, financial and technical) adequately used for addressing priority bottlenecks?</p>	<p>24. Were the available financial, material and human resources adequate to meet the set objectives, including in times of the pandemic</p>
<p>8.3 Which UNICEF's Social protection interventions for children and their families have been the most efficient in meeting the needs of the children (by intervention</p>	<p>25. What specific interventions or activities under SP would you characterize as more efficient than others? What contributed to these interventions being more efficient than others?</p>

type, by target population, by inequities)?	
9 SUSTAINABILITY	
Are legal, institutional/administrative and financial mechanisms established to ensure monitoring and evaluation as well as sustainability of the results (policies, strategies, services)?	<p>26. In your opinion, were the design and implementation of the Social Protection interventions in North Macedonia sound?</p> <p>27. What was the envisioned sustainability in the short and long term? What can promote sustainability in the short and long term?</p> <p>28. What were some of concrete changes in national policies, regulations, and plans that can sustain achieved SP results?</p>
10 IMPACT	
10.1 Are there early indications that the reforms of family and child focused benefits and reformed social services have contributed to social inclusion of children and their families?	<p>29. How have vulnerable groups, including women, children and persons with disabilities benefited (directly and indirectly) from the JP? UNICE</p> <p>30. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the changes in terms of achievement of integrated and sustainable social protection system?</p> <p>31. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the capacity of the government to improve social protection coverage for all citizens, in particular the most vulnerable, across North Macedonia?</p> <p>32. To what extent have UNICEF's social protection interventions contributed to the improvement of social services, in particular Day care centers across North Macedonia?</p>
7.4 What positive/negative, intended, or unintended outcomes have UNICEF's interventions contributed to so far?	<p>33. What have been some important unintended consequences from SP Interventions?</p> <p>a. If there were any unintended negative outcomes, which were the three most important ones? How were they handled?</p> <p>b. If there were any unintended positive outcomes, which were the three most important ones? How were they handled?</p>
11 Cross- Cutting Issues	
11.1 To what extent have UNICEF's interventions contributed to gender equality, non-discrimination and disability inclusiveness?	<p>34. To what extent the UNICEF's SP design, implementation, and monitoring have been responsive to the critical bottlenecks for inclusion of persons with disability, gender quality and non-discrimination?</p> <p>a. Could you provide some examples how UNICEF SP intervention has maintained strong adherence to the principles of accessibility, non-discrimination, and inclusiveness?</p>

KII- Focus Group Discussions- Local and Community Level

This guide shall serve as basis for interviews and discussions with FGD participants.

We are an evaluation team commissioned to carry out the evaluation of UNICEF interventions supporting the Social Protection Reform in North Macedonia. The evaluation assesses UNICEF's performance and contribution to the social protection sector reform in North Macedonia. The evaluation will focus mainly on the two major changes introduced in the country's social protection system in the period 2016-2020: a) reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services, and b) the introduction of case management in the centres for social work . The findings and lessons learned of the evaluation will be used to improve UNICEF's intervention of the implementation of the cash benefits schemes and services as well as social work case management in the next years to ensure that children and families are cared for and supported.

We are asking you to participate in the evaluation because you are in a position to contribute a relevant and valuable perspective on the functioning of UNICEF's Social protection interventions. If you decide to participate, you will be interviewed by members of the evaluation team for approximately 1 hour.

Participation is voluntary: Your participation in the interview is voluntary. You can withdraw from the interview after it has begun, for any reason, with no penalty. Participating or not in the interview will not affect the benefits to the organizations or your engagement with UNICEF.

Risks and benefits: This review is designed to help improve UNICEF's Social protection interventions by learning from the perspectives of everyone involved. You may not benefit personally from being in this research review. There may be uncommon or previously unknown risks. You should report any problems to [_____].

Confidentiality: The reports from this and the other meetings will collect and summarize the views and opinions of participants without connecting them to specific individuals and without using names at any time. Any report of this research will be presented in a way that makes it as difficult as possible for anyone to determine the identity of individuals participating in the evaluation.

If you have any questions, now or at any time in the future, you may call _____

Are you willing to be part of this discussion? (verbal response only requested)

Respondent: _____

Title and Function: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

<p>by other organizations or entities in contributing to the outcomes?</p>	
<p>3 EFFECTIVENESS</p>	
<p>8.2. Have the UNICEF supported programs and interventions contributed to reducing bottlenecks and to creating an enabling environment (institutional, political and legislative context) for social protection coverage of poor and vulnerable children and their families?</p>	<p>6. To what extent, if at all, did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to reducing bottlenecks to effective coverage of children and their families?</p> <p>7. To what extent, if at all, did UNICEF's Social protection interventions contribute to provision of accessible and quality Daycare center services?</p> <p>8. What were the driving factors that promoted implementation of UNICEF's Social protection interventions? What were the hindering factors affecting implementation of UNICEF's Social protection interventions?</p>
<p>8.3. To what extent capacity-building activities supported by UNICEF contributed to effective implementation of the social protection reform interventions?</p>	<p>9. You might be aware that the CSW have received training from UNICEF/ISA, have you noticed any changes in the way they are working? What type of changes if any have you seen?</p> <p>10. Have you noticed any changes in the establishment of the disability assessment procedures?</p> <p>11. Do you use Daycare center services? If yes, how would you assess their work? What is good? What could be better?</p>
<p>8.4. To what extent have UNICEF interventions contributed to adequacy and equity focus of the existing social protection benefits for children and their families? Are there any gaps in the system relative to the drivers of demand for social protection of children and their families?</p>	<p>12. What do you think are the main challenges/gaps in ensuring that the SP services are equitable and adequate?</p>
<p>4 EFFICIENCY</p>	
<p>4.1. Which UNICEF's Social protection interventions for children and their families have been the most efficient in meeting the needs of the children (by program type, by target population, by inequities)?</p>	<p>13. Which SP initiative was most effective in addressing your needs/improving the SP system to better targeting and services?</p>
<p>5. SUSTAINABILITY</p>	
<p>Are legal, institutional/administrative and financial mechanisms established to ensure monitoring and evaluation as well as sustainability of</p>	<p>14. Thinking about SP services and benefits, what would be the area that could benefit from further reform going forward?</p>

the results (policies, strategies, services)?	
6. IMPACT	
6.1. Are there early indications that the reforms of family and child focused benefits and reformed social services have contributed to social inclusion of children and their families?	<p>15. Thinking back to the SP interventions (pre and post reform), what, if anything, has changed in the SP?</p> <p>16. What has changed, if anything, in the lives of your community as a result of the SP?</p> <p>17. Have there been children and vulnerable groups in your community who were not able to access SP services and benefits (Cash scheme benefits, day care centers etc)</p>

Direct Observation Checklist

Day Care Centers and Service Providers	Observations
<i>This direct observation tool is used in conjunction with the interview guides</i>	
Name of the Day Care Center or Social Services Offices	
Date	
District	
Town	
Name of DCC manager/SS representative	
(DCC Only) Number of children/youth in the center	
Ratio of children to service providers	
(DCC Only) Are services for children and youth offered in the same physical space as adults?	
(DCC Only) Do children have separate access to the DCC from adults	
(DCC Only) Is the physical space adequate for various disabilities?	
Set up is adequate for the service providers (relevant computer programs, internet, other equipment's)	
(DCC Only) Who is the implementing partner?	

General Observations

ONLINE SURVEY FOR CENTERS OF SOCIAL WORK (CSW)

Dear Madam/Sir,

This online survey is carried out as part of the Evaluation of *UNICEF interventions supporting the social protection reform in North Macedonia*, implemented by an independent team of consultants from The KonTerra Group.

The evaluation is looking at UNICEF's work to support social protection reform in North Macedonia from 2016-2020. More specifically, the team is looking at UNICEF's contributions to two major changes introduced since 2019: 1) reform of the social protection cash benefits schemes and services; and 2) the introduction of case management in the centers for social work.

This online survey will collect the views and experiences of personnel working in the Centers for Social Work (CSW) on these social protection reforms, including their relevance, effectiveness, and impact.

Your responses will allow us to better understand the needs among vulnerable households and the quality of the reformed social protection programs so far. Your responses will also help us identify lessons and ways for further improving the social protection system in future.

This online survey should not take more than **30 minutes** to complete. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time or answer only some of the questions.

The information we receive through the survey will be used only for the purposes of the evaluation and will not be shared with any third parties.

Please note that any responses you give will be **confidential** so please feel free to respond freely and honestly. Your name will not appear in the evaluation report and your individual responses will not be shared with UNICEF. All data provided will be held securely and kept confidential, and no internet IP address will be kept or tracked.

Kindly complete the online survey by XX 2023 so that your opinion will be included in the evaluation. The CSWs are critical for the project, so it is important that we hear your opinion in the evaluation.

The final page of the online survey contains a "Submit" button. By clicking on this button, you agree to your participation in the survey, and you submit your responses.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this evaluation in general, or this online survey, your **contact person** is:

Erisa Pereira, Evaluation Project Manager, E-mail: epereira@konterragroup.net

If you know anyone else who is interested in taking the online survey, but did not receive a personalised invitation, please contact Ms Pereira at the above email and she will get in contact with those potential respondents.

We greatly appreciate your contribution to this evaluation. Your response is important for helping to improve UNICEF'S work in social protection in North Macedonia.

The Evaluation Team

Q1. [all] Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other/ prefer not to say

•

Q2. [all] To what extent are you familiar with the reforms of social protection system in the period of 2016-2020?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all.
- I don't know/Not familiar

•

Q3. [all] To what extent are you familiar with UNICEF and its activities?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all.
- I don't know/Not familiar

•

Q4. [all] Has your CSW benefited from UNICEF's support to the introduction of the case management?

- Yes
- No

•

A. Relevance and Coherence

Q5. To what extent do the reformed cash benefits for social and child protection (guaranteed minimum assistance - GMA and child allowance - CA) respond to the needs of the most vulnerable children and their families?

	To great extent	To some extent.	Not at all. Please, explain why?	I don't know/Not familiar
Guaranteed Minimum Assistance				
Child Allowance				

Q6. To what extent has the introduction of case management in CSWs responded to the needs of CSWs in terms of creating efficiencies and facilitating the internal processes in CSW?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all. Please, explain why? _____ I don't know/Not familiar

Q7. To what extent has UNICEF's support to the introduction of case management relevant for better organization of the work in your CSW?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all. Please, explain why? _____
- I don't know/Not familiar

Q8. To what extent have the actual measured implemented under the the social and child protection reform from 2019 adequately operationalised priorities identified in the national strategic documents?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all. Please, explain why? _____
- I don't know/Not familiar

Q9. To what extent was the social and child protection reform from 2019 implemented in coherence with other governmental sectoral policies?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all. Please, explain why? _____
- I don't know/Not familiar

B. Effectiveness and Efficiency

Case management and CSW operations

Q10. To the extent to which you are familiar with the introduction of the case management system in CSWs, to what extent has the UNICEF support to the introduction of case management in CSWs contributed to more efficient processing of cases?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all. Please, explain why? _____
- I don't know/Not familiar

Q11. What are the main changes that you have observed in your CSW since the introduction of the case management?

- More effective support directed to clients.
- Improved communication between the case worker and the clients.
- Better organization of intra-institutional capacities.
- Other. Please identify other changes _____.
- No changes in particular. My CSW continued to function as before.
- My CSW did not benefit from case management introduction.

Q12. To what extent did capacity-building activities supported by UNICEF contribute to effective implementation of the social protection reform interventions?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all. Please, explain why? _____
- I don't know/Not familiar

Q13. In your view, what are the main missing elements that UNICEF should consider going forward with support to case management in CSWs?

- Trainings related to coordination, monitoring and evaluation of client's specific needs.
- Support for use of digital case management tools and software.
- Mentoring of CSWs to adequately apply case management tools and software
- More concrete guidelines to operationalise case management
- Other trainings for CSW staff (please, list some of trainings that would be useful): _____
- Other. Please identify _____

Q14. Has the enrolment for the guaranteed minimum income (GMA) and child allowance (CA) increase after June 2019 in your CSW, in comparison to the previous year (2018)?

- Yes, for both GMA and CA
- Only for GMA
- Only for CA
- No, pls elaborate the reasons: _____

Wider social protection reform results

Q15. Thinking about the wider social protection reform – what have been the main results that helped reduce bottlenecks in ensuring effective coverage of children and their families?

	Achieved visible results	Made some progress	There are outstanding issues	I'm not sure/not familiar with this reform
Result 1: Increased access to GMA and CA among single parent households				
Result 2: Access to CA by GMA beneficiaries				
Result 3: Improved access to social services at the local level				
Other, pls add:				

Q16. To what extent has the social protection reform contributed to reducing bottlenecks in ensuring effective coverage of children and their families?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all. Please, explain why? _____
- I don't know/Not familiar

Cash benefits

Q17. In your opinion, which **social protection cash benefits** for children and their families have been the **most efficient** in meeting the needs of the vulnerable children?

	Totally efficient	Efficient	Somewhat efficient but need further improvements	Inefficient, need substantial improvements	I'm not sure/not familiar with this reform
GMA					
CA					
Special child allowance					
Educational allowance					
Other, pls list: _____					

Q18. To what extent has UNICEF contributed to the government efforts to improve the targeting and coverage of children and their families with social protection cash benefits?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all. Please, explain why? _____
- I don't know/Not familiar

Q19. To what extent has the social protection reform process enabled the system to maintain the provision of the reformed social protection cash benefits?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all. Please, explain why? _____
- I don't know/Not familiar

Q20. What are some of the key challenges related to sustainability of the reformed social protection cash benefits? (you can choose more than one answer):

- Low activation of beneficiaries
- Intra-agency cooperation

- Low take up
- Lack of effectiveness (low amounts)
- Other _____

Q21. What are some of the key challenges related to the implementation of the reformed cash benefits (i.e. GMA, CA)? (you can choose more than one answer):

- Burdensome administrative procedures
- Gap between application and payment of cash benefits
- Low inter-operability of the electronic system for benefits and services
- Other _____

Q22. How could UNICEF help? (you can choose more than one answer):

- Trainings
- Digital registries
- Technical equipment
- Support of opening more day care centers for children
- Other _____

Social services

Q23. In your opinion, which **social services** for children and their families have been the **most efficient** in meeting the needs of the vulnerable children? (you can choose more services)

- information and referral services;
- professional assistance and support services;
- counselling services;
- services in the home;
- community services and
- day care centers
- supported living
- other _____

Q24. What is your opinion of the services provided in the Day Care Centers for meeting the needs of the vulnerable children?

	I fully agree	I agree to some extent	I don't agree	I don't know/not familiar
Day Care centers provide relevant and appropriate set of services to the most vulnerable children.				
Day Care centers provide effective				

services to the most vulnerable children.				
Day Care centers take into account and address appropriately specific needs of the most vulnerable children with disability				
Day Care centers provide adequate alternative to institutionalisation of children with disability				
Day Care centers have sufficient capacities and tools to function on their own				
Day Care centers still encounter obstacles to provide relevant and effective services to the most vulnerable children.				

Q25. To what extent has UNICEF contributed to the introduction and functioning of the Day care centers?

To great extent.

To some extent.

Not at all. Please, explain why? _____

I don't know/Not familiar

Q26. In your opinion, which **social services** for children and their families **would need further improvements** to be able to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children? you can choose more services).

information and referral services;

professional assistance and support services;

counselling services;

services in the home;

community services and

day care centers

supported living

other _____

Q27. To what extent has the social protection reform process enabled the system to maintain the provision of Day care centers' services (in terms of financial allocations, institutionalization, staff)?

To great extent.

- To some extent.
- Not at all. Please, explain why? _____
- I don't know/Not familiar

Q28. What are some of the key challenges related to sustainability of the Day care centers' services? (you can choose more than one answer):

- Financial allocations
- Human resources
- Lack of trainings
- Other. Please, elaborate: _____

D. Sustainability and Impact

Q29. What institutional/administrative mechanisms have been introduced/used in your CSW to ensure monitoring and evaluation of the reformed social protection cash benefits and social services? (you can choose more answers):

- Ensuring services are implemented in accordance with the Personal Plan.
- Ensuring personal plan is updated and service arrangements with providers are modified or terminated when a client's needs or status has changed.
- Follow up actions
- Case conferences
- Monthly/Quarterly/Annual evaluation of cases
- None
- Other _____

Q30. In what ways could the CSW's monitoring and evaluation processes and procedures be improved? (you can choose more than one answer):

- Adoption of national agreed indicators for monitoring and evaluation of case processes and procedures
- Follow up actions
- Case conferences
- Monthly/Quarterly/Annual evaluation of cases
- No improvements needed
- Other _____

Q31. What are the main positive outcomes of the social protection reform from 2019 on the most vulnerable children and their families that you have observed through your work? (you can choose more than one answer):

- Improved access to cash benefits
- Increase in social service provision
- Increased value of cash benefits
- Possibility of combined use of cash benefits
- Better targeting
- More equal treatment between different households in risk

- More efficient procedures for application
- Other _____

Q32. Which category of vulnerable households and children (i.e., number of household members, ethnicity, economic status, location of living, etc.) have benefited most from the social protection reform from 2019? (you can choose more than one answer):

- Children from single parent households
- Children from low-income households that are in primary or secondary education
- Disabled children
- Children with unemployed parents
- Children from households with three and more children
- Children without parents and parental care
- Children in foster care
- Other _____

Q33. What are the main shortcomings (or negative outcomes) of the social protection reform from 2019 on the most vulnerable children and their families that you have observed through your work?

- Low amount of benefits
- Lack of (separate) child allowance for every child in the family
- Lack of child-tailored social services
- Other _____

Q34. Where there any vulnerable categories of households and children (i.e., number of household members, ethnicity, economic status, location of living, etc.) that have been negatively impacted from the social protection reform in 2019?

- Children from single parent households
- Children from low-income households that are in primary or secondary education
- Disabled children
- Children with unemployed parents
- Children from households with three and more children
- Children without parents and parental care
- Children in foster care
- Other _____

Q35. What impacts have you observed for the most vulnerable groups in your community as a result of reformed social protection system?

	More inclusion in local community	Better access to services (education, health facilities, etc.)	Improved living conditions as a result of access to social benefits	Better understanding of rights	The groups are more empowered and resilient thanks to access to reformed	Community is more aware of needs and rights of this group	Community is more inclusive of this group	Local service providers (school, health institution, CSW, police, CSOs) have stronger cooperation and referral on
--	-----------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

					social services			issues of this group
Children from single parent households								
Children from low-income households that are in primary or secondary education								
Disabled children								
Children with unemployed parents								
Children from households with three and more children								
Children without parents and parental care								
Children in foster care								
Other groups								

Q36. To what extent is the reformed social protection system now effective to provide adequate targeting and coverage of the most vulnerable?

- To great extent.
- To some extent. What is missing? Please, elaborate: _____
- Not at all. What is missing? Please, elaborate: _____
- I don't know/Not familiar

Q37. What are the two main challenges for ensuring adequate social protection of the most vulnerable children and their families in North Macedonia? *(please select two that are most important in your view)*

- Poverty, unemployment, or low income
- Lack of affordable housing

- Chronic health conditions or lack of access to healthcare
- Lack of access to social protection benefits
- Lack of access to social services
- Political instability
- Other, please add: _____

E. Cross-cutting issues

Q38. In your opinion, to what extent has the social protection reform from 2019 contributed to gender equality?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all.
- I don't know/Not familiar

Q39. In your opinion, to what extent has the social protection reform from 2019 contributed in some way to non-discrimination?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all.
- I don't know/Not familiar

Q40. In your opinion, to what extent has the social protection reform from 2019 contributed in some way to disability inclusiveness?

- To great extent.
- To some extent.
- Not at all.
- I don't know/Not familiar

Thank you!

Annex 6: Stakeholder Mapping

1. Analysis of the documentary sources will be complemented with key informant interviews (KIIs) with stakeholders, including:
 - (i) UNICEF CO staff well familiar with the implementation of programming in the relevant thematic areas (social protection, social policy, child protection);
 - (ii) Government counterparts familiar with the implementation of UNICEF's programming in the relevant thematic areas.
 - (iii) International development partner organisations involved in the social protection reform from 2019, as well as those familiar with UNICEF's programs in social protection/child protection.
 - (iv) CSO stakeholders familiar with the implementation of UNICEF's programming in social protection and involved in implementation of UNICEF's social protection programs.
 - (v) (Representatives of) Direct beneficiaries of UNICEF's social/child protection programs from the socially vulnerable households.
2. A detailed overview of stakeholders including their role and contribution to the evaluation process is presented in the table below.
3. Table: List of stakeholders to be interviewed as part of the evaluation process

Stakeholder	Role	Purpose of consultation	Level of importance of the meeting ⁷⁵	Type of interaction – method / tool
UNICEF Internal Stakeholders				
Patrizia DiGiovanni	UNICEF Representative to the Republic of North Macedonia (MK)	Overall vision, strategic knowledge and lessons learned	Critical	Face to face (F2F) interview or online interview
Artur Ayvazov	UNICEF Deputy Representative in MK	Technical and strategic knowledge, partnerships, challenges, success stories and lessons learned.	Critical	F2F interview or Online interview
Aleksandar Nikolov	UNICEF Social Policy Specialist in MK	Programme knowledge of the UNICEF social policy/social protection programme, partnerships, challenges, success stories and lessons learned.	Critical	F2F interview or online interview
Olimpija Markovska	UNICEF Child Protection Officer	Programme knowledge of the UNICEF child protection programme, partnerships, challenges, success stories and lessons learned.	Critical	F2F interview or online interview

⁷⁵ Prioritization: Critical/Desirable/ Less priority to meet with the indicated representative

Aleksandar Lazovski	Former UNICEF Social Policy Specialist in MK	Programme knowledge of the UNICEF social policy/social protection programme (institutional memory), partnerships, challenges, success stories and lessons learned.	Critical	Online interview
External Stakeholders				
National Level				
Jovana Trenchevska	Minister Ministry of Labor and Social Policy	UNICEF strategic response to government priorities, coordination, partnership and added value in the current context and in systems strengthening	Critical	F2F interview
Sofija Spasovska	Deputy Head of Social Protection Department Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	UNICEF strategic response to government priorities, coordination, partnership, role and added value in the current context and also related to the social protection reform (cash benefits and social services)	Critical	F2F interview
Dusan Tomsic	Social protection specialist in the Analysis, Evaluation and Monitoring Unit Ministry of Labor and Social Policy	UNICEF strategic response to government priorities especially related to social services	Critical	F2F interview
Drita Aslani	Head of the Unit for Social Services at the local level MLSP	UNICEF strategic response to government priorities especially related to social services	Critical	F2F interview
Mila Carovska	Former Minister of Labor and Social Policy (during 2019 social protection reform)	UNICEF strategic response to government priorities, coordination, partnership, role and added value in the social protection reform	Desirable	F2F or online interview
Elvis Memeti	Counsellor for Roma Inclusion, to the Prime	UNICEF strategic response to	Desirable	F2F interview or online interview

	Minister of North Macedonia	government priorities, coordination, partnership, role and added value in the national context of Roma Inclusion		
Elizabeta Kunovska	Project Manager of the Social Services Improvement Project in the Republic of North Macedonia (SSIP) Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	UNICEF strategic response to government priorities, coordination, partnership, role and added value in the current context of social services and systems strengthening	Critical	F2F interview
Daniela Stanojevska	Social Worker Public Institute for Social Affairs/Activities	UNICEF support of the case management and reform of the cash transfers, experiences, challenges, success stories, lessons learned.	Critical	F2F interview
Bojana Simonovikj	Associate for Active Labour Market Measures Employment Agency (Skopje)	UNICEF support of the case management, , experiences, challenges, success stories, lessons learned.	Desirable	F2F interview
Biljana Nevcheva	Social Worker/Case Manager Intermunicipal Center of Social Work Skopje, municipality Butel (Skopje region, urban)	UNICEF support of the case management and reform of the cash transfers, experiences, challenges, success stories, lessons learned.	Critical	F2F interview
Vlatko Mitev	Intermunicipal Center of Social Work Delcevo (East Region, rural)	UNICEF support of the case management and reform of the cash transfers, experiences, challenges, success stories, lessons learned.	Critical	F2F interview
Tanja Georgievska	Social Worker/Case Manager Intermunicipal Center of Social Work Kumanovo (Northeast Region, urban)	UNICEF support of the case management and reform of the cash transfers, experiences, challenges, success stories, lessons learned.	Critical	F2F interview
Ismail Merimovski	Social Worker/Case Manager	UNICEF support of the case management and reform of the cash transfers, experiences,	Critical	Online

	Intermunicipal Center of Social Work in Debar (Southwest Region, rural)	challenges, success stories, lessons learned.		
Magdalena Veselinovska	Social Worker/Case Manager Intermunicipal Center of Social Work in Tetovo (Polog Region, urban)	UNICEF support of the case management and reform of the cash transfers, experiences, challenges, success stories, lessons learned.	Critical	F2F interview
Zoran Manev	Social Worker, Director, Intermunicipal Center of Social Work in Strumica (Southeast Region)	UNICEF support of the case management and reform of the cash transfers, experiences, challenges, success stories, lessons learned	Critical	F2F interview
UN Country Team				
Rossana Dudziak	UN Resident Coordinator in North Macedonia	UN's strategic response to government priorities, UN in country advocacy and coordination, challenges ahead, approach and overview on UNICEF's role and added value in the current context	Critical	F2F
Afrodita Shalja,	Head of the UNFPA Office in Skopje	Strategic partnerships, specific agenda-coordination, UNICEF's role and added value in the current context .	Desirable	Online Interview
Suzana Ahmeti Janjic	UNDP Office in Skopje Head of Inclusive Prosperity Unit	Strategic partnerships, specific social inclusion agenda-coordination, challenges ahead, UNICEF's role and added value in the social protection/social inclusion agenda.	Critical	Online interview
Donors				
Bojana Naceva	The World Bank in Skopje Senior Education Specialist, Task Team Leader for the Conditional Cash Transfer Project and Skills Development and Innovation Support projects	The WB strategic response to government social policy priorities, coordination and overview on UNICEF's role and added value in the current context	Critical	Online interview

Nafi Saracini	Delegation of the European Union Advisor	The EU strategic response to government priorities, coordination, and overview on UNICEF's role and added value in the current context	Critical	Online interview
David Oberhuber	GIZ GIZ Country Director	The GIZ strategic response to government priorities, UN in country advocacy and coordination, UNICEF's role and added value in the current context	Desirable	Online interview
Local Level Government				
Marija Risova Mutlular	Municipality of Skopje Head of Unit for Social, Child and Health protection (Skopje region, urban)	Strategic partnerships, social services ongoing projects, UNICEF's contribution to local social protection projects	Critical	F2F interview
Suzana Petrovska	Municipality of Delcevo (East Region, rural)	Strategic partnerships, social services ongoing projects, UNICEF's contribution to local social protection projects	Critical	F2F interview
Coki Ristovski	Municipality of Kumanovo Head of the Sector for Culture, Sport, Social, Child and Health Protection (Northeast Region, urban)	Strategic partnerships, social services ongoing projects, UNICEF's contribution to local social protection projects	Critical	F2F interview
Hekuran Duka	Municipality of Debar Mayor (Southwest Region, rural)	Strategic partnerships, social services ongoing projects, UNICEF's contribution to local social protection projects	Critical	Online
Vesna Avramovska	Municipality of Tetovo Associate for Social Protection (Polog Region, urban)	Strategic partnerships, social services ongoing projects, UNICEF's contribution to local social protection projects	Critical	F2F interview

Toni Milusev	Municipality of Strumica, Head of the Local economic development sector (Southeast Region, rural)	Strategic partnerships, social services ongoing projects, UNICEF's contribution to local social protection projects	Critical	F2F interview
NGOs (National and Local)				
Suzana Tuneva Paunovska	Red Cross of the City of Skopje	Coordination, Strategic positioning of UNICEF, social services support, and potential added value of UNICEF in the national context	Critical	F2F interview
Natasa Pavikjevikj Stojmenovska	Association of Social Workers	Coordination, Strategic positioning of UNICEF, social services support, and potential added value of UNICEF in the national context	Critical	F2F interview
Blagica Petreski	NGO Finance Think	Coordination, Strategic positioning of UNICEF, measuring of child poverty, and potential added value of UNICEF in the national context	Critical	Online interview
t.b.c.	NGO Open the Windows	UNICEF's support of DI and social services for children with intellectual disability, Disability priorities, potential added value of UNICEF in the national context	Critical	F2F interview
t.b.c.	NGO Macedonian Young Lawyers Association	Support for child protection, potential added value of UNICEF in the national context	Desirable	F2F interview
Blagica Dimitrova	NGO Inkluziva Kumanovo Director	Support for social services, potential added value of UNICEF in the national context	Desirable	F2F interview
Redjep Osmanov	NGO Poraka for persons with intellectual disabilities, Delcevo	Support for social services, potential added value of UNICEF in the national context	Desirable	F2F interview
t.b.c.	Red Cross Tetovo	Support for social services, potential	Desirable	F2F interview

		added value of UNICEF in the national context		
t.b.c.	Red Cross Debar	Support for social services, potential added value of UNICEF in the national context	Desirable	Online
t.b.c.	Day care center Delcevo	Support for social services, potential added value of UNICEF in the national context	Critical	FzF interview
t.b.c.	Red Cross Strumica	Support for social services, potential added value of UNICEF in the national context	Critical	FzF interview
(on behalf of) Beneficiaries				
	Social Workers,	Have experience and views of the programme and in particular its relevance and effectiveness for current and future situations.	Critical	Focus Group Discussions (online)
	Parents of children with disabilities, clients of day care centers	Have experience and views of the programme and in particular its relevance and effectiveness for current and future situations.	Desirable	Focus Group Discussions
	Professionals (social workers, etc.) at the day care centers for children with disabilities	Have experience and views of the programme and in particular its relevance and effectiveness for current and future situations.	Critical	Focus group discussions (online)

Annex 7: Consent forms

Informed Verbal Consent Form (KIIs)

Title: Evaluation of UNICEF's Social Protection interventions in North Macedonia

Before agreeing to participate in this evaluation, it is important that you read the following explanation. This statement describes the purpose, procedures, risks, discomforts, and precautions of the program. Also described are the alternative procedures available to you, as well as your right to withdraw from the study at any time. No guarantees or assurances can be made as to the result of the evaluation.

Explanation of Procedures: The purpose of this meeting is to explore your experiences with and views about implementation of UNICEF's Social Protection interventions in North Macedonia, their main results, hindering factors and drivers and your opinions about the opportunities ahead of UNICEF in the next cycle. Participation in this evaluation involves a series of questions and asking for your responses. Your contribution is very important to identify the achievements and challenges, draw lessons and structure forward looking recommendations. Our discussion today will take app. 45 minutes.

Risks and Discomforts: The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you, and you have the right to refuse to take part in the study at any time without affecting your relationship with the ET or UNICEF. There are no risks or discomforts that are anticipated from your participation in this evaluation. However, you have every right to not to answer any type of questions that might cause discomfort.

Confidentiality and use of data collected through the interview: The information gathered during this study will remain confidential. The notes collected by the evaluation team contain only the name of the institution and not your name. This means that your personal information will not be included in any written form, so it will not be available to anyone. The notes that we are taking will be used only internally for the purpose of our analysis only and will be strictly confidential and not to be shared with any person outside of the evaluation team. The written version of interviews will be destroyed at the completion of the evaluation. Data compiled in reporting will be aggregated so that individual responses cannot be traced to specific locations or individuals.

Withdrawal without Prejudice: Participation in this study is voluntary; refusal to participate will involve no penalty. Each participant is free to withdraw consent and discontinue participation in this interview at any time without prejudice from the evaluation team

Payment: You will not be compensated in any way for participation in this study.

Agreement: This agreement states that you have received a copy of this informed consent and that you have agreed verbally to participate in the interview.

Please, contact Ms [Marija Nashoku](#), UNICEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, mnashoku@unicef.org, for any further details with regards to this Evaluation.

Informed Verbal Consent Form (FGDs)

Title: Evaluation of UNICEF's Social Protection interventions in North Macedonia

Before agreeing to participate in this evaluation, it is important that you read the following explanation. This statement describes the purpose, procedures, risks, discomforts, and precautions of the program. Also described are the alternative procedures available to you, as well as your right to withdraw from the study at any time. No guarantees or assurances can be made as to the result of the evaluation.

Explanation of Procedures: The purpose of this meeting is to explore your experiences with and views about implementation of UNICEF's Social Protection interventions in North Macedonia, their main results, hindering factors and drivers and your opinions about the opportunities ahead of UNICEF in the next cycle. Participation in this evaluation involves a series of questions and asking for your responses. Your contribution is very important to identify the achievements and challenges, draw lessons and structure forward looking recommendations. Our discussion today will take app. 90 minutes.

Risks and Discomforts: The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you, and you have the right to refuse to take part in the study at any time without affecting your relationship with the ET or UNICEF. There are no risks or discomforts that are anticipated from your participation in this evaluation. However, you have every right to not to answer any type of questions that might cause discomfort.

Confidentiality and use of data collected through the group discussion: The information gathered during this study will remain confidential. The notes collected by the evaluation team contain only the name of the institution and not your name. This means that your personal information will not be included in any written form, so it will not be available to anyone. The notes that we are taking will be used only internally for the purpose of our analysis only and will be strictly confidential and not to be shared with any person outside of the evaluation team. The written version of interviews will be destroyed at the completion of the evaluation. Data compiled in reporting will be aggregated so that individual responses cannot be traced to specific locations or individuals.

Withdrawal without Prejudice: Participation in this study is voluntary; refusal to participate will involve no penalty. Each participant is free to withdraw consent and discontinue participation in this FGD at any time without prejudice from the evaluation team

Payment: You will not be compensated in any way for participation in this study.

Agreement

This agreement states that you have received a copy of this informed consent and that you have agreed verbally to participate in the interview.

Please, contact Ms [Marija Nashoku](#), UNICEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, mnashoku@unicef.org, for any further details with regards to this Evaluation.

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