



UNITED NATIONS  
NORTH MACEDONIA



# 2022

## NORTH MACEDONIA *ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT*

APRIL 2023





# UNITED NATIONS NORTH MACEDONIA



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



International  
Labour  
Organization



IOM  
UN MIGRATION



UNITED NATIONS  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
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UNDRR  
UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction



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UN  
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programme



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNHCR  
The UN Refugee Agency



UNODC  
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



UNOPS



World Health  
Organization



UN  
VOLUNTEERS

## CREDITS

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Cover photo: Winning drawing of the Children's Poster Contest organized ahead of UN Day 2022 as part of the environmental "I care" campaign. ©UN RCO

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# Foreword



*We need unity, solidarity and multilateral solutions to address the food and energy crises, and to eliminate the trust deficit that is undermining global action across the board."*

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General



In 2022, the hopes and gains from COVID-19 recovery and global economic revival were overturned by the impact of energy, food security and finance crises – all significantly shaped by the war in Ukraine – that continued to strain economies globally and regionally, challenge people’s livelihoods and cause setbacks for the achievement of 2030 Agenda.

In North Macedonia – as in many other countries – the challenging context put a significant strain on the Government to continue prioritizing reform processes and structural changes as the fiscal space has been shrinking and vulnerabilities increasing.

At the same time and despite challenges, the country made important progress in the European Union (EU) accession process, demonstrating its uncompromised commitment to implement and address priorities that go hand in hand with the sustainable development priorities and goals.

The challenges of today require vision and commitment, but also agility and flexibility from decision-makers, implementing partners and society. In that spirit, 2022 was another year of exemplary ongoing strategic engagement and close partnership between the Government of North Macedonia and the United Nations entities with operational activities for development in the country.

Implementation of 2021-2025 Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (SDCF), the key strategic document guiding UN work in North Macedonia, has been closely tied to the UN development system reform process, based on key principles of jointness and enhanced efficiency of the UN system with supporting governments and societies towards accelerated sustainable development. In addition, we were also able to jointly respond to the emerging needs in the context of the current crisis, building on what we learned during COVID-19 pandemic.

Daily, we continued to demonstrate that working together

leads to better and more sustainable results, boosts efficiencies and eliminates overlaps.

North Macedonia has been a strong supporter of the UN reform process – globally, as a champion of multilateralism; and locally, in the country, where our joint work is marked by excellent collaboration and alignment towards our joint goals across SDCF priority areas.

The implementation of 2022 Joint Workplans contributed to addressing key development priorities. Employability of vulnerable groups increased, and jobs were created. At the same time, the regulatory environment and services for workers, farmers, and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) were enhanced. In the area of social services, the UN supported advanced education and social reforms through policy and service development for those in need. In the area of environment, UN supported the decrease in air pollution in Skopje, increase of protected areas and strengthening of biodiversity protection. Youth’s awareness of climate change increased and risks from floods and from epidemics were reduced or mitigated. In the area of good governance, UN work contributed to decentralization, fiscal decentralization and local development, progress with the formulation of the two-decade National Development Strategy, an improved child-friendly justice system, and increase in national capacities to deliver on strategic priorities linked to the EU accession and Agenda 2030.

These are just some results towards which we worked jointly. They are a testament of opportunities and hope – despite challenges impacting peace, stability, and socio-economic development, which will be felt for years to come.

They need to continue guide our work as we ensure that no one is left behind.

Upholding UN values and principles enshrined in the Charter, which continue to be tested, remains key to overcoming current crises through our joint efforts.

**Rossana Dudziak**  
UN Resident Coordinator

**Bujar Osmani**  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

# UN Country Team



**22**  
UN entities engaged in operational activities for development in North Macedonia

The United Nations in North Macedonia implements its activities in alignment with the country's development priorities, human rights and gender equality commitments, the EU accession agenda, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Agenda 2030.

The UN has been working to achieve the priorities outlined in the Government of North Macedonia and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025, through provision of technical assistance, capacity development, knowledge exchange, and innovative pilot programs.

In 2022, 22 United Nations entities were engaged in operational activities for development in North Macedonia, working together through the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC), the designated representative of the UN Secretary General for development operations in the country. 16 of these entities had a physical presence in North Macedonia, while 5 conducted their activities remotely. The UN team in North Macedonia in 2022 included more than 320 country-based personnel and support staff, as well as experts from around the world.

- FAO** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
  - ILO** International Labour Organization
  - ITU** *International Telecommunications Union \**
  - IOM** International Organization for Migration
  - OHCHR** Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
  - UNDP** United Nations Development Programme
  - UNDRR** United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction \*
  - UN-Habitat** United Nations Human Settlements Programme \*
  - UNDSS** *United Nations Department for Safety and Security*
  - UNECE** United Nations Economic Commission for Europe \*
  - UNEP** United Nations Environment Programme
  - UNESCO** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \*
  - UNFPA** United Nations Population Fund
  - UNHCR** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
  - UNICEF** United Nations Children's Fund
  - UNIDO** United Nations Industrial Development Organization
  - UNODC** United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
  - UNOPS** United Nations Office for Project Services
  - UNV** *United Nations Volunteers \**
  - UN RCO** *Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator*
  - UN Women** United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
  - WHO** World Health Organization
- \* no physical presence not SDCF signatory*



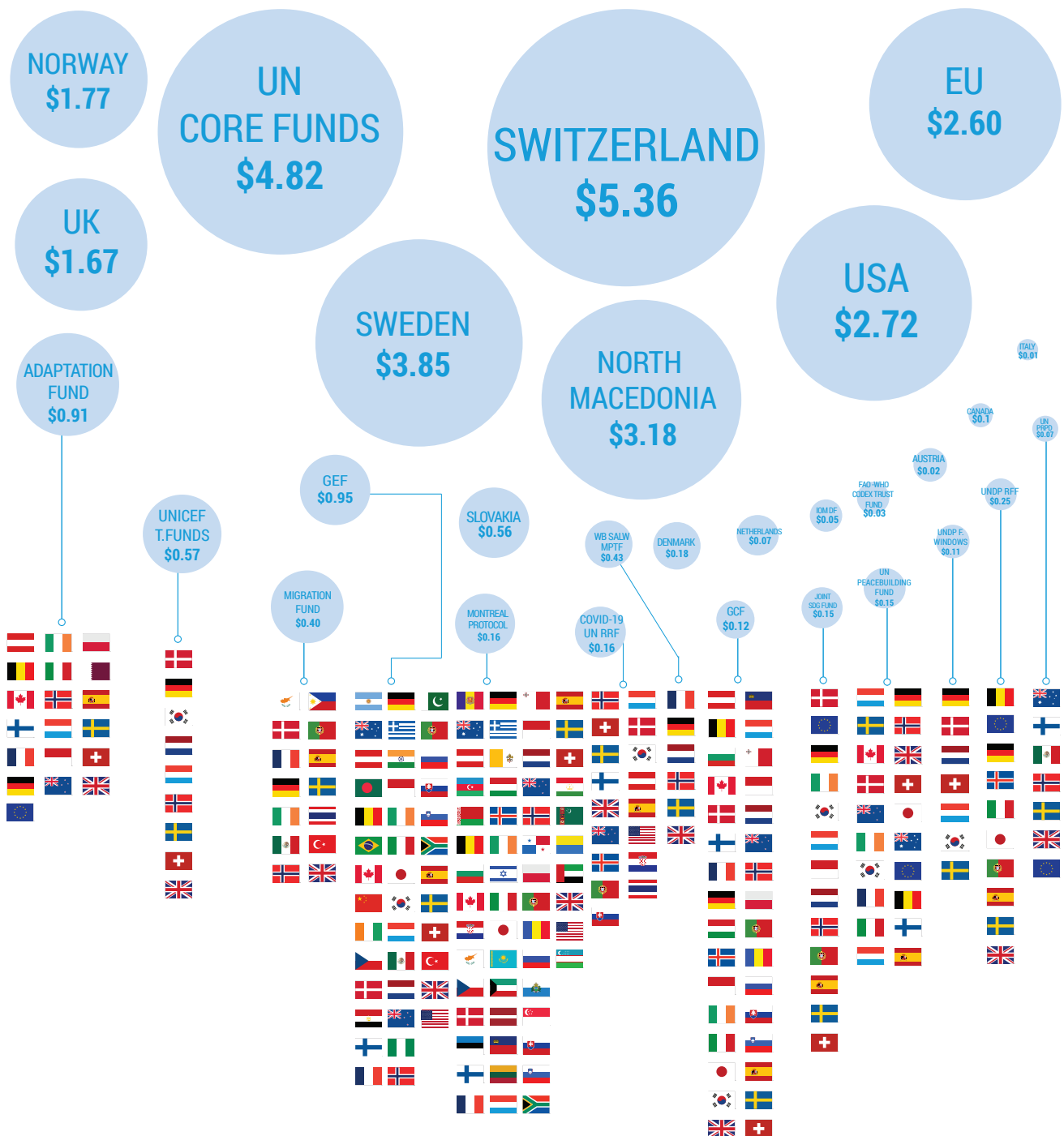
# Key UN development partners

During 2022, the UN continued to work closely with over 110 partners – national and local governments, civil society, international partners, private sector, academia and all other stakeholders – to ensure the relevance and impact of its

action for the people in North Macedonia. A detailed list of stakeholders the UN has partnered with in 2022 is provided in the annex.

## Partners that provided generous contributions to UN North Macedonia activities in 2022\*

Based on effective expenditures in 2022, data as of 31 March 2023, for 1 January -31 December 2022, in million US\$



\* Public contributors to pooled, vertical and thematic funds that supported UN activities in North Macedonia in 2022 indicated in alphabetical order.

# Key developments in the country and regional context

The impact of overlapping regional and global crises in 2022 overwhelmed institutional capacities in North Macedonia and globally, and seriously threatened the living standards of people, especially the most vulnerable groups.

Global energy crisis and rising food prices undermined the post-COVID-19 economic revival and the trends intensified due to war in Ukraine. The impact on North Macedonia was mostly indirect due to strong reliance on energy and food imports and strong trade exposure to the European Union (EU) markets. The people, but also businesses and especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have been strongly hit by inflation and energy crisis that undermined the already low competitiveness of the economy. Labour market continued picking up in 2022, but youth unemployment persisted. Financing of the budget deficit and the social spending became increasingly difficult as financial buffers continued depleting and capital markets worsened.

Human capital remained the key economic challenge, with steady population decline confirmed by 2021 Census due to continued trend of aging and outmigration. Despite education reforms, the learning outcomes remained low and insufficiently aligned with future markets' skills. While the impact of COVID-19 reduced, the health system continued to struggle due to the lack of resources and medical staff. Social reforms and the fight against informalities were yet to produce the intended results, while the children rights, especially of those with disabilities, have improved.

The focus on climate change, environment and natural resources reduced due to the energy crisis, which contributed to slight worsening of air pollution compared to previous COVID-19 period. But energy price increases also boosted incentives for green transition and made renewable energy investments more attractive. Challenges persisted in relation to the three major lakes, with the situation in Prespa and Dojran Lake especially concerning and deteriorating. Investments in wastewater and solid waste management, natural resources management, as well as greater focus on recycling remained short of what is needed.

Despite challenges, in 2022 EU commenced the screening of the level of transposition of EU acquis, but negotiations will only officially open once the Constitution is amended to include additional ethnic groups in the preamble. Meanwhile, the challenges and delays within the EU accession process have decreased the public support for EU integration and deepened political polarization of the society. Regional cooperation continued actively through the high-level Prespa Forum Dialogue and the "Open Balkan" initiative. The initiative, aimed at creating single market for Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia, proved useful in tackling the food and energy crisis in 2022.

Despite international rankings improvements, corruption and lack of accountability remained key societal problem. The inclusion and participation of stakeholders and the society at large in crafting policies improved, but implementation capacity, equity, and public trust in institutions continued to

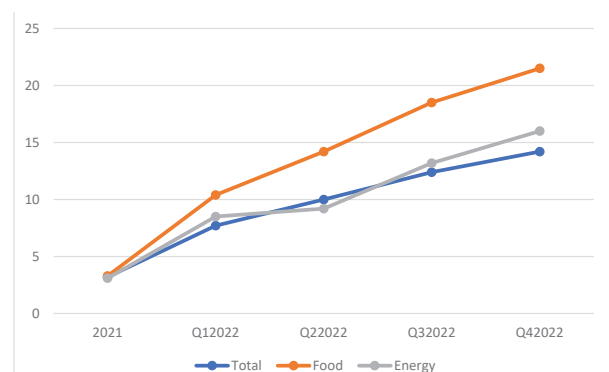
shrink. The Government continued to engage with UN and European human rights mechanisms, with the integration and follow up on their recommendations remaining challenging.

The challenging political context further stretched institutional capacities in North Macedonia and the multidimensional crisis worsened the already difficult operating environment for local governments. Digital development remained a pressing need, with the country scoring below the European average on a wider regulatory framework. The country remains along one of the main routes for mixed migration movements to Europe, which resulted in more than 27,391 detected irregular border crossings in 2022, mostly from Syria, Pakistan, Morocco and other countries. Some 22,000 refugees arrived from Ukraine, but only 5,900 remained in the country. Eradication of statelessness, although within reach, was not achieved in 2022.

Consultations to formulate a twenty-year National Development Strategy continued and some important reforms were launched such as the new budgetary reform, as well as policies that better target vulnerable groups such as women, youth, persons with disabilities and Roma.

The 2022 review of the UN Common Country Analysis (CCA) reiterated the need to strengthen data management and implementation capacities, step up effective fight against corruption and informalities and design anti-crisis measures that are strongly targeted at the needs of the most vulnerable in the context of scarce financing. Despite the current challenges, the country must also maintain commitment for strategic investments in human capital, food security, climate change, environment and disaster resilience.

## North Macedonia Consumer Price Index



## 2022 quarterly GDP growth rate



Source: SSO, 2023

# UN support to national development priorities through SDCF

This section highlights UN North Macedonia contribution and results from working with partners in four areas – inclusive prosperity, quality services for all, healthy environment and good governance – in 2022.

## SDCF overview

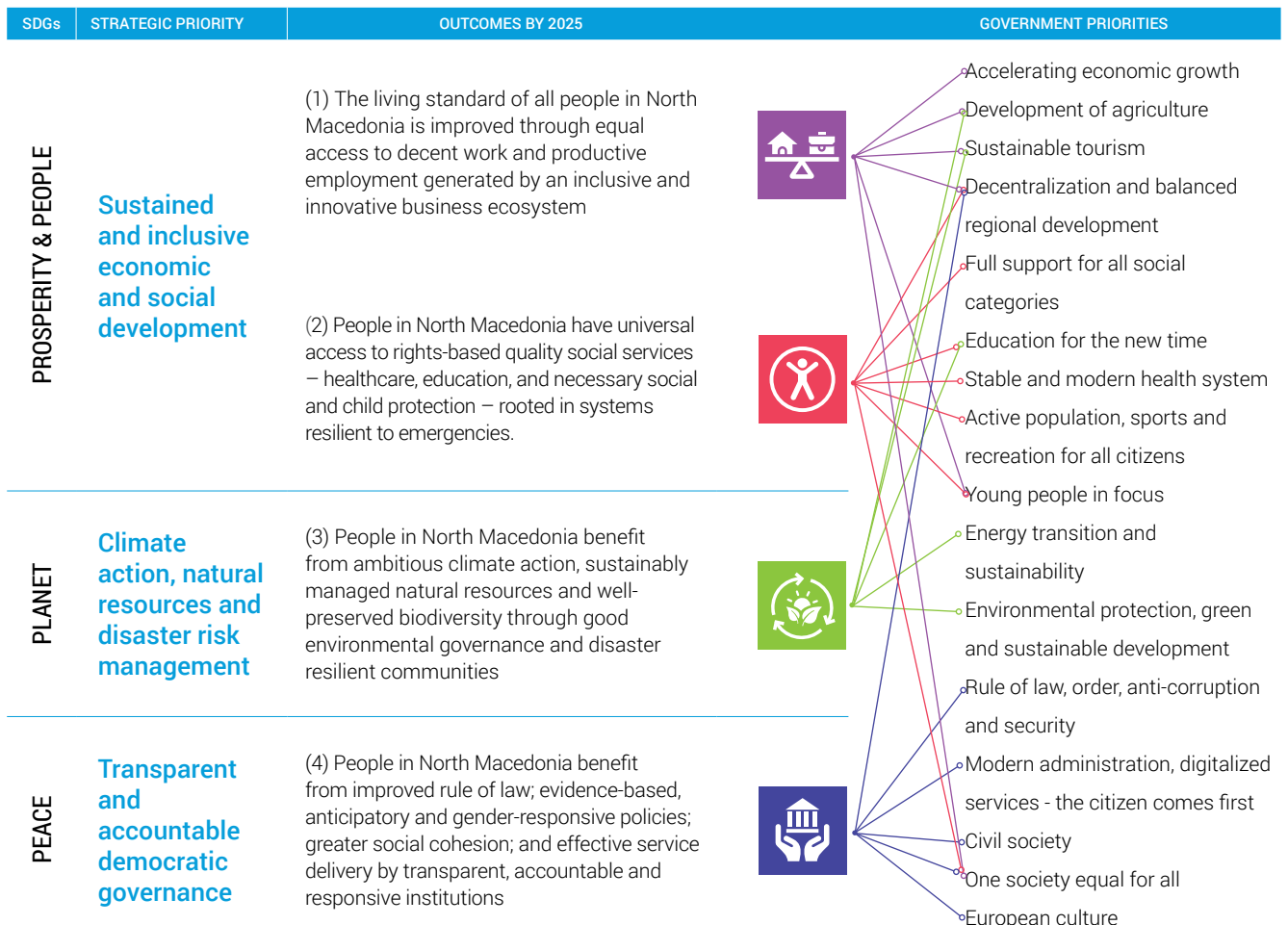
Within the 2021-2025 SDCF, UN and partners are addressing three national strategic priorities and seek to contribute to four intended outcomes.

Building on the strong tradition of UN work in North Macedonia, SDCF supports the shift from direct implementation towards a more targeted UN support as an enabler and provider of anticipatory policy advice, innovation and expertise.

UN action is evidence-based, which requires strengthened statistical capacity, better collection of disaggregated data, and improved coordination and information sharing at all levels. All activities are done jointly with national and local authorities, civil society, private sector, international partners, and other stakeholders.

Programmes promote gender equality, civic engagement of youth, trust building, and equal opportunities for all, to realize their human rights and full potential. Recognizing that the people are not passive recipients of services but agents of change, the UN interventions support societal transformation for more active and responsible individual and community approach to sustainable and inclusive development.

For detailed values for all outcome indicators see Annex 3; for results by Outcome and UN entity, see the report's Supplement.





# 2022 results

## OUTCOME 1

# Inclusive prosperity



*By 2025, the living standard of all people in North Macedonia is improved through equal access to decent work and productive employment generated by inclusive and innovative business ecosystem*

### Contribution to



- Accelerated and sustainable economic growth with a better standard of living
- Development agriculture
- Sustainable tourism
- Decentralization and balanced regional development



- Fundamentals first: Economic Development and Competitiveness
- 11. Agriculture and rural development
  - 19. Social policy and employment;
  - 20. Enterprise and industrial policy;
  - 26. Education and culture

2022 UN expenditure

**\$5,311,561**

### Development partners:

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy; Ministry of Education and Science, Employment Services Agency; Regional Employment Offices; Trade Unions; Chambers of Commerce; Local Economic and Social Councils; Employers; Farmers Associations, Producer organizations



Starting in 2018, North Macedonia has been operating a youth guarantee in line with EU practices. Recent labour market data seem to indicate that the youth guarantee has helped to improve the situation of young people in the period 2018-19. In 2020, the situation suffered a set-back because of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, recovering in 2021. In 2022, 7419 (3595 women), out of 20185 persons registered in the Youth Guarantee, got employed within 4 months. The percentage of participants who successfully completed the Youth Guarantee in 2022 is 43 %. *Credit: ILO*

Despite challenges posed by the consecutive crises, some of the key indicators for this outcome demonstrated solid improvement in 2022. The employment rate continued to increase, approaching the 2025 target and up for 2.5% since last year. Youth in NEET decreased significantly (22.8%) since last year (24.26%), almost reaching the target set for 2025. Growth per employed person has also picked, while the working poverty rate continues to increase.

Working with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Employment Service Agency and other relevant partners, UN has substantially contributed to these positive developments. In 2022, UN supported creation of **1,204 jobs** through different measures such as counselling and mentorship of **671 businesses** and other interventions such as green measures, internships and the Community Works Programme in 52, out of 81, municipalities. Of these jobs at least 359 were attained by Roma, 36 people with disabilities (23 persons self-employed) and 34 are created through green investments. In addition, supporting underdeveloped yet imperative care economy, UN enabled licensing of **117 providers of care services** for elderly and persons with disabilities (PwD) and **capacitated 28 NGOs** to assist these groups.

## 5,351

persons with increased employability

Responding to the critical need of market required skills, and focusing on vulnerable groups, UN supported enhancement of employability and activation of **5,351 people** of which 54% women and almost 70% young, 2,379 are Roma and 152 persons with disabilities. Moreover, **147 people were upskilled through Future Skills** training for digital transformation and green transition in: construction, renewable, energy and textile. Addressing the most serious challenge of eroding human capital in the country, UN assisted authorities to implement the **Youth Guarantee** plans which resulted in registering **20,185 young Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) people** through the network of service providers led by Employment Support Agency of which 7419 (3,595 women) were employed within 4 months of registering. Of that, 2,400 young NEET (1,553 women, 193 Roma and 6 PwD) were registered with assistance of NGOs, enhancing the social services within the community. This contributed to a significant decrease of the Youth in NEET rate in 2022 dropping for almost 2% since last year.

Throughout the year, UN worked with the authorities to enhance policy and regulatory environment and services in inclusive property embedding participatory and evidence-based approach.

In the area of labour relations, UN facilitated the tripartite social dialogue for drafting of the **new Labour Relations Law**

and supported development of the new “Law on Employment and Insurance in case of Unemployment” to enable the Employment Support Agency (ESA) to implement recent trends in labour activation of vulnerable, with instruments for implementation of **social contracting model**. UN led analysis of legal alignment with the **ILO Convention on ending violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work, No. 190** was validated by the Economic and Social Council and entered parliamentary process.

To boost rural economy UN supported the amendments of the **Law on Sale of State-owned Agricultural Land** making privatization of state-owned agricultural land fully operational. In response to the challenges in the global environment, preparatory actions for development of the **first National Food Security Strategy** were initiated through a consultative and participatory process, analytical evidence, and proposal for inter-institutional national coordination mechanism. Recognizing the challenge of migration, UN assisted the authorities to **engage the diaspora in the socio-economic development** of the country, capacitating more than 20 institutional stakeholders with competencies in diaspora-related issues including diaspora engagement projects.

Green economy was reinforced by introducing **green transition measures for companies in the Governmental Operational Plan 2022** worth \$333,000. Skills creation services were enhanced by **introducing a concept for completion of vocational skills for adults** in the Regional Inclusive Centres of Excellence. With UN support, the Ministry of Information Society and Administration conducted the **National Digital Skills Assessment** to understand the current supply and demand of digital skills of the employees in private sector, start-ups, and the education sector and co-developed a **Digital Innovation Profile**. The recommendations from both informed the design of the National ICT Strategy 2023-2027. In addition, digitalization was enhanced through few specific products such as **digital tool HANA** which provides access to written data in Albanian for visually-impaired persons, as well as a web-based **Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA) Tool**. Adapted and linked to national data collection systems, the FPMA was operationalized by MAFWE with UN support in 2022, to allow for easy monitoring and analysis of domestic and global food prices, essential in addressing food security in a crises context.

In parallel, UN also worked on specific measures to address

## 3,102 ha

under land consolidation

informalities and quality of jobs. In that context, labour market regulation was improved by building capacity of labour inspectorate. This includes **training of 106 inspectors** on Labour Relations Law, developing **an e-learning platform and a new website** with digital applications for employers and workers, as well as providing a new **IT and measurement equipment**. To address informalities in the HORECA (Hotels, restaurants and café) sector, a pilot measure implemented with Association of Hotels, Restaurants, Cafeterias and Campsites – HOTAM with **simplified employment procedures and lowered social security contribution for seasonal workers in Ohrid and Struga**. To improve safety and health of jobs in construction, mines and agriculture, UN undertook a gap analysis of regulations' alignment with ILO conventions that was validated by authorities.

## Ljupco Nikolovski

Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy

Facing the challenges exacerbated by the recent COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine war to the domestic food security, the Ministry and the government have recognized the importance of having a National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy as a long-term roadmap of national priorities, actions, and resources needed to promote the country's agricultural production, enhance food availability, and improve the affordability of healthy diets for all people in North Macedonia, as well as making food systems sustainable and resilient to future crisis, which may affect the national food security. *Credit: Government MK*

## Mirjana Kapkoska - Angeleska

women farmer from the village of Dabjani

'Mirjana inherited property from her grandfather, following the denationalisation of agricultural land. But she could hardly farm her land, as it consisted of 65 parcels scattered across the field. Thanks to the joint efforts of the EU, FAO and MAFWE all her parcels are now consolidated in one – eight hectares large and regularly shaped parcel. 'Now I have finally brought my land back to agricultural production', says Mirjana. *Credit: FAO*

UN also responded to the most critical challenges for sustainable and competitive rural economy, such as land fragmentation, insufficient rural infrastructure, and animal health management, as well as substantive gender gap in the agricultural sector. In 2022, UN with EU support, continued the assistance to the implementation of the National Land Consolidation Programme through simultaneous implementation of ten land consolidation projects on the ground. This process involved preparation and adoption of plans for re-allotment and improvement of the agricultural

infrastructure covering 3,102 hectares of agricultural land, owned by 2,954 agricultural landowners (633 women). As a result, the number of land parcels in these areas is now reduced by almost 2.5 times i.e. from 8,237 to 3,344 parcels, while the average size of the land parcels tripled (from 0.42 ha to 1.34 ha) in the areas where land consolidation was finalized, thus the structural problem of small farm sizes and fragmented land parcels was addressed, unlocking the potential of agricultural production and improving the competitiveness of farms. This year, in partnership with

## 70 women farmers

financially supported

the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, 70 women farmers benefitted from increased financial support (from € 3,000 to € 6,000) through the UN facilitated measure aimed to support women agricultural producers. To assist in aligning the animal health management with EU standards, UN undertook a preparatory assessment for the Food and Veterinary Agency to upgrade the National Animal Information System.



UN interventions enabled creation of 1,204 full-time and part-time jobs (622 full-time and 582 part-time jobs) through different measures, including newly introduced green measure during 2022. Out of them, 68.5% are women, 30.5% are young up to 29 years old, 34.7% Roma and 42 jobs (3.5%) for persons with disabilities. *Credit: UNDP*

OUTCOME 2

# Quality services for all



*By 2025, people in North Macedonia have universal access to rights-based quality social services – healthcare, education, and necessary social and child protection - rooted in systems resilient to emergencies*

Contribution to



- Social inclusion (care for all vulnerable categories) and development of human capital
- Modern education system
- Stable and modern healthcare system
- Youth in the focus
- One society for all



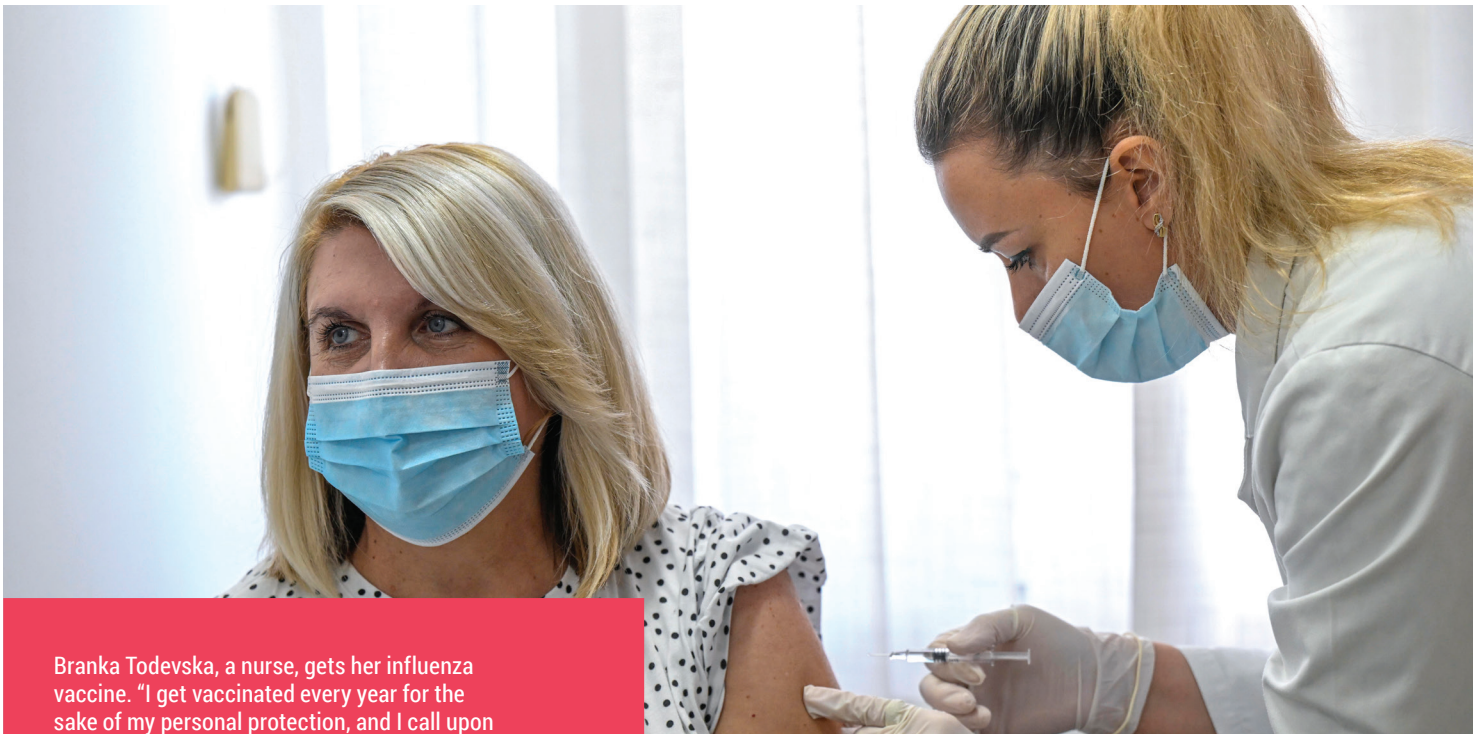
- 28: Consumer and health protection
- 19: Social Policy and Employment;
- 25: Science and Research,
- 26: Education and culture

2022 UN expenditure

**\$5,128,417**

Development partners:

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science, Health Institutes, Associations or Directorates; Vocational Training Institutes; Trade Union of Health Workers; Civil Society; Academia, Private Sector



“  
Branka Todevska, a nurse, gets her influenza vaccine. “I get vaccinated every year for the sake of my personal protection, and I call upon all other people to get vaccinated for their own health’s sake,” says Branka. *Credit: WHO*

The latest available data indicates slight increase of the population living below the poverty line (21.6% in 2019 to 21.8% in 2020), impacting the youngest most (from 27.8% in 2019 to 30.3% in 2020), This is further increasing with the latest crisis which impacted vulnerable categories disproportionately and put more people into poverty, or an additional 13,000 people, of which 5,000 children, according to the estimate in the UN supported analysis of the impact of the crisis to the Macedonian households. This also caused a slight decline of the human development index which decreased from 0.774 in 2021 to 0.770 in 2022. Yet, the country’s ranking improved from 82 to 78 place.

Using COVID-19 as a momentum, UN support and technical

assistance to the Ministry of Health not only facilitated the response to the emergency health system needs but also enabled the **strengthening of the national healthcare system**. This was achieved, among other, through **generation of critical evidence for improved policy making and improved patient-centred service design**.

The assessment of the national legal context identified the **required changes in the national legislative and regulatory framework to enable the implementation of the primary health care (PHC) reform**. Situation analysis of Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) not only provided the most up to date data about the system but allowed to detect **new equity gap in access to early intervention services**, proving

a clear-cut income inequality in access to ECI services. The clinical protocols and pathways for the priority non-communicable diseases, will contribute to introducing **minimum quality standard for care delivery in daily practice**. The systematic analysis of the administrative processes for primary care doctors identified the specific **redundancies and opportunities to increase the efficiency** of PHC administration. Planning and design of an e-appointment system for Primary Health Care will allow **patients to avoid long waits at their health centre**, without imposing any added administrative burden on PHC. Digital software developed and piloting ongoing, will facilitate **easier consultation among the health professionals** at primary, secondary and tertiary level, thus saving patients from financial hardship of unnecessary travel and avoiding crowds in waiting rooms in hospitals. The above-mentioned results contribute to achieving the SDG targets 3.8 (universal health coverage) and 3.4 (reduce premature mortality from non-communicable diseases), as well as to the SDCF outcome indicator on Self-reported unmet need for medical examination and care, in 2020 at 1.7%, and expected to improve back in 2022 after COVID-19.

The first comprehensive assessment of the **health workforce** planning structure and processes laid out the foundation towards **the development of a new (first) Health Workforce Strategy (HWS)**. With UN support, the Ministry of Health, School of Medicine and the Specialized Hospital for Geriatric and Palliative Care designed an action plan for transforming the specialized geriatric and palliative care hospital into a teaching centre for the **newly designed geriatric sub-specialization** and have developed a roadmap for workforce development. This will help prepare the health workforce to respond to the needs of the growing elderly population, in line with the SDG target 3.c (increased health financing retention of workforce in developing countries). **Over 1,800 health professionals** (6.5% of the total healthcare workforce) **went through series of trainings** (each in their field of expertise) in vaccine administration, vaccination planning and conversation for easier acceptance of required vaccination, safety at work, working on mental health, laboratories work, field epidemiology, telemedicine, effective perinatal care and other areas.

## Svetlana Milić

housewife

a 65-year-old housewife from a municipality in North Macedonia, had a routine check-up at a mobile gynaecological clinic that changed her life. She was diagnosed with early-stage cervical cancer and underwent surgery to prevent the cancer from spreading. Despite North Macedonia having more gynaecologists per 100,000 people than the European average, many smaller towns and villages lack easily accessible sexual and reproductive health services, which is a significant barrier for vulnerable people and people in rural areas. *Credit: UNFPA*

Svetlana together with 2000 women and girls from rural and underserved areas of the country had the possibility to undertake a regular gynecological check in her place of living, through the services of the mobile gynecological clinics,

established with UN support back in 2021 and later integrated in the national health system. In cooperation with the local civil society organization HOPS, these services have been extended also to women and girls in prisons, sex workers and drug users.

With the UN support and in collaboration with the Safe Motherhood Committee, the Ministry of Health established six operative executive boards for the **implementation of the perinatal care model**, in the six regions of Skopje, Bitola, Tetovo, Shtip, Strumica and Kumanovo. The boards will contribute to better coordination of the implementation of the Master Plan for Perinatal Care 2020–2030 at regional level. Building on the activities from previous years, additional 175 healthcare professionals were trained in 10 facilities/hospitals in effective perinatal care (EPC), contributing to the improved quality of health services and **improved maternal and newborn health**. While the neonatal mortality rate increased during the pandemic (from 4.2 to 4.5%), these continued investments, including with UN support are expected to reverse the trend to the lower rates from the pre-pandemic period.

## 340 children

benefited from skills development programmes

In 2022, the UN worked with the Ministry of Education and Science and associated institutions on continued implementation of the **education reform** to address the learning crisis caused by the systemic gaps, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although schools remained mostly open throughout 2022, recovering from the pandemic-related learning losses was slow and contributed to lower education outcomes, with the most vulnerable children being disproportionately affected.

In the lead-up to the **Transforming Education Summit** organized by the UN Secretary General, a series of 10 national consultations on the future of education were organized with UN support, with over 600 youth, students, teachers, municipal officials, parliamentarians and CSOs. Based on the input from the consultations, a **national statement of commitment** for further improvement of the education system and advancing the achievement of the SDG 5 **was delivered at the Summit in September in New York by the Prime Minister**.

Although schools remained mostly open throughout 2022, recovering from the pandemic-related learning losses was slow and contributed to lower education outcomes, with the most vulnerable children being disproportionately affected. Preschool attendance is still low, with most (60%) of 3–5-year-old children missing out on quality and inclusive preschool education (SDCF indicator 2\_10) albeit increasing after COVID. In response to this, UN invested in advocating for expanded access to preschool education alongside a wider process to optimize the entire school network and make better use of the resources available. UN has also engaged with the first 10 municipalities directly to plan resource optimization and utilize unused spaces in schools toward an increase in pre-primary education coverage, expecting first results in 2023.

UN continued to support curricular reform by providing teachers with effective pedagogical strategies, educational resources, and tools (including digital) for **quality inclusive teaching**. Special attention in this year's support was given to student wellbeing as a significant factor in



Teachers and educators joined UN supported capacity building workshops on teaching about climate change through new cost-effective experiments in their classes. The approach helps children to learn the basics of science and the effects of environmental and climate change phenomena, such as degradation on water, soil, air, heat and warming cycles. These experiential school activities also help children develop skills such as problem-solving, perseverance and collaboration. *Credit: UNICEF*

improving outcomes for learners, especially for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. New **educational content** was continuously designed and made freely available on Eduino, including learning resources, games, activities and a virtual laboratory with self-paced science experiments, further strengthening **Eduino** as the go-to online platform with verified, good-quality teaching and learning materials for teachers, parents, and students.

## 10,970 teachers

participated in UN-supported development programmes

To support **inclusion of all children in mainstream education** and creating a nurturing and stimulating environment for children with disabilities to learn and develop the skills they need to thrive, UN supported the expansion of early inclusion in education programmes, the transformation of the special schools into resource centers, capacity-building of staff at the Resource Centres, the 1,364 members of the **school inclusion teams of all primary schools** in the country, as well as 400 professionals across the country in Augmentative and Alternative Communication. As result, in the school year 2021/2022 1,232 students with disabilities were enrolled in regular primary (911) and secondary (312) schools. The rollout of the national program on Social and Emotional Learning was completed through a network of 192 peer support teachers and complemented by a two-month training program for sustainable Professional Learning

Communities to promote a culture of continuous learning for all staff and improve outcomes for all children.

UN continued supporting **comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)** and youth-related initiatives by working with the Bureau for Development of Education in planning and rolling out the strategic positioning process, and development of the National Strategy on CSE. The strategy aims to improve knowledge, skills, and attitudes of students in CSE, and increase awareness of the need for CSE in primary education.

All these activities aim to improve the quality of education and the students' learning outcomes, the progress of which will be measured through the SDCF indicator 2\_20 on PISA testing scores from the 2022 round of testing, expected soon.

UN partnered with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and other relevant institutions to support **social protection policy and service design and piloting** to improve the protection of persons in need.

In 2022, UN support was focused on developing the capacity of the social service workforce. The new Digital Learning



The social mentoring programme, adapted to the needs of women survivors of violence, has helped participants become financially and psychologically resilient. Magdalena Chadinoska Kuzmanoski, a social mentor who worked with five women, explains how social mentoring leads to employment, financial security, and improved quality of life for survivors and their dependents. Soft skills development and professional training help women become more competitive in the labour market, while social mentors suggest potential employment opportunities only when they are sure that the woman can cope with the demands of the job. *Credit: UN Women*

Platform for social service workforce offers delivery of specialized online trainings required for the licensing processes, as well as training for addressing the potential burnout, which was utilized by more than 100 social sector frontline workers so far. In parallel, UN built capacities, tools and methods for delivery of intergraded case management to vulnerable population as singly entry point for support services and benefits which is expected to serve over 50,000 households starting from 2023.

## 50,000 households

to benefit from improved social services  
via integrated case management

The first ever cross-sectoral Parenting Strategy was developed aiming to ensure caring family environment for the children at home. As part of parenting interventions, hundreds of children benefited from improved parenting skills through Mellow Parenting programme (100 families), the Parenting Help Line (100 parents), and the Bebbo (over 7,000 users)

parenting application - all enabling easy to access and low-cost approach to early intervention and parent support.

Based on the new **foster and kinship care** standards, newly established regional Foster Care Support Centres acquired knowledge and developed skill to promote the family foster care service, evaluate and educate potential and future foster families, and to observe and support the existing 261 foster and kinship families. The process of identification and requirement of new foster families, and access to information for the general population, professionals, and existing foster care families has been facilitated through the foster care web page <https://zgrizuvanje.gov.mk/>.

National capacities for expansion of the human-rights based model of disability and needs assessment of children and youth in the North-East, East, Vardar and South-West planning regions were developed. Following the adoption of the amendment to the Healthcare Law by Parliament, prepared with UN support, the initiated establishment of the national and ten regional functional assessment bodies will complete the introduction of the new model, that, as of 2023, will provide easy and single-entry point for support services and benefits of all persons with disabilities and their families throughout the country.

In support to the Government to ensure that no one is left behind, UN ensured and facilitated provision of health, education, social and child **protection services to the migrants and forcibly displaced persons**, including of Afghan families that were temporarily in the country. About 26,000 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers accommodated in the Temporary Transit Centres in Vinojug and Vizbegovo, received medical and psychosocial support, cultural mediation, recreational activities, language assistance and

other reception and protection needs. 40 Asylum seekers with specific needs, accommodated in the Reception Center Vizbegovo and private accommodation were assisted with education and employment services as well as medical interventions and psychosocial support. Lastly, regarding the Global Compact on Refugees Fund pledge for the remaining Kosovo refugees, 5 persons gained citizenship and 6 have voluntarily returned to Kosovo. 244 persons of the initial caseload of Kosovo refugees are still in the country, and their situation is expected to be resolved by 2024.

Last year marks good progress in the implementation of the **Law on Prevention and Protection of Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence**. With UN technical support, key documents, such as the Multisector Protocol (MSR Protocol), six bylaws, the Program for the Reintegration of Victims were prepared. These legal documents define new provisions, facilitate the multi-stakeholder response and the key standards and procedures in data collection and analysis and provide improved quality services to victims of violence. Data collection and analysis is fundamental for evidence-based policy making. Targeting the chronic lack of quality and reliable data on Violence Against Women (VAW) and domestic violence, UN also supported the mapping of the

current situation and the challenges related to the collection and reporting of GBV data, after which, development of an information management system was initiated.

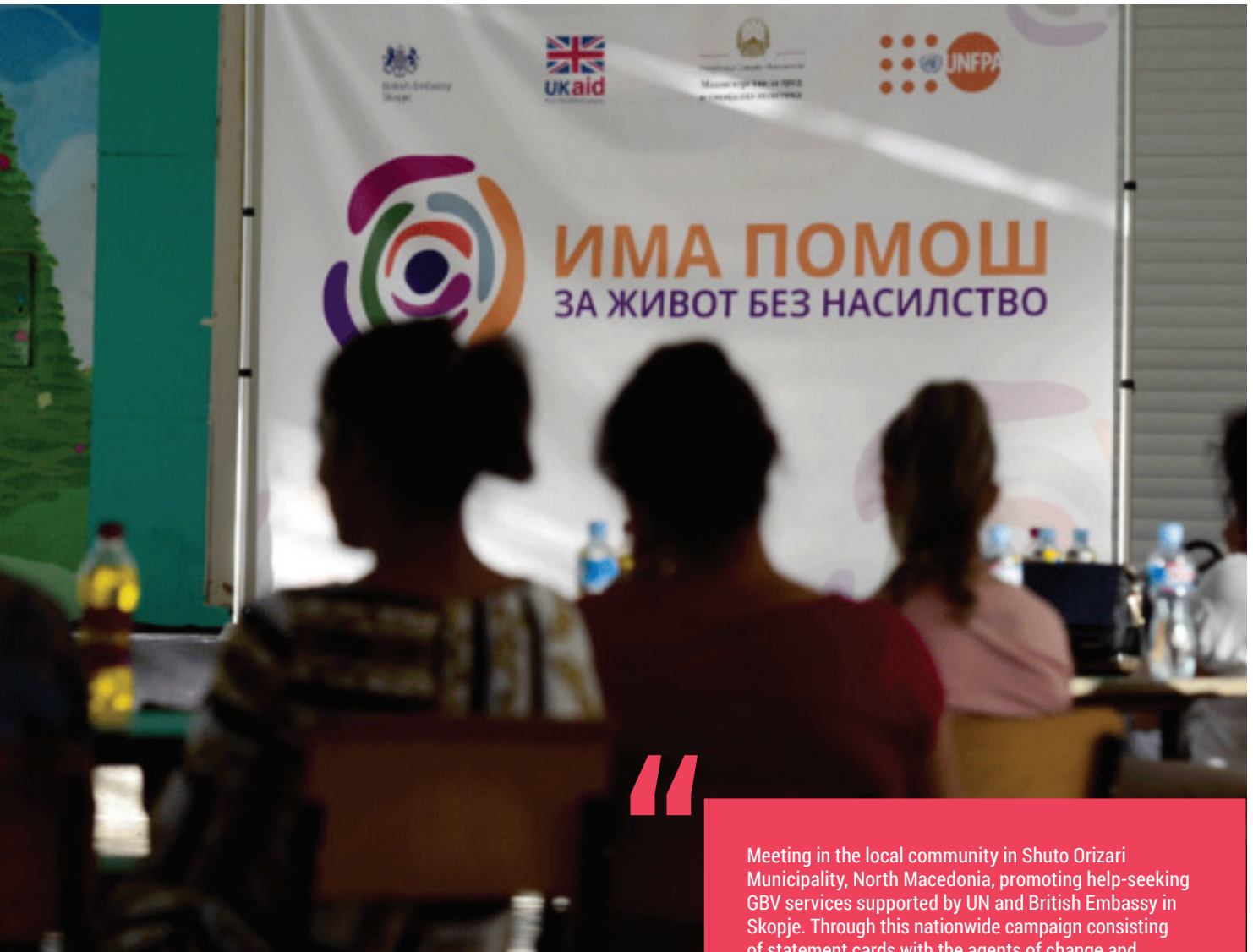
The UN supported the review and update of existing training material on **Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and GBV for SRH professionals**, GBV service providers, and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) aiming to improved quality of SRH and GBV services for persons with disabilities. A nationwide campaign targeting all women and girls living in urban and rural areas with a focus on Roma populations raised awareness regarding available services for victims and survivors of gender-based and domestic violence in the country. In addition, community events were held in three communities to raise awareness about online violence.

With UN support, over 15.000 women victims of violence benefited from **counselling services** of the Counselling centre for victims of gender-based violence capacitated with UN support as well as the first inclusive playground that will reduce the burden of care givers (prevalently women) to more than 20 children with cerebral palsy. Additionally, 249 women and girls survivors of violence in the South-East region of the country received services from the two newly



Anastasia, a 19-year-old philosophy student was forced to flee from her home in Ukraine due to the ongoing conflict and found refuge in North Macedonia along with her sister, where they were welcomed by a family of Ukrainians who work in the Embassy in Skopje. Thanks to her open-mindedness and curiosity, Anastasia was invited to continue her studies at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, where she was given a laptop and all the necessary resources to advance in her studies. Anastasia is grateful for the opportunity to continue her studies and is eager to use her skills and intellect to help rebuild her homeland. The Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje believes that universities have a unique opportunity to support young refugees whose education has been interrupted due to war or persecution. UN supports the Government and all stakeholders in their effort to offer international protection to refugees, and they work to increase the acceptance of the people they serve, and their potential to be utilized in the host countries, as well as in their homelands once they feel safe to go back. *Credit: UNHCR*





opened psycho-social counselling centres led by partner CSOs Skaj Plus Strumica and EHO Stip, supported by UN. The sustainability of the psychosocial counselling centre in Strumica was ensured through the drafting and adoption of a municipal Local Action Plan for Gender Based Violence. 13 women survivors of violence, who are also long-term unemployed and single mothers, gained and kept their employment through participation in a 12-month **social mentoring program for economic empowerment**. These women have reported enhanced self-confidence in seeking employment and an improved financial situation resulting in a better quality of life and wellbeing.

Meeting in the local community in Shuto Orizari Municipality, North Macedonia, promoting help-seeking GBV services supported by UN and British Embassy in Skopje. Through this nationwide campaign consisting of statement cards with the agents of change and statement videos gained 1,67 million reach, and an estimated 455,000 unique individuals (around 25% of the overall population) have been communicated multiple times with and content of the campaign. *Credit: UNFPA*

OUTCOME 3

# Healthy environment



*By 2025, people in North Macedonia benefit from ambitious climate action, sustainably managed natural resources and well-preserved biodiversity through good environmental governance and disaster resilient communities.*

Contribution to



Sustainable Development Investment (1. Agriculture Development; Infrastructure, 3. Energy);  
Healthy Environment;  
Protection of Natural Disasters



11: Agriculture and Rural Development;  
12: Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy;  
15: Energy;  
27: Environment and Climate Change;  
26: Education and Culture;  
28: Consumer and Health Protection

2022 UN expenditure  
**\$10,291,711**

Development partners:

Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Labour and Social Policy; Ministry of Economy; Cabinet of Deputy President of the Government in charge of Economic Affairs; Crisis Management Centre; Directorate for Protection and Rescue; Local self-governments; Farmers' associations; Chambers of Commerce; NGOs, private sector



UN's support to reducing risk of floods continued, with various activities in Polog region and along the Drini River currently underway. As a result, more than 100,000 citizens in these regions have reduced flood risks. In the Drini River Basin, appropriate flood risk mitigation measures and activities were identified based on the UN supported hydrological and hydraulic models and flood hazard maps and comprehensive socio-economic and vulnerability assessment of communities within the basin. In Polog, investments were made both in flood risk prevention infrastructure and in capacitating relevant emergency agencies. For example, 40 ha of erosive land in the National Park Shar Mountain was afforested/reforested, the riverbed of Bogovinjka Reka was reconstructed, and the storm water network in Gostivar was cleaned. Further, relevant emergency agencies and other local institutions in the Polog region were capacitated through provision of equipment, organization of drills, and exchange of experience with colleagues from the region. *Credit: UNDP*

UN supported the establishment of a **comprehensive national policy on climate change**. After the adoption of the ambitious enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions (e-NDC), in 2022 the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning was supported to compile the **4th National Communication to UNFCCC (4th NC)**, which includes information on the National GHG Inventory, sectoral GHG emission projections and respective mitigation measures, as well as the country's vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change and proposed adaptation measures. Draft proposal for the development of a National Adaptation Plan was prepared and will be submitted to the GCF in the first quarter of 2023. UN also supported the enhancement of **climate change data** through the newly developed **Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) Platform**. The Platform enables the

country to report to the UNFCCC/Paris Agreement and the EU /Energy Community.

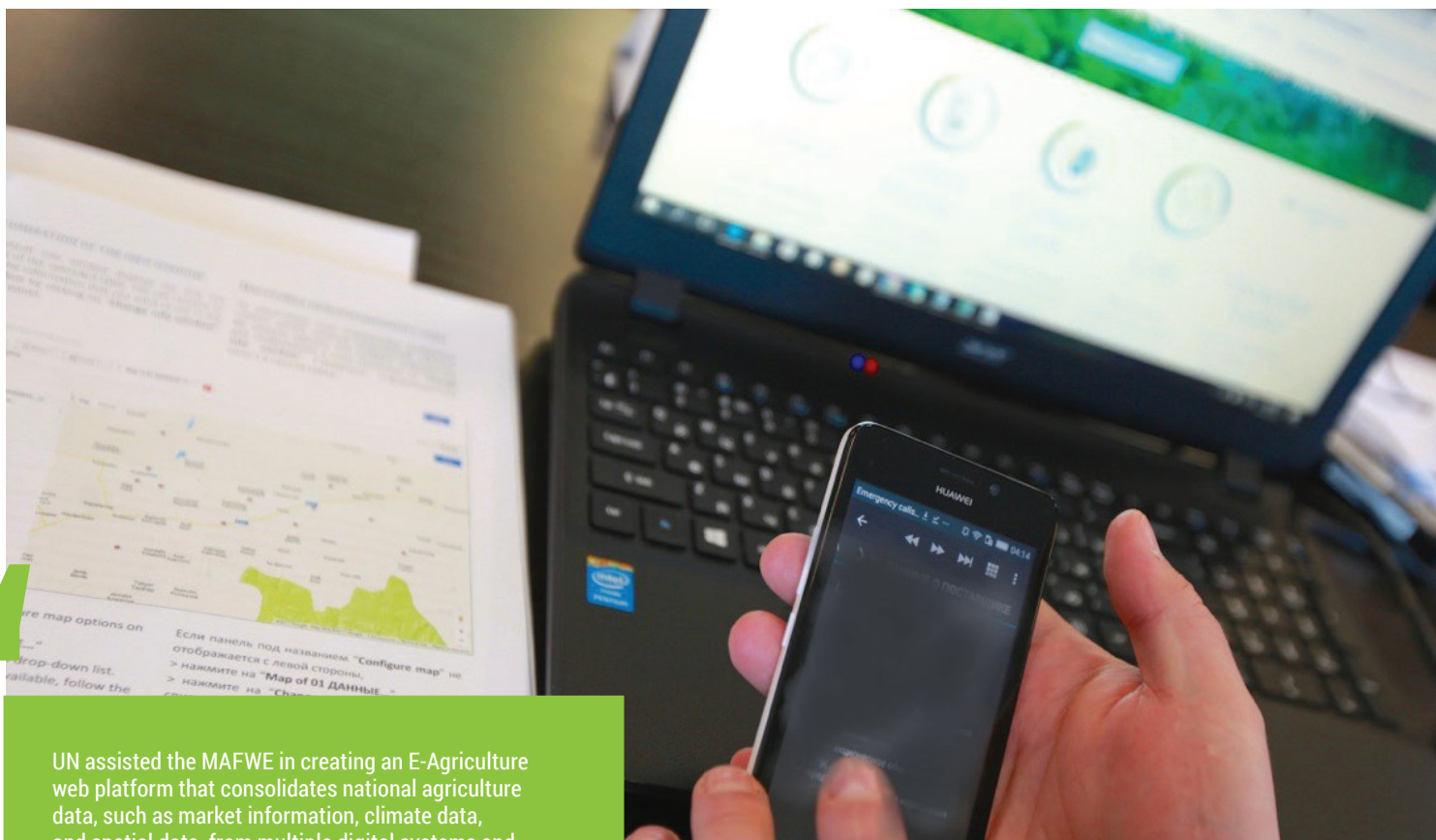
The awareness of children and adolescents on climate change and environment was strengthened through wide-reaching systemic approach. In 2022, the Bureau for Development of Education with UN support **embedded climate change and environment topics within the regular primary school natural science curricula** (2nd and 5th grade), adding to previously revised curricula for 1st and 4th graded in 2021, and, developed teaching materials for kindergartens. Over 120 pre-primary and primary school teachers were trained on integrating environmental concepts in teaching and they further disseminated the programme to 800 colleagues through professional learning communities, school visits and co-delivery. Further, a **network of science centres for experiential learning was formed**, to enable hands-on experience of youth and includes the Hydrobiological Institute - Ohrid, Natural History Museum - Skopje, National Park Galichica, Education Centre "Negrevo in Pehcevo, National Technics - Skopje, and Botanical Garden Natural Sciences Faculty - Skopje. Finally, 140,929 young people were reached and 5,113 engaged on social media through UN supported communication for development initiatives on youth led climate action.

To increase access to finance for climate change in the country, UN supported the country with preparatory and implementation activities to gain or increase access to four key global funds – **the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund, the Global Environment Fund and Joint SDG Fund**. Further, UN also supported the Deputy Prime Minister's Cabinet for

Economic Affairs, as National Designated Authority (NDA) for the GCF, and the Ministry of Finance to develop a **procedure for monitoring, tracking and streamlining of climate finance and a new web system** for climate finance data collection and reporting on the NDA webpage [www.greendevopment.mk](http://www.greendevopment.mk). To enable private sector transformation and engagement towards green and carbon-neutral economy, UN conducted a climate technology assessment for the industrial sector and continued to provide technical assistance and performance-based financial rewards to companies. Further, UN supported the Ministry of Economy and the Energy Agency to develop secondary legislation on Energy Audits of large enterprises; and the development of the first online toolkit for private sector engagement in climate action.

To fight the depletion of the ozone layer, UN supported the review of national legislation and data collection on ozone depleting substances, a Rulebook on licenses for management of refrigerants and/or products containing refrigerants, and a Study on refrigerant waste quantities. Moreover, the UN supported the monitoring and permanent control of consumption of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC) and other substances that deplete the ozone layer (evaluation of 50 import licenses) as well as monitoring of the recovery and recycling scheme with 25,009 kg of controlled substances and their blends. **Service shops** were assessed to prepare granting of recovery and recycling equipment.

In terms of climate change adaptation, most UN support was focused on **greater resilience of the agriculture sector and of urban areas**. In 2022 a national e-Agri platform was launched by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy



UN assisted the MAFWE in creating an E-Agriculture web platform that consolidates national agriculture data, such as market information, climate data, and spatial data, from multiple digital systems and databases. The platform will provide policy-makers with insights to develop policies and measures for a sustainable agriculture transition. *Credit: FAO*

with UN support. The platform informs policymakers in creating sustainable agriculture policies and enables farmers to improve their farms' environmental sustainability, productivity and income. The [E-agri platform](#) integrates global and national agriculture, meteorological, climate and spatial data including the global [Earth Map platform](#). Further, UN supported the government in promoting climate-tolerant seed systems through completion of **legal analysis of the national seed legislation**, and on-farm demonstrations and training of farmers, agricultural producers, seed farm representatives, agricultural cooperatives, and National Extension Agency representatives in partnership with the UKIM Institute of Agriculture. Further, proposal for improvement of the irrigation, land and water management in Radovish was prepared.

In terms of **urban resilience**, the City of Skopje was supported to expand the base of **environmental data, information and studies needed for informed decision making**, such as a Biotope Map, Inventory of Riparian Habitats, Groundwater Study, Water Management Strategy, Study of possible transmission paths of six-valent chrome in Zeden Mountain underground waters and their impact on Rasche spring, Strategic planning document for redesign of public spaces, as well as the technical documentation for a green corridor along the Serava and Lepenec Rivers. Pilot urban resilience measures to reduce the effects of **urban heat islands** were also supported i.e. **two green roofs on Gradski Trgovski Centar and on Dom na Kultura "Koco Racin"** and **greening of slopes of Kale Skopje Fortress**. Further, **energy efficiency of the building complex of the Government and Presidency** was enhanced through implementation of energy management system and ISO 50001 certification.

With UN support, capacity of national institutions to strengthen **resilience of biosphere reserves and world heritage sites** vis-a-vis climate change and disaster risk was strengthened and a South-East Europe network of practitioners was formed.

In terms of **integrated, sustainable and inclusive management of natural resources, significant increase of the area under protection to 13.9%** of the country's territory, from baseline of 10.34% in 2019 is already achieved (**76% achievement of the SDCF Outcome Indicator**: Proportion of country area this is designated as protected), mainly thanks to the proclamation of the new National Park Shar Mountains in 2021, supported by the UN through preparation of the Valorisation Study. The UN support to the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning continued in 2022 focusing on establishment of relevant institutions and implementation capacity of the Shar Mountains National Park, through development of a draft Management Plan for the Park, to enable the effective protection of this biosphere. Further, UN supported the preparation of a **re-valorisation study for Ohrid Lake**, the main technical document for the re-proclamation of Ohrid Lake as Monument of Nature, the drafting of a Management Plan and facilitated the commitment of mayors of municipalities around the lake to jointly protect and restore the lake (Ohrid, Struga and Debrca). Rangers, protected area representatives, members of mountaineering associations and local women have been capacitated on effective management of protected areas.

With UN support, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning strengthened the national policy and management of **forest ecosystems** towards greater forest conservation and plant, bird and animal habitats protection. **Sustainable Forest Management Guidelines** for two pilot sites (Bukovikj and Belasica) were drafted. Further, **188 high nature value forests** of almost 56 000 ha and **old individual trees with exceptional natural characteristics** and localities with important plant communities were valorised. To ensure uninterrupted food

access, breeding and reduction of traffic accidents mortality of large carnivores (specifically for Balkan lynx and brown bear), UN identified and recommended protection measures for two pilot corridors and developed a manual for design of green crossings for wildlife / bio corridors over main road and railway infrastructure. The recommendations were taken forward by the relevant institutions - PE State Roads, PE National Forests and several hunting associations for implementation. Further, specific actions for biodiversity protection of reptiles and amphibians were catalysed through the development of the **first ever National Red Books of Reptiles and Amphibians**, which analyse status, trends and threats to these species and contribute to their protection.

## 56,000 ha

forests and individual trees were valorised

Due to the importance of land protection as a key medium for ensuring biodiversity, UN supported the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and select municipalities in pioneering work on establishing the policy framework for strengthening **soil protection and land degradation neutrality**. In 2022, UN supported the **draft Law on Soil Protection** and the update of **Local Environmental Action Plans** for Arachinovo, Saraj, Zhelino, Jegunovce and Lipkovo to include approaches for erosion control and torrent water. With UN support, North Macedonia has produced the **first National Report to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**.

## 40%

reduction in air pollution in terms of PM10 in a Skopje suburb through UN support

Significant progress was also achieved in terms of **reduction of air pollution, with annual fine particulate matter PM10 reduced from 51.32 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2019 to 35.91 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (SDCF Outcome Indicator: Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter PM 10 fully achieved and SDG Target 11.2)**. The UN contributed to this positive development, through improvements in the overall policy framework and piloting work on household heating in the most polluted suburb Lisiche of the capital city Skopje. Thanks to UN support, **market operators have changed practices and included new efficient heating and cooking appliances** on the market, after being trained on these technologies and their comparative selling points and incentivised through new legislative framework that requires sales channels to promote energy efficient appliances. The subsidy schemes for **energy-efficient improvements in residential buildings** for low- income and better-off families was successfully piloted in Lisiche, resulting in **40% reduction** in air pollution in terms of PM10 (60.359 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2020 vs. 35.5 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2021) in this area and **60% decrease** in polluting emissions (5.56 t in 2021 vs. 2.23 t in 2021). As part of this pilot activity, 399 households, including economically vulnerable households were supported to replace inefficient heating and to implement energy efficiency. Finally, a **Source Apportionment Study** was developed, analysing the sources of the air pollution and informing the Plan of Action for the City of Skopje. A **national online platform on air pollution** was developed to facilitate dialogue between the Government, civil society, private sector and academia.

Partial progress is noted in the decrease of the generalized **disaster risk** with the INFORM Risk Index value for the country slightly improved at 2.4 points in 2022, but still away from

the 2.0 target (SDCF Outcome Indicator: INFORM Risk Index, 33% achievement level). The reforms of the overall crisis management system are still on hold and such a situation is hampering the achievement of the targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. In this context, the UN is one of the few organisations, which have supported the country in building resilience, with focus on **reducing risk of epidemics and of major floods**, through establishment of comprehensive system and set of measures to respond to these types of disaster risk. Several important policy documents and guidelines for prevention of flood risk were developed with UN support. These include the outline of a **National Flood Risk Mitigation Strategy**, **draft Regulation for Preparation of Municipal Flood Defence Plans**, and **draft Guidance for Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction in Urban Planning**.

In 2022, UN continued to support the building of an effective and efficient system for **detection and response to epidemics**, as one of the sources of disaster risks. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the Institute for Public Health, the UN established and capacitated the **Public Health Emergency Operation Centre** and enabled **real-time data exchange on diseases** within the public health laboratory network, through their digitalization. This significantly increases the country's preparedness and response capacity for epidemics.

UN's support to **reducing risk of floods** and resilience building continued, with various activities in Polog region and in the Drini River Basin currently underway. As a result, more than **100,000 citizens in these regions have benefited from reduced flood risks**. In Polog, investments were made both in

flood risk prevention infrastructure and in capacitating relevant emergency agencies. For example, **40 ha of erosive land in the National Park Shar Mountain was afforested/reforested**, **the riverbed of Bogovinjska Reka was reconstructed**, and **the storm water network in Gostivar was cleaned**. Further, **relevant emergency agencies and other local institutions in the Polog region were capacitated** through provision of equipment, organization of drills, and exchange of experience with colleagues from the region. In the Drini River Basin, appropriate flood risk mitigation measures and activities were identified based on the UN supported hydrological and hydraulic models and flood hazard maps and comprehensive socio-economic and vulnerability assessment of communities within the basin. The works for restoration of the River Sateska and its diversion in the old riverbed were completed.

In terms of **hazardous waste**, the cleaning up of the environmental hot spot OHIS (old chemical factory complex), polluted with cancerous lindane (HCH), has started. The clean-up will contribute to solving the long-standing problem of exposure to this toxic substance for the densely populated urban areas in the capital of the country. After previous preparatory infrastructure activities, UN organised **effective removal of 1,083 tons of HCH waste and HCH contaminated soil in 2022**. This activity will continue in 2023. Capacity building of government officials and statisticians on e-waste statistics was also supported by the UN at the regional level, to ensure improved overview of national **e-waste dynamics** and management to feed policy decisions at the national level. E-waste country profiles as well as a Western Balkans Regional E-Waste Monitor Report are planned to be produced in 2023.



The cleaning up of the OHIS environmental hot spot, polluted with cancerous lindane (HCH), has started. The clean-up will contribute to solving the long-standing problem of exposure to this toxic substance for the densely populated urban areas in the capital of the country. After previous preparatory infrastructure activities, UN organised effective removal of 1,083 tons of HCH waste and HCH contaminated soil in 2022. This activity will continue in 2023. *Credit: UNOPS*

OUTCOME 4

# Good governance



*By 2025, people in Whole country benefit from improved rule of law; evidence-based, anticipatory and gender-responsive policies; greater social cohesion; and effective service delivery by transparent, accountable and responsive institutions.*

Contribution to



- Rule of law, good governance, and anticorruption
- Promoting democracy and freedom
- EU integration



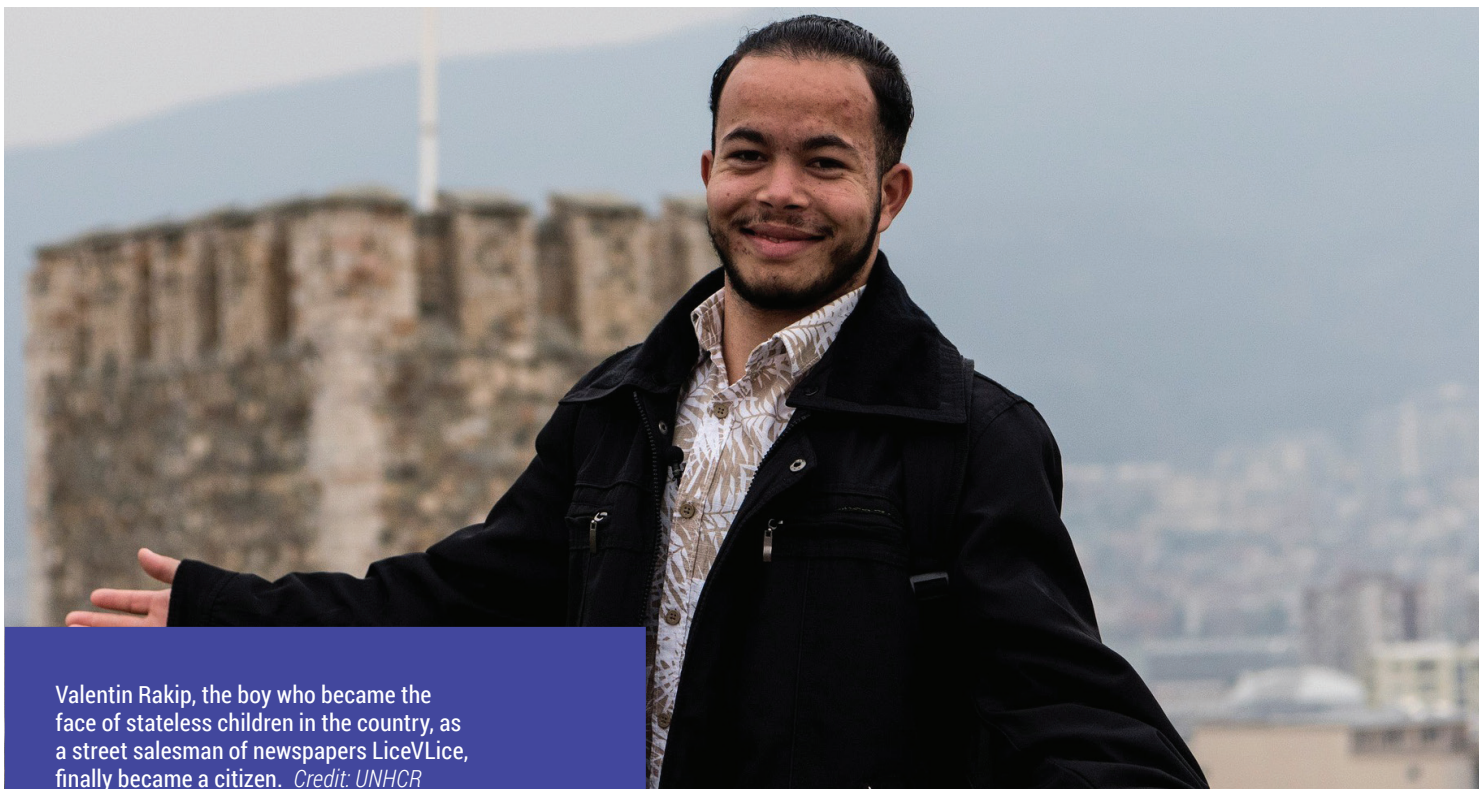
- Fundamentals first: Cluster 1
- 23: Judiciary and Fundamental Rights
- 24: Justice, Freedom and Security

2022 UN expenditure

**\$10,589,510**

Development partners:

Prime Minister's Cabinet, VPMs in charge of good governance and economic affairs, Secretariat for European Affairs, Ministries of Interior, Local Self-Government, Finance, Labor and Social Policy, Foreign Affairs, Information Society and Administration, Justice, Culture, Education and Science, Parliament, National Bank, SSO, Bureau for Regional Development, Public Revenue Office, State Audit Office, local government units, Academy of Judges and Prosecutors, Ombudsman, National Non-Discrimination Coordination Body, NHRIs, Inter-ministerial WG for adoption of Migration Policy, Judiciary, Public Prosecutors Office, Prosecution on Organized Crime and Corruption, Customs Agency, WCO, INTERPOL, National Commission for UNESCO, BAR association, MYLA, OPDs, Association of Finance Officers (AFO), Association of Units of Local Self Government, civil society and academia



Valentin Rakip, the boy who became the face of stateless children in the country, as a street salesman of newspapers LiceVLice, finally became a citizen. *Credit: UNHCR*

North Macedonia gained the reform momentum with the start of EU accession screening and negotiation processes. UN activities contributed further to aligning legal, policy and institutional frameworks with the EU acquis and international standards that advanced **fundamental rights, gender equality, non-discrimination, access to justice**, which are central for EU accession and the achievement of SDGs. Inclusive and transparent governance boosted the enjoyment of rights and meaningful participation of people, enabling women, youth,

persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups to have a say in policy and decision making at central and local level. **More than 100 people facing discrimination and exclusion** - women and girls, persons with disabilities, victims of gender-based violence and human trafficking, persons belonging to certain ethnic minorities, like Roma - were empowered to avail protection from unequal treatment in the realization of their rights. **190 persons were granted citizenship** because of legislative interventions. UN, jointly with national and

international partners, contributed to the development of a new strategy for disability rights and inclusion, and supported the national framework for monitoring the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) increasing opportunities for meaningful participation in policy making and decisions that affect their lives.

In the **judicial sector**, UN support resulted in a stronger criminal justice protection through new incriminations for online and offline violence against women and children. The **justice for children** was transformed into a non-punitive and restorative system, where the interests of children in conflict with the law are a primary consideration. To sustain such systemic change, new National Strategy for Prevention and Justice for Children development was supported and 350 justice and social welfare professionals were trained, who have increasingly applied a multisectoral and trauma-informed approach in dealing with children at risk, and those in conflict or in contact with the law. This led to 25% increase of alternative measures over custodial sentence. The multimedia campaign **“Just a child”** raised awareness of the life-time consequences of punitive measures and adverse childhood experiences. The justice professionals’ skills were scaled up in **countering serious and transnational crimes**, including illicit drug and arms trafficking, human trafficking, smuggling of migrants, and illicit financing of terrorisms. The access to and safeguards for victim’s rights have been strengthened with the new law on state-funded compensation of victims of violent crimes, developed with UN support.

“

## Fatmir Bytyqi

Deputy Prime Minister in Charge of Economic Affairs

I participated in the workshops (visioning workshops for the National Development Strategy) in Skopje, and I am especially proud to see many young people, people from different ethnic groups, representatives of the vulnerable groups of citizens who discussed together and shared their ideas. Every suggestion, every vision about the future development of the country is a treasure indeed, since it will help us for the first time to draft a document which will present a long-term and comprehensive roadmap about the policies we have to make in the next 20 years. *Credit: UNDP*

The increased capacities and knowledge of the government, judiciary, national human rights and other independent institutions, and civil society leveraged a positive climate for change, innovation and progress on strategic national priorities. UN supports the development of the first **National Development Strategy** setting the country’s development footprint for the next two decades. More than 3,000 citizens and multisector development actors were engaged in the NDS dream labs and consultations creating the future, in parallel with the baseline analysis. The new Strategy for Digital Transformation (ICT) 2023-2027 was drafted with UN support. In support of the EU accession process, UN continued bolstering the approximation of legislation and **EU negotiation skills** of the Parliament and SEI in prioritizing technical assistance and streamlining expertise and resources in critical reform areas. The capacities of SEI, Sector Working

Groups, and other government institutions for **integration of the EU Gender Equality Acquis** in national laws and policies were strengthened. Active engagement of civil society and media in the EU accession process was promoted, through a grant scheme that supported lobbying, advocacy, oversight activities and capacity building at the national and local level. Under SEI lead, a cooperation network of national institutions participating in the EU integration process was established.

The **public finance management reform** notes improvement in the transparency in public spending, auditing, transfer pricing, indicators for measuring informal economy, and continued into a new reform cycle in 2022-2025. The system was further strengthened with the new Organic Budget Law which includes gender equality as of the key budgetary principles, and a requirement for consideration of gender equality priorities in budget planning and execution. The first Gender Performance Audit was conducted by the State Audit Office providing recommendations for more effective Government measures for advancing gender equality. The integrated governance approach impacted the **local governance system** and decentralization. With UN support, dashboard for municipalities is developed, that is now used by 50 municipalities, to share information on budget expenditures; enabling citizens to monitor public expenditures on quarterly level. Additional finances for the municipalities were secured by introducing two new funding mechanisms. A methodology for comprehensive assessment of the local government system and regulatory impact assessment was designed to generate evidence and data for reorganization of local competencies. The model of e-municipality was expanded with new digitalized public services for more than 300,000 people. The number of municipalities, which use E-dashboard for municipal budget execution, has reached at total of 46 municipalities. In the primary education, a new formula for allocating funding of municipalities was developed for all primary schools to deliver good quality education in line with international standards that will be implemented as of next year.

The **new Gender Equality Strategy (2022-2027)** was adopted emphasising the importance of adequate financing for gender equality across the 17 thematic priority areas. Gender equality was integrated throughout all areas of the National Development Strategy, at its initial stage of development. Representatives of 16 public institutions and other stakeholders gained knowledge on gender statistics and gender analysis. The capacities of 169 representatives of state institutions on GRB in the sectoral planning and budgeting processes were strengthened. Sustainability of results and a stronger local ownership of gender mainstreaming was achieved with the creation of gender champions in 7 institutions, who completed the first Training of Trainers on gender mainstreaming in IPA processes. At local level, 307 representatives, 212 public officials and 95 municipal councillors were trained on gender-responsive budgeting and gender equality. **All of these results together with the work of the other partners and national institutions have contributed to improved Gender Equality Index (2022)** measured for a second round, showing 2.5 points increase from 2019 index, reaching out 64.5, approaching the national target of 65 points.

The UN’s forward looking, transparent and participatory approach in policy making driven by data, made the national policies more effective and relevant for the emerging challenges. Significant efforts were vested in increasing institutional data-related capacities and the use of census

data and digitalization of statistical processes. The **first official publication of the results of 2021 Census of the Population, Households and Dwellings**, issued with UN support contributed to a better understanding of key demographic tendencies in the country and their impact on policy and decision making. A **National Roadmap on Migration Statistics** and Programme for Statistical Surveys 2023-2027 were produced in line with national and international standards. The potential use of alternative and innovative sources of data, like remittances, big data was explored. Justice institutions were capacitated to collect, integrate and generate child protection data related to children in contact with the law and child victims. At local level, the Municipal Development Index (MDI) was updated to reflect the 2021 Census data, and the use of gender statistics and analysis was promoted. Access to support services for women and children, victims of gender-based and domestic violence improved.

## 74 policy recommendations

supported

Jointly with civil society and grassroots movements, UN advocated for marginalized communities, positive narratives and a greater **social cohesion**. 74 policy recommendations across 16 municipalities were a result of nearly 4,000 women voicing their needs to local decision-makers for more gender-sensitive public infrastructure, transportation, and services.

The UN promoted **youth empowerment and participation** in shaping the new National Youth Strategy and in other policy decisions, along with establishing of local youth councils in five municipalities. 87 public events and campaigns generated positive narratives and perceptions of vulnerable groups and persons left behind, including the milestone #IBelong campaign to end statelessness in the country by 2024. On the Human Rights Day, 300 young people were standing up for their and the rights of peers under the slogan "Dignity, Freedom and Justice for All."

The UN facilitated the country to endorse the **Western Balkans Anti-Corruption and Illicit Financial Flow Roadmap**, and to benefit from the regional exchange. The corruption risks assessments were undertaken in public enterprises, and more than 200 civil servants, mayors and municipal councillors increased their knowledge on local governance, oversight, anticorruption, and public finance management. Under the cross-border cooperation framework with Kosovo, 415 police officers from North Macedonia exchanged experiences with their peers in combatting illicit arms trafficking and joined forces in raising awareness on misuse of small arms and light weapons. Through joint UN efforts, national institutions were supported to follow-up on the recommendations for North Macedonia pertaining to the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption (Articles 7, 8 and 10; as well as articles 53 to 59). Capacity building activities were conducted with the Ministry of Justice in asset recovery and integrity in the public sector targeting CSOs, public administration and representatives from the justice and prosecution institutions.



Training of trainers for gender-responsive budgeting with participants from the Western Balkans and Turkey, April 2022. Credit: UN Women



# Financing & partnerships

Throughout 2022, UN initiated and implemented several interventions aimed to channel more efficient financing for sustainable development from public and private sources.

The new Organic Budget Law (OBL) adopted by the Parliament in September 2022, associated with new Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS), provides an opportunity to enhance information about SDG financing. The new PFM reform includes gender equality among the key budgetary principles and foresees gender tagging of budget programmes within the IFMIS. In this context, UN continued to build capacity for gender-based budgeting with central and local institutions, including by supporting the establishment of the Resource Center on Gender Responsive Policymaking and Budgeting.

For the first time in the country and with UN support, an expenditure analysis to assess the adequacy, efficiency, effectiveness, and equity of government budget in justice for children was developed and used to inform the next stages of the justice for children reform. This strategic document assists national and municipal institutions with better tracking, planning, and executing expenditures related to justice for children, and will, in the long term, improve the scope and scale of preventative programs, as well as the delivery of adequate services and support to children in conflict and in contact with the law.

To improve funding for critical services at local level, the developed software for valuation and administration of property tax in the municipality of Sveti Nikole was expanded with administrative tax modules that allows to further increase the tax basis and local tax collection for more than 200%.

The new formula for allocating primary education funding to municipalities, based on the extensive analyses of the public spending challenges, was endorsed by the Ministry of Education and Science. Amending the current salary-heavy budget (89%), the revised formula will increase funding for professional and career development of teacher workforce, enable schools to provide more hours of teaching and ensure efficient resource allocation to provide good quality education. It will also ensure fairness and equity by providing more adequate allocation for schools with more languages of instruction, for children with disabilities, for students who need to travel to school and for children from poor households.

While continuing the preparatory work to establish the innovative Green Financing Facility, UN also commissioned a Study for innovative ways of financing strategic documents that was consulted with large number of stakeholders from the institutions and the private sector. The study will serve as basis for developing financial plans to support implementation of the forthcoming National Development Strategy.

To enhance the contribution of the private sector with the country's sustainable development, UN initiated a survey to

explore if and/or how businesses in North Macedonia are currently working to align activities with SDGs. One of the findings indicate that 51% of the respondents are not familiar with SDGs and what they represent, suggesting a space for substantial engagement with the private sector, starting by raising awareness about Agenda 2030 and showcasing examples of private sector contributions.

With support of the Joint SDG Fund, UN commissioned a comprehensive analysis to assess the effects of the food, energy and finance crisis in a targeted, sustainable and evidence-based manner. Having in mind increasingly scarce budget resources, the project "Identifying Systemic Pathways for Responding to the Global Crisis on Food, Energy and Finance in North Macedonia" produced an analysis of the anti-crisis measures and recommended ways and modalities to make these measures and wider policies more effective and efficient, including by improving the targeting to the needs of the most vulnerable.

In terms of partnership, beyond the regular engagement of UN entities with partners, mid-year review of the Joint workplan implementation and Annual Planning Stakeholder Workshops were organised, bringing together relevant UN entities, government, CSO and international partners to jointly reflect and plan UN SDCF implementation. Further, the UN team discussed current approaches and gaps within each Outcome Group as part of the regular monitoring of the UN SDCF Resource Mobilisation and Partnership Strategy and prioritised engagement with private sector as an area in which more focused approach of the UN would be explored in 2023.



2022 UN Annual Conference dedicated on "Identifying systematic pathways for responding to the Global crisis on Food, Energy and finance in North Macedonia". Credit: UN RCO

# UN coherence, effectiveness & efficiency

In 2022, UN North Macedonia – in strong partnership with the Government – furthered implementing the UN development system reform to achieve greater coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency of its in-country work. Year two of SDCF implementation was characterized by consolidating collective and individual entities' efforts to translate the reform principles into practice – through coordinated joint planning, further roll-out of tools and guidance and tools, with continuous focus on results and efficient delivery.

## Programmatic alignment and coherence

A joint workplan (JWP), which compiles all UN development activities within a given year, following the collective discussion and alignment through a consultative process within the UN and with national partners, annually operationalizes SDCF.

2022 JWP was the second North Macedonia annual plan, endorsed by the SDCF JSC in March 2022, after being consulted with more than 90 UN and Government partners and reviewed during mid-year consultations in June and July. The priority activities, benchmarks and targets were compiled in one place and served as a tool for enhancing UN accountability towards all partners, which was emphasized as a welcome development by some donors locally. The 2022 JWP continued to promote collective UN action towards shared inter-agency results and goals, with UN as an enabler and provider of policy advice and expertise.

The UN continued with dedicated efforts to develop joint programmes of multiple UN agencies, to enable the provision of a comprehensive set of UN knowledge and expertise to the country on complex, multi-faceted challenges. In 2022, the UN had seven joint programmes in implementation.

## Transparency and accountability

The JWP 2022 process and its outputs continued to promote the transparency of UN work, which is key to the UN development system reform. Detailed information – including financials – continued to be available to all partners during the

planning and implementation phase, including through public channels. This cemented accountability as the key driver for delivering results and continued to promote collaboration, partnerships, information exchange and avoiding overlaps in programming.

In October, for example, the UN Resident Coordinator hosted a briefing for UN member states and international partners on UN development system progress in North Macedonia, which included the overview of the various knowledge and information products developed by the UN, and the ongoing programming and advocacy activities. Furthermore, key contextual changes and developments that serve as guidance for UN joint work-plans and as resource for national policy making were presented ([2022 Common Country Analysis update](#)).

The funding framework information – key for UN accountability and transparency through providing a single reference and overview of the SDCF funding situation and required, available and projected financial resources, including the amount, source, duration, and sequence – continued to be regularly collected and embedded in the Joint Workplans in 2022. Significant efforts were invested to ensure quality of financial data, cross-checking, and validation within UN and with all donors.

UN North Macedonia also continued to roll out [UN-INFO](#) – UNCT's central online planning, monitoring, and reporting platform that digitizes the joint results frameworks, strategies and other operational coordination tools – in 2022 and promoting it as a key tool to track, support and provide a one-stop-shop for all information on UN's work in the country, together with the in-country tri-lingual corporate website (<https://northmacedonia.un.org>).

## Joint governance and coordination

The SDCF governance structure ensures strategic and day-to-day alignment between UN entities and with all other stakeholders. The March UN-Government high-level Joint Steering Committee (JSC) provided strategic guidance and 2022 JWP endorsement, which was operationalized through regular bilateral and multilateral interaction and coordination between UN entities and partner ministries and other institutions.



Four SDCF Outcome Results Groups (OGs), the main coordination mechanism to ensure coherent UN system-wide approach of analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring at an outcome level, continued their work and met regularly – for internal UN engagement and for joint planning that engages relevant Government counterparts at the outcome level.

UNCT remained the backbone for UN in-country alignment, supported by the Programme Management Team (PMT) and OGs on programmatic opportunities and challenges; Communications Group and Management, Evaluation and Learning Group on advocacy and data; and multiple internal thematic groups. The streamlined and regularized internal structure continued to enhance coherence and alignment of UN work across outcomes and mandates and the country-level implementation of the UN Development System reform, and supported processes such as the National Development Strategy, Transforming Education Summit consultations and others.

The strengthened role of the UN RC remained key for enhanced leadership and improved positioning of the overall work and impact of the UN work in the country 2022. This has only been possible due to the active support for the UN development system reform by the Government, and political support and resources invested globally by donors since 2019, including through the UN Special Purpose Trust Fund that provides funding for the strengthened RC System.

## Joint advocacy

Joint advocacy and public outreach activities to enhance UN visibility and bring its work closer to people continued to rely on storytelling on the in-country corporate [website](#) (social media the web-based Sustainable Development Bulletin, dispatched regularly to more than 2,500 subscribers. UN communications teams continued to invest in collective tools to support data driven communications and advocacy (enhanced press clipping, social media listening services).

In addition to regular campaigns – 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence and campaigns around various international days such as the Human Rights Day and the World Environment Day – communications were significantly strengthened during the UN week with one major event in Skopje and for the first time with two events outside of Skopje, one in Kavadarci and one in Struga. New long-term initiative and campaign on environment and climate change was also launched, as a joint advocacy with the EU Delegation. Environment and climate change was also the theme of the UN week activities and included an extremely attractive drawing contest intended to stimulate young children and adolescents to learn more about the SDGs and the challenges we are facing in ensuring protection of the environment and in minimising the effects of climate change. Over 200 children from all corners of the country submitted drawings and the most successful were also invited to the main celebration of the UN Day in 2022, held in Skopje.

The United Nations North Macedonia has made significant strides in strengthening its social media presence and outreach in 2022, growing the fanbase on Facebook and Twitter by more than 10% on a year-to-year basis. The organization has recognized the power of social media in reaching a wid-



16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign. Credit: UN-RCO

er audience and engaging with the public on a more personal level.

One of the key benefits of the UN North Macedonia's social media presence is its ability to connect with young people, who are often the most active users of social media. By engaging with younger audiences, the organization can raise awareness about important issues and inspire a new generation of advocates for sustainable development, climate changes and human rights. Furthermore, the UN North Macedonia has been using social media to collaborate with other organizations, institutions, and stakeholders in promoting their goals and objectives. This has allowed UN North Macedonia to expand the outreach and establish new partnerships that can contribute to achieving UN's goals.

## Efficiencies

UN North Macedonia's delivery of the UN's global Efficiency Agenda is centred around the implementation of the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) 2.0, which is estimated to save \$1.3 million through eliminating transaction costs, saving staff time, and benefiting from economies of scale over the five-year period.

In 2022, the work was centred around the strengthened Operations Management Team (OMT), fully represented of all UN entities with operational presence in the country, Work progressed on the disability accessibility assessment of more than 30 event premises and hotels used by UN across North Macedonia, which add to the collective UN contribution to forwarding the rights of persons with disabilities. Contribution was also made to the healthier and greener environment through identifying collective ways for safe IT disposal used by several UN entities.

While impact of COVID-19 on working modalities decreased in 2022, ensuring business and operations continuity without interruption and at the same time safety and health of its staff remained a top priority. Flexible and remote working arrangements remained in place in select instances, paired with gradual transition back-to-office. At the end of 2022, UN resident workforce in North Macedonia consisted of more than 320 national and international personnel – 56% female and 44% male.

# Evaluation and lessons learned

## PSD evaluation

The final independent evaluation of the strategy preceding SDCF, the 2016-2020 Partnership for Sustainable Development (PSD), was conducted at the end of 2019, with results informing SDCF development of the 2021- 2025 SDCF.

The PSD evaluation report listed five recommendation areas for UN to improve its results or coordination.

1. Strengthening of the inter-agency cooperation
2. Data management and programme design and monitoring
3. Sustainability of the undertaken interventions
4. Sustainability of financing; and
5. Strengthening UNCT role in coordination with development partners

UNCT has fully consider the five sets of evaluation recommendations. As in previous years, its observations gave the UN RC and UNCT North Macedonia a baseline overview and had further guided operations during 2022. By the end of 2022, UNCT fully achieved over 70% of the actions while the rest remain applicable and continue throughout the whole SDCF cycle.

An externally conducted evaluation of UNICEF supported interventions aiming to improve the inclusion of children

with disabilities concluded that the interventions contributed greatly to increasing the availability and supply of services as well as qualified human resources and significantly helped to positively shift the paradigm and improve public understanding on disability.

## Lessons learned

Close cooperation between UN entities usually emerges in those areas where there is a clear reform agenda, underpinned by a clearly identified problem and a strong commitment to change by the Government. National ownership is thus an important factor that shapes the interaction of UN entities at the country level.

Another vehicle for close, efficient, and joint UN work is the support received through joint funding sources. Pooled funds and other funding opportunities that support multi-entity proposals can serve as a convening tool that enables best use of cross-thematic UN expertise for addressing complex cross-cutting challenges.

UN can also become rapidly relevant and provide a major contribution in areas where it has had minimal engagement earlier. If there is a clear need in an area of UN expertise, capacity and experience, it is possible for UN entities to come together, coordinate effectively and efficiently deliver in close collaboration with each other.



One of the winning drawings provided by children on the UN environmental children's drawing contest ahead of the UN Day

# Finance & resource mobilization

## Financial overview

In 2022, \$37.4 million was made available to the UN North Macedonia, of which \$31.3 million was expended, resulting in 84% delivery rate. Looking at SDCF outcomes, good governance (\$10.6 million expended) and healthy environment (\$10.3 million) were the most resource-intensive, followed by inclusive prosperity (\$5.3 million) and quality services for all (\$5.1 million).

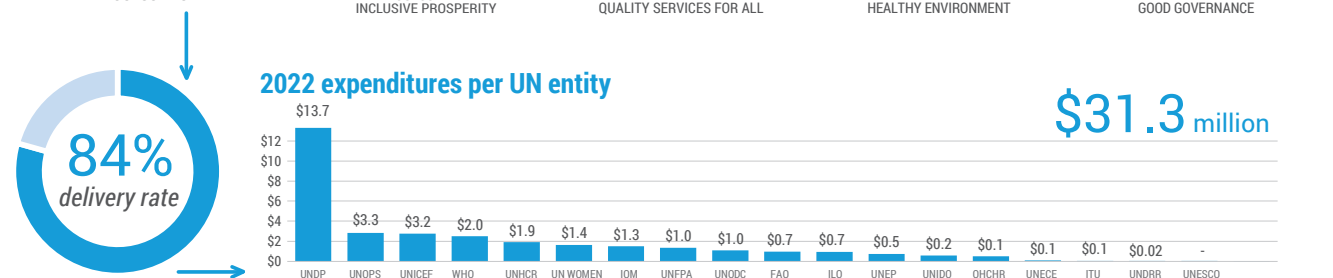
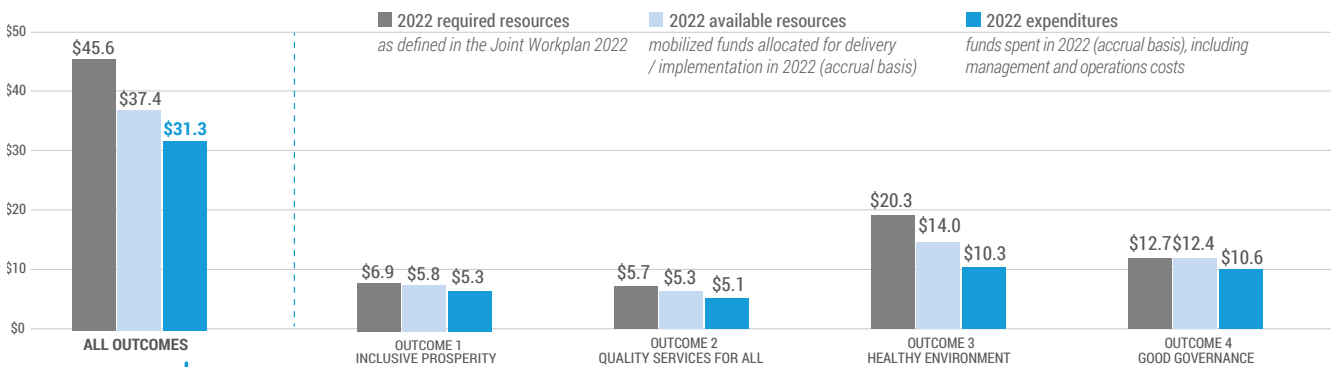
UN successfully mobilised 82% of the required (budgeted) resources for the year two of SDCF, enabling smooth implementation. 2022 UN North Macedonia activities were

received from 29 sources of financing. Most of the available funding was received in the form of project- and programme-specific funding (61%), followed by core funding (14%), government funding (11%), global vertical funds (7%), pooled funds (4%), and thematic funds (3%).

The top ten non-core/non-thematic funding sources based on expenditures in 2022 for UN work in North Macedonia were Switzerland, Sweden, North Macedonia, United States, European Union, Norway, United Kingdom, Global Environment Facility, Adaptation Fund and Slovakia.

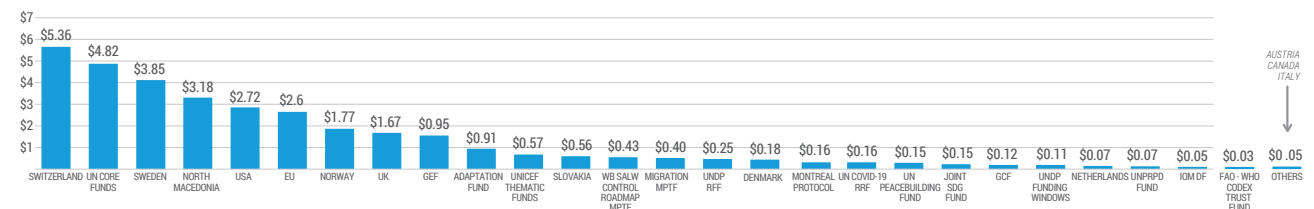
### 2022 required and available resources and expenditures

Data as of 31 March 2023, for 1 January – 31 December 2022, in million US\$



### 2022 expenditures per funding source

Data as of 31 March 2023, for 1 January – 31 December 2022, in million US\$



Source: UN North Macedonia, 2023 available funding and expenditures are based on UN entities' financial systems or financial statements information as of 31 March 2022. UNHCR expenditures are estimates based on historic delivery rate as their expenditure reporting is consolidated only in April.

# Resource mobilization

In late 2021, the UN North Macedonia developed a **UNSDCF Resource Mobilisation and Partnership Strategy (RMPS)**, outlines the objectives of the UN team in joint resource mobilization and partnership and defines focus activities and approaches to ensure a more coherent, streamlined and transparent approach. On resource mobilisation, four quantitative targets and two approaches have been defined. Reporting on progress in achieving these targets for the UNSDCF 2021 – 2025, as at end of year 2 of implementation is provided below.

The UN North Macedonia is largely on track in **mobilising the needed finance for the planned results under the UNSDCF 2021-2025 (RMPS Objective 1)**. At end 2022, USD 124.6 million were available for activities in the five-year period, or 70% of the USD 178 million required funding. At annual level, 82% of the required resources for 2022 were mobilised and made available, and 63% of the required resources for 2023 have been mobilised before the year begin (calculated based on the updated annual required resource target in JWPs 2022 and 2023). For the five-year duration of the SDCF, an overall funding gap of 53.6 million or 30% of the overall required funding remains to be mobilised. In terms of **quality of funding/funding mix**, most of the funding that has been received so far is in the form of non-core resources (\$108.4 million,87%). Among non-core funding sources, most contributions come from project and

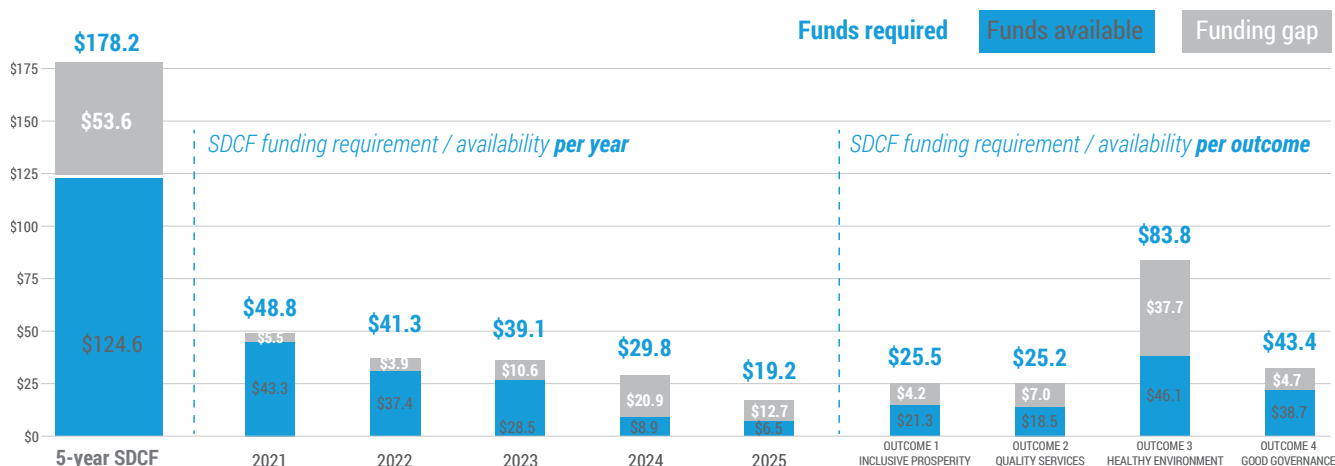
programme specific funding (54%), followed by government funding (14%), pooled funds (10%), global vertical funds (6%), thematic funds (3%), and symbolic private sector funds (less than 1%). The UN has already **succeeded in increasing government co-funding and pooled and vertical funds funding** and reduced reliance on earmarked project and programme funding, resulting in an **improved funding mix**.

The top 10 non-core funding sources for the period 2021-2025 as at end 2022 are Switzerland, North Macedonia, Sweden, European Union, Joint SDG Fund, United Kingdom, Global Environment Facility, United States, Norway, and Adaptation Fund.

UN North Macedonia continued its dedicated work on **increasing joint (multi-agency) programming**, and is in line with the **annual target defined under RMPS Objective 3**. Five new joint programme ideas/joint initiatives were developed in 2022 (two concepts related to human security, a concept on road safety, food-social–energy crisis and a joint initiative on Ohrid Feasibility Study) and four successfully were newly funded/resourced (green finance, main phase, regional youth programme, systemic pathways for the food-social-energy crisis, Ohrid Feasibility Study, innovations for reuse of waste). Significant new funding was mobilised in 2022 for joint programmes/initiatives in the value of **\$9.35 million**.

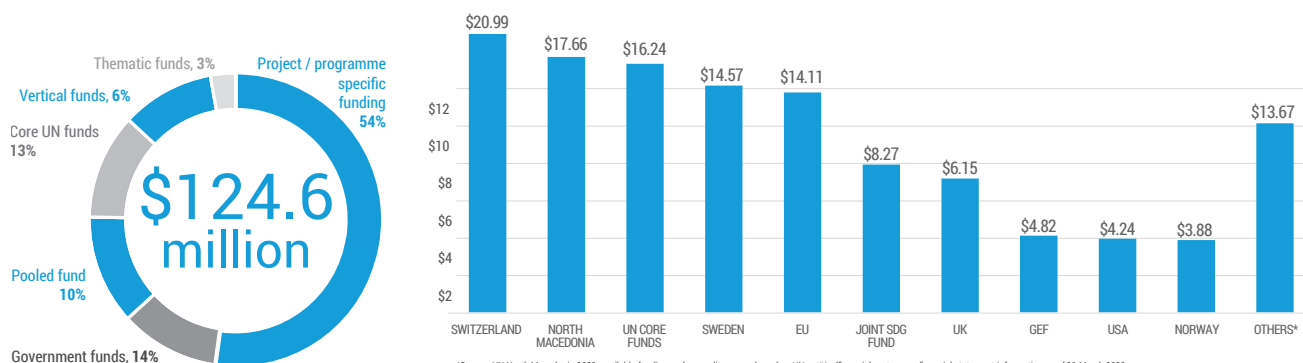
## 2021-2025 SDCF required and available resources

Data as of 31 March 2023 for 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2025, in million US\$



## 2021-2025 mobilized funds per funding modality and funding source

Data as of 31 March 2023, for 1 January – 31 December 2025, in million US\$



\*Source: UN North Macedonia 2023; available funding and expenditures are based on UN entities financial systems or financial statement information as of 31 March 2023

# UN in North Macedonia in 2023

In 2023, UN North Macedonia will continue to work closely with the Government and Macedonian society towards accelerated sustainable development. Targeted and focused expert advice and support, underpinned by the focus on leaving no one behind will remain the key pinnacle for engagement.

In that context, UN will work with partners to create internationally competitive and resilient SMEs, including in the creative and culture sectors. UN will continue engaging with the partners to enhance employability of vulnerable groups, such as youth, hard to employ people and people with disabilities with right set of skills, support services and lifelong learning; and assist the authorities to improve the quality of jobs, emphasising health and safety aspects. Gender-responsive business environment and agri/rural development policies, as well as supporting modern, standards-aligned regulatory framework and social services will remain in the core of UN policy work, while setting the base for digital development. To support a competitive rural economy activity, UN will continue to work on critical aspects of agricultural land consolidation and strengthened animal health management, also tackling food security in the context of the ongoing multidimensional crisis. Addressing adverse demographic aspects, UN will also support the authorities to facilitate productive engagement of the diaspora in the country development.

UN will continue to support the ongoing healthcare, education and social protection reforms that address systemic challenges. The new policy development and analytical unit that will be established in the Ministry of Health with UN technical and advisory support will aim to enhance the capacities in addressing the key health system challenges. Education reform support to primary school optimization and improving the budgetary allocations system in primary and secondary education will be enhanced. Support for policies and service development to improve the protection of most vulnerable categories will continue with focus on prevention from all forms of violence as well as persons with disabilities, migrants and asylum seekers.

A number of new flagship activities are planned to start in the area of environment and climate change, in addition to continuing programmes: two programmes for addressing air pollution throughout the country, with significant investments in green heating, green transport, and public building energy efficiency; extension of green loans for SMEs and households through the Green Financing Facility; significant investment in improved irrigation infrastructure in Radovish for more climate resilient agriculture; new programme for implementation of the enhanced NDC as well as the preparatory activities for the National Adaptation Plan; comprehensive support to Prespa Lake region, Feasibility Study for the Ohrid Coastal Urban Plan; and the drafting of a National Strategy on Soil Protection. Work will continue on environmental education, preservation of natural resources and biodiversity, disaster risk reduction and hazardous and e-waste management.

UN remains committed to support the finalization of the National Development Strategy (NDS) through open and inclusive debates, both with experts and citizens; and assist with building strong, resilient, and transparent institutions with

a clear vision and able to bring a transformative change on a long run, but also in the lives of people, especially stateless people. Months leading towards the fourth Universal Periodic Review of the country will be used as an opportunity for enhanced engagement and support to the country in meeting its human rights commitments. In particular, UN is committed to support the Government to end statelessness by 2024 and will continue to work closely with national authorities in finding systemic solutions for undocumented and stateless people to have legal identity and enjoy full range of rights.



One of the winning drawings provided by children on the UN environmental children's drawing contest ahead of the UN Day

# Annexes

## [1] UN North Macedonia partners

### Government and state agencies

Academy of Judges and Prosecutors  
 Administrative Court  
 Agency for Real State Cadastre  
 Agency for Youth and Sports  
 Anti-Discrimination Commission  
 Bureau for Regional Development  
 Bureau of Education  
 Centre for Social Work  
 Centres for Development of the planning regions  
 City of Skopje  
 Crisis Management Centre  
 Customs Agency  
 Directorate for Protection and Rescue  
 Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of Economic Affairs  
 Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration  
 Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of Political System and Good Governance  
 E-health Directorate  
 Employment Services Agency  
 Food and Veterinary Agency  
 Fund for Innovation and Technological Development  
 Health Insurance Fund  
 High Administrative Court  
 Institute of Social Activities  
 Inter-ministerial Working Group for the Adoption of Migration Policy  
 Judiciary  
 Local Self-government Units  
 Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy  
 Ministry of Culture  
 Ministry of Defence  
 Ministry of Economy  
 Ministry of Education and Science  
 Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning  
 Ministry of Finance  
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
 Ministry of Health  
 Ministry of Information Society and Administration  
 Ministry of Interior  
 Ministry of Justice  
 Ministry of Labour and Social Policy  
 Ministry of Local Self-Government  
 Minister without Portfolio Responsible for Diaspora  
 Municipal Centres for Social Welfare (MCSW)  
 Municipalities  
 National Bank  
 National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism and Counterterrorism and Inter-Agency Working Group on Reintegration  
 National Committee for CVE and CT  
 National Coordination Body on Implementation of the CRPD  
 National Extension Agency  
 National Public Health Institute  
 Parliament  
 President's Cabinet  
 Prime Minister's Cabinet  
 Public Prosecutors Office for Prosecution of Organized Crime and Corruption  
 Public Revenue Office  
 Regional Employment Offices  
 Secretariat for European Affairs  
 State Audit Office

State Labour Inspectorate  
 State Statistical Office  
 Supreme Court  
 Office of the National Coordinator for CVE and CT  
 Vocational Training Institutes

### Civil society organizations

National Youth Delegate to the UN General Assembly  
 Akcija Zdruzenska  
 Association of Finance Officers (AFO)  
 Association of Social Workers  
 Association of Special Educators  
 Association of Units of Local Self Government  
 Association ZMAI  
 Balkan Foundation for Sustainable Development  
 Centre for Research and Policy Making  
 Chambers of Commerce  
 Connecting Natural Values and People - Office  
 Council for Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency - SPPMD  
 Employers' organizations  
 Farmers' associations  
 Healthy Options Project Skopje  
 Helsinki Committee for Human Rights  
 International Union for Conservation of Nature - Eastern Europe and Central Asia  
 IZBOR STRUMICA  
 Macedonian Ecological Society  
 ESSA Synergy Skopje  
 Macedonian Medical Association  
 Macedonian Association of Gynecologists and Obstetricians  
 Macedonian Red Cross  
 Macedonian Young Lawyers Association  
 National Federation of Farmers  
 National Roma Centrum  
 NGO SEGA PRILEP  
 Ombudsman  
 Open the Windows  
 Organizations of persons with disabilities  
 Producer organizations  
 Professional Associations  
 Trade Union of Health Workers  
 Trade Unions  
 Youth Educational Forum

### Academia

Association for Research, Communications and Development  
 Faculty of Agriculture and Food Science  
 Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering  
 Faculty of Law Iustinianus Primus  
 Faculty of Veterinary Medicine - Skopje  
 Health Education and Research Association  
 Macedonian Academy of Science and Arts  
 Medical Faculty Skopje  
 South-East European University  
 State Institute of Agriculture  
 University Clinic of Psychiatry  
 University Clinic of Gynecology and Obstetrics  
 University Goce Delcevo, Shtip  
 University of Southampton

### Multipartner councils

Economic and Social Council of North Macedonia

Local Economic and Social Councils of North Macedonia  
 National Commission for UNESCO  
 National Coordination Body for Protection of Children from Abuse and Neglect  
 National Council for Gender Equality  
 National Tripartite Social and Economic Council  
 State Council for Prevention of Child Delinquency  
 UNESCO National Commission

### International partners

Austrian Embassy (ADA)  
 British Embassy  
 Central European Bank (CEB)  
 Consular Office of the Slovak Republic  
 Delegation of the European Union in North Macedonia (EUD)  
 Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-eastern Europe (DPPI SEE)  
 Embassy of France  
 Embassy of Sweden (SIDA)  
 Embassy of Switzerland (SDC, SECO)  
 Embassy of the Republic of Turkey  
 Embassy of the Russian Federation  
 European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)  
 European Investment Bank  
 European Training Foundation (ETF)  
 General Consulate of Belgium  
 Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF)  
 German Embassy  
 German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs  
 German Federal Ministry of Health  
 Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean  
 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ)  
 International Centre for Migration  
 INTERPOL  
 Policy Development (ICMPD)  
 International Union for Conservation of Nature, Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (IUCN – ECARO)  
 Lions Club International Foundation  
 Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI)  
 Netherlands Embassy  
 Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS)  
 OSCE Mission to Skopje  
 Royal Norwegian Embassy  
 Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO)  
 Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP)  
 United States Embassy (USAID)  
 UNECE Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency

### Private sector and others

Bar association  
 Business Confederation of Macedonia  
 Chamber of Mediators  
 Diaspora  
 Doctor's Chamber  
 Media  
 Primary care facilities  
 Safe Motherhood Committee  
 National Commission on Cervical Cancer Prevention and Early Detection  
 Various companies

## [2] UN joint programmes implemented in 2022

### Evidence-based migration policy planning and discourse in North Macedonia

Funded by the [Migration MPTE](#), implemented by IOM, UNHCR and UNFPA; \$1.5 million, 30 months duration (1 October 2020 – 30 April 2023)

### Safe and Innovative Health Services in times of Covid 19

Funded by the [Covid-19 Response and Recovery Fund](#), implemented by UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF; \$850,000, 14.5 months duration (1 January 2021 – 31 March 2022)

### From Knowledge and Engagement – to Empowerment and Participation (KEEP)

Funded by [UN PRPD](#) and implemented by UNDP, UNICEF, and UNFPA, \$400,000, 36 months duration (February 2021 – February 2024)

### Green Financing Facility to Combat Climate Change and Air Pollution,

Funded by [Joint SDG Fund](#), implemented by UNDP, IOM and UNECE, \$7.97 million / total financing of \$46 million (April 2022 – March 2026)

### Regional Youth Project

Funded by [UN Peacebuilding Fund](#), implemented by UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNICEF, USD 4.5 million, of which \$0.65 million for North Macedonia activities (May 2022 – May 2024)

### Bio-hack My World

Funded by [Green Shark Challenge](#), implemented by UNDP and UNICEF, USD 0.25 million, May 2022 – May 2023.

### Identifying Systemic Pathways for Responding to the Global Crisis on Food, Energy and Finance in North Macedonia

Funded by [Joint SDG Fund](#), implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and FAO, USD 0.25 million, July 2022-February 2023



### [3] SDCF outcome indicator trends

OUTCOME INDICATOR	CATEGORY	BASELINE	BASELINE YEAR	TARGET(2025)	ACHIEVED (2021)	LATEST VALUE	TREND
<b>Inclusive prosperity</b>							
<b>Employment rate (20-64)</b>	Total (20-64 years)	59.2	2019	63.1	59.44	61.8	↗
	Female	48.4	2019	49.2	49.7	51.7	↗
	Male	69.8	2019	74.3	68.9	71.8	↗
	Youth (15-29) Total	34.4	2019	34.9	32.63	34.4	↗
	Female	28	2019	28.2	27.79	28.5	↗
	Male	40.4	2019	41.8	37.2	40.2	↗
<b>Proportion of informal employment in total economy</b>	Total	16.1	2019	14	12.93	12.3	↗
	Female	13	2019	not set	10.1	9.2	↗
	Male	18.1	2019	not set	14.89	14.5	↗
	Youth (15-24) total	24.01	2019	not set	16.53	17.8	↘
<b>Percentage of young people neither in employment nor in education and training</b>	15-29 years	24.5	2019	22	24.26	22.8	↗
	Female	28.3	2019	28.2	25.48	24.5	↗
	Male	20.9	2019	20	23.1	21.1	↘
	15-24 years	18.1	2019	15.8	17.82	18	↘
	Female	19.2	2019	19.1	16.83	18.4	↘
	Male	17.1	2019	16.9	18.75	17.6	↘
	25-29 years	34.9	2019	33.3	34.7	31.6	↗
	Female	43.1	2019	43	39.45	35.8	↗
Male	27.1	2019	25.6	30.19	27.6	↗	
<b>Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person</b>		-1.3	2019	2.7	1.54	2.4	↗
<b>Global Competitiveness Index 4.0</b>	Rank	82/141	2019	67	82	not available	↔
	Points	57.3	2019	not set	57.3	not available	↔
<b>Working Poverty rate</b>	Total	8.8	2019	7	10	12.5	↘
	Female	6	2019	not set	not available	8.9	↘
	Male	10.6	2019	not set	not available	15.1	↘
<b>Quality services for all</b>							
<b>Percentage of children age 36-59 months attending an early childhood education program (attendance rate)</b>	Total	39.8	2019	60	36 (2020)	41	↗
	Girls	47.76	2019	60	not available	47	↘
	Boys	52.24	2019	60	not available	53	↗
<b>Proportion of children and young people at the end of lower secondary education, achieving at least minimum proficiency level</b>	Reading	45	2018	55	next survey in 2022	Survey postponed	↔
	Numeracy	39	2018	49	next survey in 2022	Survey postponed	↔
<b>Self-reported unmet need for medical examination and care, % of population aged 16 and over</b>	Total	2.3	2018	2	2.5 (2019)	1.7 (2020)	↗
	Female	2.6	2018	2.2	2.4	1.8	↗
	Male	2	2018	1.8	2.6	1.7	↗
<b>Proportion of the target population covered by all vaccines included in their national programme</b>	All vaccines coverage	95	2018	>95	<90	<90	↗
	3 doses of DTP3	92.5	2018	95	80.9	83.9	↗
	Second dose of MCV2	74.8	2018	95	80.5	89.2	↗
<b>Probability of dying from any of cardiovascular diseases (CVD), cancer, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases (CRD) between age 30 and exact age 70</b>		20.3	2016	18.5	22.73 (2019)	No data	↔
<b>Modern contraceptive prevalence rate</b>		14	2018	next survey in 2023	20	No data	↔
<b>Neonatal mortality rate</b>		3.8	2019	3.5	4.2	2.9(2021)	↗
<b>Proportion of households covered by social protection cash transfers</b>		8	2019	14.5	30.9	44.4	↗

OUTCOME INDICATOR	CATEGORY	BASELINE	BASELINE YEAR	TARGET(2025)	ACHIEVED (2021)	LATEST VALUE	TREND
<b>Human Development Index</b>	Index points	0.759	2019	0.78	0.774	0.770	↘
	Rank	82/189	2019	not set	82	78	↘
<b>Proportion of population living below the national poverty line</b>	Total	21.9	2018	15.5	21.6	21.8 (2020)	↘
	Female	22	2018	16.8	22	21.0	↗
	Male	21.8	2018	14.2	21.1	21.9	↘
	0-17 years old	29.3	2018	not set	27.8	30.3	↘
	Youth (15-24)	29.7	2018	not set	27.4	28.6	↘
	Adult (16+)	20.6	2018	not set	20.4	20.1	↗
	25+	19.2	2018	not set	19.3	21.1	↘



## Healthy environment

<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Gg CO2-eq)</b>		8,021	2016	6196	12,290* (2019)	Biannual data	↘
<b>Proportion of a country designated total area that is protected</b>		10.34	2019	15	13.47	13.9	↔
<b>Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter PM10 (µg/m3)</b>		51.32	2019	<40	41.90	35.91	↗
<b>INFORM Risk Index (2020) (on a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is very low and 10 is very high)</b>	Points	2.6	2020	2	2.5	2.4	↗
	Risk level	low	2020	very low	Low	Low	↔
<b>System for integrated pest management in place</b>		no system in place	2020	system fully functional	no	no	↔
<b>Average use of pesticide per area of cropland (kg/ha)</b>		0.22	2017	EU average: 3.14	0.3	0.3	↔
<b>Degree of integrated water resources management implementation (0-100)</b>	Points	33	2020	60	40	40	↔
	Level	medium-low	2020	medium-high	medium-low	medium-low	↔
<b>Renewable energy share in the total gross final</b>	Energy consumption	18.18	2018	29	19.22 (2020)	17.29	↘
	Electricity consumption	24.84	2018	46	23.53 (2020)	21.53	↘



## Good governance

<b>Rule of law index (overall, on a scale from 0 to 1)</b>		0.53	2020	not set	0.53	0.53	↔
<b>Gender equality index</b>		62	2019	65	next survey in 2022	64.5	↗
<b>Level of establishment of permanent national child rights coordinating mechanism</b>		weak	2020	established	weak	weak	↔
<b>The country has a system in place to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment</b>		no	2020	yes	no	no	↔
<b>Worldwide Governance Indicators</b>	Average	49.72	2018	>60	52.92	52.36	↘
	Voice & accountability				50.24	52.17	↗
	Political stability & absence of violence/terrorism				50.47	50	↘
	Government effectiveness				57.69	50	↘
	Regulatory quality				68.75	66.35	↘
	Rule of law				52.4	52.4	↔
	Control of corruption				37.98	43.27	↗
<b>Open Budget Index</b>	Transparency	41	2019	>=45	41	36	↘
<b>Percentage of official statistics aligned with EU acquis</b>		67	2019	95	67 (2019)	67	↔
<b>Level of general satisfaction with public services at the local level (on a scale from 1 to 5)</b>	Total	3.07	2020	3.5	2.97	3.2	↗
	Female	3.12	2020	3.6	2.97	3.21	↗
	Male	3.02	2020	3.4	2.97	3.19	↗
	Urban	3.09	2020	3.5	2.83	3.16	↗
	Rural	3.05	2020	3.5	3.08	3.26	↗
<b>The level of the alignment of the refugee protection and migration systems with the international and EU standards</b>		partially aligned	2020	fully aligned	mostly aligned	mostly aligned	↗
<b>Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive</b>		19.8	2020	25	19.3	24	↗

## [4] Acronyms & abbreviations

BOS	Business Operations Strategy	NEET	Youth Not in Education, Employment or Training
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy	NES	National Employment Strategy
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	OG	SDCF Outcome group
CSA	Climate-smart agriculture	OPDs	Organizations of persons with disabilities
DV	Domestic violence	PAs	Protected areas
eNDC	Enhanced nationally determined contribution	PMT	UN Programme Management Team
EPR	Environmental Performance Review	PSD	Partnership for Sustainable Development
ESA	Employment Support Agency	PWD	Person with disabilities
ESC	Economic and Social Council	RC	Resident Coordinator
EU	European Union	RCO	UN Resident Coordinator's Office
GCF	Green Climate Fund	RMPS	Resource Mobilization and Partnership Strategy
GHG	Greenhouse gas	SDCF	Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
GRB	Gender-responsive budgeting	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
GREVIO	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence	SEEU	South-East European University
HCFCs	Ozone depleting substances	SEL	Social and emotional learning
HDI	Human Development Index	SSO	State Statistical Office
HORECA	Hotels, restaurants, and cafes	UN	United Nations
HOTAM	Association of employers in hotel and catering	UNCT	United Nations Country Team
ICF	International classification of Functioning, Disability and Health	VET	Vocational education and training
ILS	International Labour Standards	WAV	Violence against women
JSC	Joint Government-UN SDCF Steering Committee		
MAFWE	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy		
MAP	Modified atmosphere packaging		
MLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy		
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science		
MoEPP	Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning		
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification		
NDS	National Development Strategy		



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**Supplement:**

**2022 detailed results**





## OUTCOME 1

# Inclusive prosperity



*By 2025, the living standard of all people in North Macedonia is improved through equal access to decent work and productive employment generated by inclusive and innovative business ecosystem*



UNDP interventions in 2022 enabled creation of 1,204 full-time and part-time jobs through different measures, including newly introduced green measure, out of which 68.5% are women, 30.5% are young up to 29 years old, 34.7% Roma and 42 jobs (3.5%) for persons with disabilities. *Credit: UNDP*

Projects implemented by **UN agencies** during 2022 are directly contributing to the increased opportunities for more inclusive jobs and productive economic environment. They have been constructed around strengthening enterprises to create quality jobs; supporting skills to increase employability of vulnerable groups; enhancing policy and legal framework through policy recommendations and technical expertise for enhanced public services; addressing informalities and improving quality of employment, as well as enhancing agricultural and rural development.

## **SUSTAINABLE ENTERPRISES CREATED AS GENERATORS OF EMPLOYMENT THROUGH STRENGTHENED VALUE CHAINS AND INCREASED CAPACITIES TO ADOPT NEW BUSINESS MODELS.**

In 2022, UNDP supported total of **671 businesses**, making jobs accessible to different vulnerable groups. Out of them, 502 SMEs have been supported with business mentorship and counselling services through established platform

[biz4all.mk](http://biz4all.mk). Within the Self-employment measure, Roma and persons with disabilities were supported to create 28 new business (5 Roma and 23 persons with disabilities) by raising their entrepreneurial skills through training and mentorship support. As result, they managed to successfully start their own business and generate additional 9 employments. Furthermore, UNDP invested in developing policies and concrete measures to support creation of green jobs. With specifically designed employment programmes 9 private companies were supported to make green investments creating 34 green jobs. In addition, 104 private companies and 28 new service (care) providers received support through flexible VET and tailored training programs aligned to their needs and over 420 unemployed people were trained creating jobs for over 70% of them.

## **28 new service providers**

**supported through flexible VET and tailored training**

UNDP interventions enabled creation of **1,204 full-time and**

**part-time jobs** (622 full-time and 582 part-time jobs) in 2022 through different measures, including newly introduced green measure. Out of these 68.5% were jobs for women, 30.5% for up to 29 years young people, 34.7% for Roma and 42 jobs (3.5%) for persons with disabilities. Care Economy measure as a new module which continues to raise interest from the policy makers, enabled **117 people to become licensed care service providers**, enabling mostly women to get recognition and formal employment as care providers. The measure was facilitated by 28 NGOs in a variety of forms, from creation of new entities to creation of new service lines within existing ones. Additional 582 part-time jobs have been created through Community Works programme to support provision of different social services in 52 municipalities. Seen through the lenses of vulnerable groups, Roma mentorship and ACCEDER programme ensured full-time job creation for 359 Roma out of which 157 (43.7%) women and 174 (48.5%) young.

#### **WOMEN AND VULNERABLE/EXCLUDED PERSONS BENEFIT FROM SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH TAILORED EMPLOYMENT MEASURES AND A MORE DYNAMIC AND INCLUSIVE SKILLING SYSTEM THAT RESPONDS TO LABOUR MARKET NEEDS FOR ALL PEOPLE**

UNDP interventions on enhancing employability and facilitating employment of the most vulnerable individuals produced significant results in 2022. These include **5,351 people who benefited from activation and employment support services**, out of which 2,888 women (54%), 3,717 young (69.5%) of which 2,400 NEET, 2,379 Roma (44.5%) and 152 persons with disabilities. Of the 2,379 Roma activated in the labour market, 2,019 unemployed Roma benefited from employment activation through the holistic and individual case management approach of employment mentors and advisors (including ACCEDER programme), 167 were Roma returnees from the EU countries, and 193 were young NEET who benefited from the Youth Guarantee (field) activation services.

## **5,351 people supported**

**with activation and employment services**

Through VET and other types of skills training, during 2022, a total of 1,083 persons (70% women, 31.3% young) increased their employability and improved their prospects for job-finding. Also, 231 hard-to-employ people increased their employability by gaining knowledge and working experience in providing community-based social services to 9,022 end-beneficiaries in 52 municipalities (5,122 women, 679 persons with disabilities).

Additional 318 unemployed engaged in Care Economy sector completed VET trainings and 117 of them got full-time employment in 28 newly established care service providers (NGOs). Activities for completion of primary education continued with 15 juveniles to assist their faster integration.

The Future Skills (FS) trainings helped 147 people (82 women) to upskill and support digital transformation and green transition in three key economic sectors: construction, renewable energy and textile.

ILO/ EU supported **Youth Guarantee (YG)** Implementation Plan of North Macedonia for the period 2022-2026 builds on the lessons learnt since 2018 and the principles set forth in the Council Recommendation on A Bridge to Jobs – Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee (October 2020). Compared to the previous implementation plans, in the period 2022-2026 more emphasis is placed on: (i) reaching out to detached young people where they mostly live, (ii) improving the quality of offers provided to young people registering in the YG service delivery system; (iii) establishing wider and better partnerships with other governmental and non-governmental actors, and (iv) building a stronger service delivery system. Overall, in 2022, **20,185 (10,316 women) persons registered with the Youth Guarantee**, out of which **7,419 (3,595 women) got employed** within 4 months of registration. Rate of the successful exit from the Youth Guarantee (Percentage of participants who successfully completed the Youth Guarantee) in 2022 was 43%.

## **20,185 registered**

**with the Youth Guarantee**

UNDP also supported implementation of the Youth Guarantee through two youth umbrella NGOs (over 60 young field workers) engaged to support ESA's Employment Centers in identifying and registering young NEET. With this support, over 5,000 young unemployed and over 1.140 private companies were informed about Youth Guarantee scheme in ESA. As result 2,400 NEET were registered in ESA's data base (1,553 women; 6 persons with disabilities; and 193 Roma).

#### **ENHANCED AND GENDER-RESPONSIVE POLICY AND REGULATORY MEASURES THAT FOSTER ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND FINANCING FOR INCLUSIVE AND GREEN GROWTH**

ILO facilitated tripartite process for drafting the new Labour Relations Law (LRL) concluded in the second half of 2022 producing a consolidated draft law proposal. The draft LRL entered second stage of the process in December 2022, with the first of the series planned public hearings held on 26 December. Additional 8 public hearings, aimed to improve the draft text and align it with the International Labour Standards, are planned for first quarter of 2023.

ILO conducted analysis of the legislative alignment with Convention on ending violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work, No. 190, was validated in the tripartite meeting in April 2022. Furthermore, ILO Convention on ending violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work, No. 190 entered the parliamentary procedure for ratification on 5 December 2022.

In 2022, **FAO** assisted the Government to initiate the development of the first [National Food Security Strategy](#), with particular emphasis on the appropriate medium and long-term policy responses to sustainable agriculture, food security, nutrition and rural development. In close cooperation with the Rural Development Network of North Macedonia, through a consultative and participatory process, FAO and MAFWE conducted necessary collection of national food security and nutrition data, as well as a detailed analysis



of relevant national policies, that will serve as the basis for outlining the future **Food Security and Nutrition Strategy**. In addition, an institutional survey was conducted in 2022 for developing a proposal to establish a dedicated and permanent inter-institutional national coordination mechanism as a major state body involving all concerned ministries and national agencies to be responsible for the strategic oversight of national food security and nutrition strategy, legislation, policies, and programmes. The implementation of this new policy should contribute to improving the country's self-sufficiency by increasing sustainable agricultural production and productivity, enhancing distribution and sharpening the country's readiness to react efficiently to the future crisis that may impact on the food security.

To boost rural economy **FAO** assisted the Government to amend the **Law on Sale of State-owned Agricultural Land** to make privatization of state-owned agricultural land fully operational. The work included analysis of the existing tools for combating abandoned land and its implementation, including good European practices in the use of mediation mechanisms for agricultural land leases. Implementation of this new Law, pending Government adoption, should result in further development of the agricultural land market, bringing abandoned agricultural land back into production and rational use. The rational use of the agricultural land, as a limited natural resource, is essential for self-sustainable domestic agriculture sector that fosters job creation in rural areas and food security for the Macedonian people.

In addition, **FAO** also assisted the **MAFWE** to develop, test and put in function the **Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA) Tool** – a web-based **FAO** tool for analysis and dissemination of global price data, specifically adapted for North Macedonia (the global level **FPMA** tool was initially [developed in 2010](#) as part of **FAO's** initiatives to address the soaring food prices at global level). The country-level version of the [price tool](#) is linked to existing national data collection systems. It allows the Government, decision-makers and agricultural producers to easily monitor and analyse timely and reliable information on domestic wholesale and retail prices of basic food commodities, as well as to monitor food prices at the international level, which may negatively affect national food security in the context of crises.

To support **ESA** in following and implementing recent trends in labour activation of vulnerable with instruments for smooth implementation of social contracting model, **UNDP** assisted the drafting of a new "**Law on Employment and Insurance in case of Unemployment**".

In 2022, **UNDP** also followed up its previous work on embedding lifelong concept and market required qualifications in the relevant legislation. In that context, the Ministry of Education and Science (**MoES**) was supported to draft a **Concept Paper on developing Secondary/VET Schools into Regional Inclusive Centres of Excellence (RICE)**. The Concept, now adopted by **MoES**, is based on the universal learning design and aims to build capacities of education professionals in delivering learning outcomes with various learners, while at the same time opening opportunities for lifelong learning activities of the professionals (teachers) and learners. Also, through serial of introductory workshops and trainings, professionals from **MoES** and the State Education Inspectorate increased their understanding and knowledge on Inclusive education. In addition, 130 professionals from three Regional **VET** Centres (**RVETC**) in the country have

increased their awareness of the need to create inclusive surrounding for the variety of students.

With concrete policy level interventions in care economy **UNDP** enabled **NGOs to become social service providers for delivery of in-home care and respite service** per the established protocols. This goes along with the measure for Roma returnees, where **NGOs** are engaged to identify and match potential beneficiaries. Interventions are supported with the Study on **GMI** aiming to identify benefits and causes hindering labour activation. **UNDP** also continued to support social reform by **development of rulebooks for guidance and support of the Regional Councils for Social Protection for preparation of Regional Plans**, which integrate social service, budgeting, and employment of vulnerable groups. In parallel, a Protocol for children at risk was adopted and transfer of knowledge was organized so that local **NGOs** can become potential service providers.

**UNDP** also worked to reinforce green economy by supporting introduction of **green transition measures for companies** in the Governmental **OPE 2022** worth \$333,000.

**UN** also supported digitalization process, through co-creation of a **Digital Innovation Profile** as basis for the **ICT Strategy 2023-2027**, undertaken by **ITU**. In addition, **UNDP** developed specific products such as digital tool **HANA** which provides access to written data in Albanian for blind persons, as well as a Mobile App for matching the skills of young people to further facilitate growth of their careers.

With **ITU** support, the **National Digital Skills Assessment** for North Macedonia was completed by the Ministry of Information Society and Administration. The assessment aimed to understand the current supply and demand of digital skills in North Macedonia, to contribute to the development of a digital skills strategy that will meet citizen needs, and to contribute to further growth of the digital economy and digital society. The assessment results are delivered in a set of explicit and implementable recommendations. The scope includes an assessment of basic digital skills in the private sector, start-ups, and the education sector, as well as an assessment of the current demand for all levels of digital skills across the economy. The recommendations provided strategic guidance to the **National ICT Strategy 2023-2027 developed** in 2022 with **UN** support.

Finally, recognizing the challenge of migration, **IOM** worked to assist the authorities to **engage the diaspora in the socio-economic development** of the country. More than 20 institutional stakeholders with competencies in diaspora-related issues, from the Cabinet of the Minister without portfolio responsible for Diaspora affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Emigration Agency, the Ministry of Health, the National Bank, the Ministry of Local Self Government, the Agency for Foreign Investments, the United Macedonian Diaspora and the members of Inter-ministerial Working Group on Migration Policy were capacitated in development and implementation of diaspora engagement projects to support the socio-economic development of North Macedonia, in line with the priorities set in the National Strategy of the Republic of North Macedonia for Cooperation with the Diaspora 2019-2023 and the Resolution for the Migration Policy of the Republic of North Macedonia 2021-2025.

### IMPROVED QUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT THROUGH MEASURES FOR TRANSITION TO FORMALITY AND ADEQUATE PROTECTION AT WORK IN COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARDS

ILO strengthened labour market surveillance by **training 106 State Labour Inspectors** on labour relations law in a series of four workshops; developing a **learning platform with e - learning module** for labour inspectors, as well as a **new website of the State labour Inspectorate** with digital applications for employers and workers and **new IT and measurement equipment**.

It also implemented a pilot measure in cooperation with the Association of Hoteliers - the Association of Hotels, Restaurants, Cafeterias and Campsites - HOTAM. The pilot measure **Making Declared Work Attractive for Employer and Employees (MDWA)** generated evidence that the simplification of employment procedures and lower contribution to social security for workers who are engaged temporarily and occasionally, affects the reduction of informal employment and work. Hotam website was the entry platform for the participation of interested employers and workers in the pilot measure implemented in Ohrid and Struga. Evaluation of the measure and the lessons learned are currently underway.

ILO also finalised **comparative (gap) analyses of the Convention no. 167 on safety and health in construction, Convention no. 176 on safety and health in mines, Convention no. 184 on safety and health in agriculture and the national legislation, lex generalis and lex specialis on the health and safety of construction workers and all additional legal acts in the relevant area.** All three gap analyses on ILO OSH conventions were validated and **OSH day 2022 was organized** in collaboration with the National OSH Council.

### POLICIES AND CAPACITIES STRENGTHENED FOR SUSTAINABLE AND COMPETITIVE RURAL ECONOMY ALIGNED WITH EU, WITH FOCUS ON SMALL FARMS AND WOMEN FARMERS

During 2022, **FAO** with EU support, successfully continued the support to the implementation of the **National Land Consolidation Programme** through simultaneous implementation of ten land consolidation projects on the ground. This process included preparation and adoption of plans for re-allotment and improvement of the agricultural infrastructure covering 3,102 hectares of agricultural land, owned by 2,954 agricultural landowners (663 women). As a result, the number of land parcels has been reduced by almost 2.5 times, from 8,237 to 3,344 parcels, while the average size of land parcels tripled (from 0.42 ha to 1.34 ha) in the areas where land consolidation was finalized. The improved land structures should improve the farmers' potential to scale up agricultural production and shift towards competitive, modern and more climate resilient farming.

## 3,102 ha of land

under land consolidation processes

FAO supported the Food and Veterinary Agency (FVA) to conduct the preparatory steps for upgrading the **National**

**Animal Information System (NAITS)** in line with EU standards in the area of the animal health and food safety. This involved a comprehensive assessment of the FVA systems, leading to a technical specification for a custom-built NAITS system based on the FAO-developed system in Georgia. The specification included an implementation roadmap and project proposal for the system implementation phase.

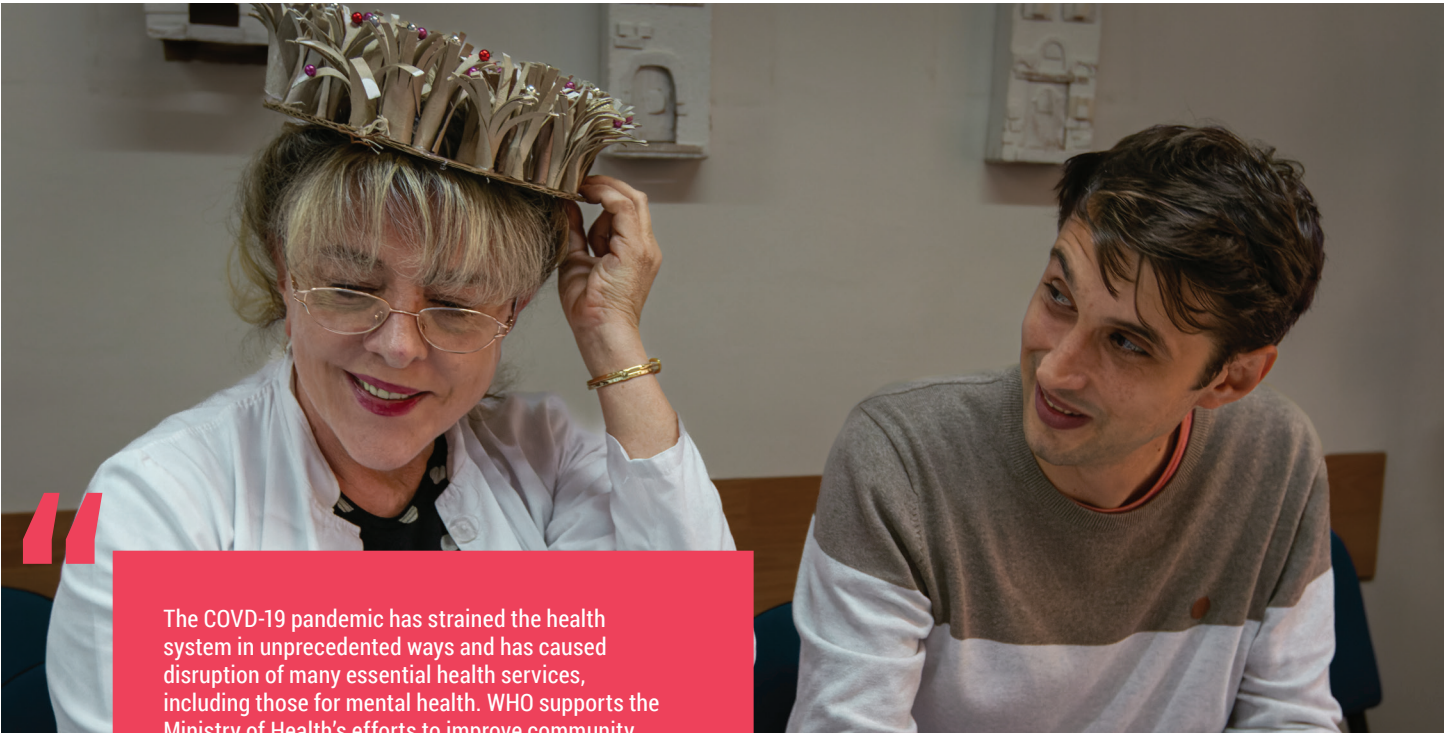
**UN Women** supported the Faculty of Agricultural Science and Food (FASF) to extend research and technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (MAFWE), in mainstreaming gender in the national policies for agriculture and rural development. The Ministry, in cooperation with FASF and the Working Group on Gender Equality, revised the criteria and doubled the budget allocation for the gender specific measure (Measure 115) for supporting women agricultural producers, making the measure more responsive to their needs. This ensured that the National Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development is more gender responsive increasing the financial support from 3,000 euros to 6,000 euros. As a result, [70 women farmers benefited from increased financial subsidies](#), which aim to directly influence their livelihoods and reduce the vulnerability of small-scale agricultural producers.

## OUTCOME 2

## Quality services for all



*By 2025, people in North Macedonia have universal access to rights-based quality social services – healthcare, education, and necessary social and child protection - rooted in systems resilient to emergencies*



The COVID-19 pandemic has strained the health system in unprecedented ways and has caused disruption of many essential health services, including those for mental health. WHO supports the Ministry of Health's efforts to improve community based mental health services. *Credit: WHO*

**HEALTH SYSTEM IS STRENGTHENED TO PROVIDE UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HIGH QUALITY AND PEOPLE-CENTRED SERVICES TO PROMOTE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AND ADDRESS POPULATION-SPECIFIC HEALTH NEEDS AND RISK FACTORS, INCLUDING IN EMERGENCIES**

In 2022, the Ministry of Health with UN and other partners support continued the implementation of the health system reform, based on human rights and equity principles. The work was focused on improvement of the primary health care, maternal and child health, mental health as well as sexual and reproductive health, initiating action for development of new human resources for health strategy, tackling non-communicable diseases risk factors, bringing services closer to people and preparing the health system for large scale immunizations. Four UN entities were active in this area during 2022 – WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNHCR.

To accelerate the **implementation of the national Primary Health Care reform**, the Ministry of Health, and Health Insurance Fund, with WHO support, conducted an **assessment of the national legal context**. The assessment identified the changes needed in the legislative and regulatory framework to enable the implementation of the reform in the areas of

continuity of care, coordination between providers, and performance measurement. In parallel, few more activities, aiming to contribute to the acceleration of the reform were completed during 2022 with WHO support. The first one - **systematic analysis of the administrative processes** required by health authorities for primary care doctors, identified the specific redundancies and opportunities to increase the efficiency of PHC administration. The Ministry of Health and e-Health Directorate completed the **design of the e-appointment system** for Primary Health Care. Once implemented in 2023, the system will allow sick patients to avoid long waits at their health centre, without imposing additional administrative burden to PHC staff, but also improve patient and professional experiences and satisfaction. Then, **clinical protocols and pathways for the priority non-communicable diseases** (hypertension, diabetes, asthma, hypothyroidism) were developed. These protocols ensure introduction of minimum quality standard for care delivered in all PHC practices and lay the foundation for monitoring of the quality and introducing evidence-based interventions into daily practice. With WHO support, the National Public Health Institute developed the Action Plan (2023-2027) on **reducing salt intake through diet**, as an important and cost-effective measure for improving population health outcomes. The Action Plan will guide the country's achievement of the

globally agreed targets to reduce salt intake by 30% by 2025, as part of the global action to reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in line with the SDG Target 3.4 on reducing by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases.

The **first comprehensive assessment of the health workforce planning structure and processes** in the country, developed with WHO support, laid out the foundation towards the development of the first Health Workforce Strategy. The **online training platform** [www.obuki.zdravstvo.gov.mk](http://www.obuki.zdravstvo.gov.mk) was re-designed and enriched with new functionalities to provide better learning opportunities for health professionals and easy access to the newly established and adapted e-trainings, as well as for easy monitoring the number and profiles of health workers undertaking the trainings. This platform is now available in three languages: Macedonian, Albanian and English.

The Ministry of Health in collaboration with the University Clinic for psychiatry and the Center for Family Medicine, with WHO support, **piloted the Mental Health Gap Action Programme (Mh-GAP)** in the regions of Gevgelija and Kocani. As part of the programme, some 100 primary health care practitioners were capacitated to improve the services to the citizens from these regions in coping with mental health related problems including appropriate therapy and referral. In addition, an **assessment of the Community Based Mental Health Centers (CBMHC)** across the country was undertaken, in collaboration with the University Clinic for psychiatry. The assessment pointed out the challenges and the needs that CBMHC are facing with and served as a basis for development of an Action Plan for Community Based Mental Health Care. In parallel, UNICEF was instrumental in **generating a first-time critical data on mental health** through the study on mental health of adolescents and their families, and the study on mental health of women in the perinatal period. Both studies proved the initial assumptions about worrisome trends and provided strong evidence that informed national systems about the scale of the issues and the urgent need for additional investments in mental health.

While mental health has been the most critical consequence from the COVID-19 pandemic, this was not the only one. Using the momentum, UNICEF's support and technical assistance not only facilitated the response to the emergency needs but also supported the health system reform. This was achieved through generation of critical evidence on mental health, child nutrition, effectiveness of home visiting system, ECI services; development of digital solutions and modelling telemedicine services, capacity development and technical assistance in developing national guidance and protocols on COVID-19 measures. Evidence generated through UNICEF supported **'Functional analysis of patronage (home visiting) services'** enabled to inform the national system about the most critical gaps of these services such as shortage of staff and the lack of supportive supervision. The generated evidence is a key informant in revising policies and guidelines for these critical workforces for pregnant women and mothers with newborns. **Situation analysis of Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)** not only provided the most up to date data about the system but allowed to detect a new equity gap in access to early intervention services, proving a clear-cut income inequality in access to the ECI services. Primary health care system was strengthened through **capacity development of 190 healthcare workers** for telemedicine including remote monitoring of patients to enable services for children and families to be provided where physical presence is

not possible. **Digital software** developed for establishing professional communication network that allow consultation of health professionals at primary, secondary and tertiary level, thus saving patients from financial hardship to travel and avoid crowds in waiting rooms in hospitals. The pilot is put into practice by 5 family doctors and 5 specialists and is currently ongoing. **Protocols for COVID-19 treatment and care** at primary healthcare level (for children, pregnant women, and general population) has been finalized, published and are used by the healthcare workers in the country.

Building on the results in 2021, UNFPA trained additional 175 healthcare providers from 6 key facilities/hospitals in efficient perinatal care, while WHO provided similar training to another 6 facilities, thus contributing to **improved quality of maternal and new-born health services**, strengthened knowledge and skills in EPC, and improved maternal and new-born health. The mobile gynaecological clinics, established with UNFPA support in 2021, whose focus is on cervical cancer prevention, were partially integrated in the national health budget, within the programme for prevention and early detection of cervical cancer, with increasing budget allocation year over year. In parallel, **two full-scale campaigns on cervical cancer prevention were conducted** with around 400K reach on social media and approx. 1.8 million people through National TV media. In the course of 2022, **2,000 women and girls have received SRH services through the mobile clinics**. In cooperation with the CSO HOPS, these services have been extended to **women and girls in prisons, sex workers and drug users**. These clinics are fully integrated in the national health system, allowing for adequate data management and privacy protection, and easy referral and follow up services.

The initiative for introducing **health promoting schools** is advancing well in 2022. With WHO support, school health focal points from Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education and Science, Bureau for Education, Institute of Public Health, teachers and other school staff and implementing partners, were sensitized about the programme and national consensus to roll the program in four early adopter schools is built. Capacities of teachers and other school staff from the early adopters' schools were strengthened and situation analysis to identify the key health and wellbeing challenges in school age children was conducted. The implementation plan to introduce the HPS program was also developed, and the programme is ready for roll out during the next school year.

With WHO support, the Ministry of Health, School of Medicine and the Specialized Hospital for Geriatric and Palliative Care "13 November," designed an action plan for transforming the specialized geriatric and palliative care hospital into a teaching centre for the newly designed geriatric sub-specialization and developed a roadmap for workforce development. These two plans contribute to the MoH's efforts to **prepare the health workforce better respond to the growing share of older people** and the changing needs for health and social care.

The **assessment of barriers to health services in rural and remote areas and small urban settlements** prepared with WHO support contributed to identifying supply and demand barriers to health services in small urban settlements and rural and remote areas. The insights are utilized by the Ministry of Health for balanced territorial planning to reduce health inequities and tackle social determinants of health.

With WHO and UNICEF support, **good progress was made in enhancing the skills and knowledge of healthcare professionals and organizations in vaccine surveillance,**

coverage, and management, including for COVID-19 vaccines. 200,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines were delivered with UNICEF assistance through COVAX mechanism. **Catch-up immunization strategy** was completed to ensure access to vaccines to all children that were missed. Based on the results from behavioural study on MMR1 vaccine hesitancy, UNICEF has developed five prototypes that were printed and distributed to 34 health centres, vaccination points and GPs nationwide. Through training sessions, technical support, and community engagement, **vaccination rates were improved significantly**, aiming to reach the pre-COVID rates. **Advancement in the timely reporting and management of vaccine-related data was also noted.** This outcome played a vital role in the fight against COVID-19 and greatly contributed to the protection of communities from vaccine-preventable diseases.

## 200,000 vaccines delivered

with UNICEF support through COVAX mechanism

The national Guidelines and Standard Operation Procedures for COVID-19 and regular immunization were updated in collaboration with the Center for Family Medicine to enable safe and efficient delivery of vaccines. Some 300 health professionals (doctors and nurses in PHC, including paediatricians and voluntary mobile teams) were trained in vaccine delivery, as well as over 90 immunization managers on the standard operating procedures. **Reaching Every District (RED) immunization programme was piloted** in 12 municipalities across the country, aiming to reduce gaps in immunization coverage and reach the most at-risk groups, both for COVID-19 and routine immunization programme activities. 50 immunization managers from across North Macedonia was trained on how to develop regional immunization microplanning. **Over 500 health workers from the vaccination units throughout the country were trained** on "Health and safety at work" to ensure promoting best practices, rights, roles and responsibilities of health workers, including key considerations for occupational safety and health during the COVID-19 response. Additional trainings were organized for over 30 large employers for promotion of safety at work, which included the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination for the work process.

The **Monitoring system of adverse events** through the National system for electronic health records – Moj Termin was updated aimed to strengthen the integration between Moj Termin and the Macedonian Drug Authority (MALMED) system. More than 650 family doctors as well as specialist - paediatricians from the preventive teams from the health centres were trained on the new opportunities to report digitally the adverse events following immunization aimed to minimize the administrative burden of the healthcare workers.

Last but not least, **two rounds of qualitative and quantitative behavioural insight (BI) analysis** were conducted to assess risk perceptions, behaviours, trust and knowledge related to the COVID-19 pandemic among the general public and health care workers in the country that informed the policy and communication actions.

**QUALITY AND AFFORDABLE EDUCATION IS PROVIDED IN TRAUMA-INFORMED, GENDER-RESPONSIVE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO CHILDREN AND**

## YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRY TO RAISE LEARNING OUTCOMES, ENABLE THEIR SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWER THEM WITH SKILLS FOR TRANSITION TO THE LABOUR MARKET

In 2022, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR and UNDP worked with the Ministry of Education and Science and all other relevant partners to address the systemic gaps in the area of education, which were further exacerbated by the pandemic. The UN entities provided continued support for capacity-development of preschool and primary school professionals for inclusive education, mental health and psychosocial support, technology-enhanced teaching and learning, environment and climate change.

In response to these challenges, UNICEF has invested its efforts for **expanding access to preschool education** alongside a wider process to **optimize the entire school network and make better use of the resources available.** UNICEF has also **engaged municipalities** directly to plan resource optimization and utilize unused spaces in schools toward an increase in pre-primary education coverage.

The roll-out of the **national programme on Social and Emotional Learning** was completed through a network of 192 peer support teachers, reaching 71 preschools and 1366 preschool teachers (all serving preschool teachers). In order to strengthen the system of horizontal support and development in preschools, a two-month training programme for **sustainable Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)** was developed. Through a seven-module programme, 202 preschool teachers received a conceptual framework and practical experience and were supported to initiate the establishment of PLCs in the preschools, to promote a culture of continuous learning for all staff.

An international conference on **'The Interplay between child wellbeing and academic attainment'** was organized in March 2022, bringing together eminent national and international experts, teachers and professionals (from the UK, US, Canada, Croatia and Moldova) to discuss social and emotional learning, parenting, digital technologies in education and child wellbeing. The conference raised awareness on the importance of social and emotional development and expansion of preschool access to all children, the importance of psychosocial support and wellbeing during the education process and later into adulthood, the different aspects of the increased use of digital technology in education, its effects on the process and the observed opportunities. The conference reached more than 4,600 participants online, and 200 with in-person attendance.

## 10,000 parents reached

for parenting resources

A series of 15 **'Sharing and Playing'** events were organized at preschools, bringing together preschool professionals and parents from various communities. The events aimed to bring the social and emotional learning programme and resources closer to parents and caregivers and promote stronger parental engagement, responsive caregiving and social and emotional learning (SEL) at home. The hybrid events reached more than 10,000 parents, helping to raise awareness of the importance of SEL, thereby building public demand for social and emotional learning opportunities.

To support **early inclusion of children with disabilities**, a critical mass of 400 professionals across the country including from preschools and resource centres were supported with capacity-building to apply Augmentative and Alternative Communication to help children with complex communication needs to communicate with their peers and caregivers, thereby facilitating their early inclusion, learning and development.

To support **full inclusion of all children in mainstream education by 2023**, in partnership with the BDE, UNICEF supported the development of a new Manual for the Modified Curriculum for Children with Complex Needs. Moreover, the **1,236 members of the school inclusive teams from all 364 primary schools** enhanced their knowledge and understanding on how to jointly work to create a nurturing and stimulating environment for children with disabilities to learn and develop the skills they need to thrive.

Eduino continued to offer webinars for teacher professional development. During 2022, the webinar series focused on **innovative teaching methods, the use of digital tools, inclusion, the environment and student well-being** as a significant factor in improving outcomes for learners. The professional development webinar series totalled more than 10,000 participants (the total workforce of teachers in North Macedonia is 26,000). **Six self-paced online teacher development courses for inclusive technology-enhanced digital teaching and learning** were developed, adapted in Macedonian and approved by the BDE. The modules will be made available to teachers as self-paced online courses in 2023.

Recognizing the untapped potential of the education system to promote mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, tailored training modules and toolkits on MHPSS for school psychologists were developed, piloted and tested as online modules, offering school psychologists a self-paced learning resource alongside a verified toolkit. In addition, the new cohort of Grade 1 and Grade 4 teachers (3,000) were supported in implementing the **new national curricula** through training on the importance of good mental health and well-being on increasing students' learning, creativity and productivity, physical health and life expectancy.

UNFPA continued with the support to the introduction of comprehensive sexuality education in school curricula and youth related initiatives. Based on the signed MoU with the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE), in 2022, UNFPA continued supporting the BDE in the process of strategic positioning, planning and rollout of CSE. **UNFPA and UNICEF** contributed to the development of the National Strategy on CSE. This document is a prerequisite for scaling up CSE at national level, following the CSE piloting in 2021/2022 in 3 primary schools. The strategy was designed in a way to offer innovative approaches and solutions to CSE in the educational system, and focuses on 2 main priorities: Improving the knowledge, skills and attitudes of students in the area of comprehensive sexual education and Increasing awareness of the need to study the contents of comprehensive sexual education in primary education.

In 2022, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, **UNICEF** continued supporting **schools facing WASH** and IPC challenges. UNICEF continued collaboration with the tripartite WASH committee, of representatives from the MoES, Institute for Public Health and the State Education Inspectorate. As a result, 58 predominantly rural satellite schools received mobile handwashing stations – effectively covering 8260

students. Additionally, technical staff representatives from these schools received specialized WASH training and helped advance the hygiene improvement plans of the schools.

In the lead-up to the **Transforming Education Summit** organized by the UN Secretary General, a series of 10 national consultations on the future of education were organized by UNICEF under overall coordination of the UN Resident Coordinator and active participation of several other UN entities. Over 600 youth, students, teachers, municipal officials, parliamentarians and CSOs were involved in the consultations. Based on the input from the consultations, a national statement of commitment was prepared and presented at the Summit in New York by the Prime Minister.

### **SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM IS RESILIENT TO EXTERNAL SHOCKS AND STRENGTHENED TO DELIVER PROGRESSIVELY IMPROVED SERVICES TO ALL PERSONS IN NEED, ESPECIALLY TO THOSE LEFT BEHIND**

Throughout 2022, four UN entities (UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM and UNDP) partnered with relevant institutions (line ministries, government agencies and civil society) to address the needs of children, persons left behind in need of assistance and services. UNDP results for this and the previous section on education are presented under the outcome 1 on inclusive prosperity.

To ensure **caring family environment** for the children, **UNICEF** applied two-fold approach of supporting the policy and service development. At policy level, a **new cross-sectoral Parenting Strategy** was developed for the first time in the country, providing direction on positive parenting. The Strategy ensures systematic approach in provision of parenting support services, resources and initiatives. It is designed not only to target the improvement of the positive parenting skills, but also to strengthen the enabling environments and workforce capacities to support parents, promote shared caregiving and non-violent discipline techniques, while ending harsh and abusive parenting practices, and support parents' and caregivers' mental health and wellbeing.

At service level, children benefited from **model services for improving parenting skills** thorough: online delivered Mellow Parenting programme delivered online, the **Bebbo parenting application** providing guidance and information on child development; and the **Parenting Help Line** - all enabling easy to access and low-cost approach to early intervention and parent support.

**UNICEF** support aimed at **strengthening the child protection systems** was focused on **developing capacity of the social service workforce**. Starting from the childcare system, capacity of the core professionals in this system was built based on the new foster and kinship care standards. The process of identification and requirement of new **foster families**, and access to information for the general population, professionals, and existing foster care families has been facilitated through the foster care web page. The UNICEF supported Foster Care Register compiles information on potential, active and available foster families, thus facilitating communication between the key professionals.

The new and unique **Digital Learning Platform for the social service workforce**, established in partnership of **UNHCR** and **UNICEF**, ensures continuous professional capacity development. It offers delivery of specialized online

trainings required for the licensing processes. So far, more than hundred social sector frontline workers were provided with tools to improve personal resilience and therefore ensure better system response in crisis situations. These professionals also gained necessary skills to develop annual programs for mental health and psychosocial support for the most at-risk children, using holistic approach towards mental health.

UNICEF support to address the potential burnout during the pandemic, by ensuring more than hundred social sector frontline workers are provided with tools to **improve personal resilience and therefore ensure better system response in crisis situations**. More than 200 families experiencing hardship during the COVID pandemic received immediate social protection services or referral by seven mobile teams composed of lawyers and social workers, in close collaboration with the centres for social work, with UNICEF support.

In the field of **child sensitive social protection**, UNICEF completed work on developing the knowledge and tools used by social work professionals in the country's Centers for Social Work (CSW) to apply the method of **integrated case management** and to better manage the workload. Almost all case managers from all 30 Centers for Social Work (CSW) participated - 197 case managers – including in 168 mentoring sessions of the programme. This will benefit **over 50,000 households** that receive social services and benefits through the CSWs. The delivered casework mentoring program for social work professionals was transferred to the Institute of Social Affairs and is incorporated in the electronic platform for educating social work professionals.

In the domain of **inclusion of children with disabilities**, UNICEF developed **national capacities for expansion of the human-rights based model of disability and needs assessment of children and youth** in the North-East, East, Vardar and South-West planning regions. This will complete the introduction of the new model as a single-entry point for support services and benefits throughout the country. **An externally conducted evaluation of UNICEF interventions** aiming to improve the inclusion of children with disabilities concluded that UNICEF-supported interventions contributed greatly to increasing the availability and supply of services as well as qualified human resources and significantly helped to positively shift the paradigm and improve public understanding on disability.

In support to the Government, led by the no one left behind principle, UNICEF ensured and facilitated provision of health, education, social and child protection services to the Afghan families that were temporary in the country.

In partnership with UNHCR, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, City Red Cross and Open Gate-La Strada supported a total of **40 persons (refugees and asylum seekers) with specific needs**, accommodated in private accommodation and Reception Center for asylum seekers Vizbegovo. The organizations facilitated access to services, such as education, employment, social assistance and complemented government lead activities, assisted the persons with finding appropriate accommodation suitable for the special needs, facilitating medical interventions where needed, providing language classes and psychosocial support on a daily basis.

In terms of direct support, IOM directly supported more **26,000 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers** accommodated in the Temporary Transit Centers in Vinojug

and Reception Center for asylum seekers Vizbegovo, with receiving medical support and psychosocial support, cultural mediation, recreational activities, language assistance and other reception and protection needs.

Lastly, regarding the **GRF pledge for the remaining Kosovo refugees**, 5 persons gained citizenship and 6 have voluntary returned to Kosovo. 244 persons of the initial caseload of Kosovo refugees are still in the country, and their situation is expected to be resolved by 2024.

### **IMPROVED MULTISECTORAL RESPONSE TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE BASED ON VICTIMS/ SURVIVOR-CENTRED APPROACH, INCLUDING HARMFUL PRACTICES AND DISCRIMINATORY GENDER NORMS AND STEREOTYPES**

During 2022 UN (and more specifically UN Women and UNFPA) supported the implementation of the recently adopted Law on Prevention and Protection from Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, through provision of technical support for development of the key documents and design and piloting of services to the victims and perpetrators.

With UNFPA support, the Multisector Protocol (MSR Protocol), six (6) bylaws and the Program for reintegration of victims were completed, in joint efforts among the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice and CSOs working on GBV prevention, gender equality and women empowerment.

**Data collection and analysis** is the fundament for evidence-based policies contributing towards the quality of services for GBV survivors. Targeting the chronic lack of quality and reliable data on VAW and domestic violence, UNFPA supported the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in mapping of the present conditions and challenges related to the collection and reporting of GBV data in North Macedonia, after which a development of a fully functional IMS Model has started.

**“The Virtual is Real: Strengthening legislative frameworks in support of Bodily Autonomy”** forum organized by UNFPA under the Body-right regional campaign discussed the current situation and legal framework on cyber violence. The forum contributed to strengthened regional partnerships through crafting consistent and effective legal measures and raised awareness to combat digital violence and gender-based violence in general.

A **nationwide campaign** focusing on raising awareness regarding available services for victims and survivors of gender-based and domestic violence in the country and addressing prevalent obstacles that prevent women from reporting violence such as shame, fear, and misconceptions, targeted all women and girls living in urban and rural areas with a focus on Roma populations. The nationwide campaign achieved 1,67 million reach, engagement of 57,000 people, with 455,000 unique reaches on major social media. In the frame of 16 days of activism, UN supported the organization of community events to raise awareness about online violence in three communities (Debar, Strumica and Prilep), with more than 100 participants were actively engaged to discuss the ways of prevention and protection from TfGBV.

With UN Women support, **2,430 Roma women, men,**

girls, boys have increased knowledge and awareness about prevention and protection from violence against women (VAW) and domestic violence, including gender discrimination, harmful gender stereotypes and early marriages, through over 2,000 visits in a door-to-door campaign, 10 network and eight dialogue meetings led by CSO National Roma Centrum Association. As a result, a change in their personal views on violence was observed, and in some cases, a change in behaviour - 19 Roma women have requested legal assistance, including for divorce proceedings due to domestic violence. 10 cases concluded with positive court decisions in favour of the women and their marriages were terminated by final court decisions. The women now enjoy the possibilities to live outside the violent environment, receive child support and state benefits.

## 2,430 Roma

learned more about VAW prevention and protection

Additionally, UN Women support for victims of violence through provision of services resulted in 249 women and girls survivors of violence in the South-East region of North Macedonia benefitting from services from two newly opened psycho-social counselling centres, led by CSOs Skaj Plus Strumica and Echo Stip, assisted with technical and mentoring support by UN Women partner CSO HERA – Health Education and Research Association. Sustainability was ensured for the psychosocial counselling centre in Strumica with the drafting and adoption of a municipal Local Action Plan for Gender Based Violence, with UN Women support, which foresees financial allocations for the centre's functioning.

UN Women supported the economic empowerment of 15 women survivors of violence, who are also long-term unemployed and single mothers, through a 12-month social mentoring programme organized by UN Women partner CSO Association for Research, Communications and Development - PUBLIC. 13 women have found and retained their employment and enjoy better quality of life thanks to the programme.

With UNFPA support, existing training material on SRH and GBV for SRH professionals, GBV service providers and OPD's were reviewed and updated by professionally trained CRPD persons with disability and Special Educator and Rehabilitator, thus contributing to **improved quality SRH and GBV services for persons with disabilities**. These materials aim for sensitization of the service providers including OPDs and different initiatives of persons with disabilities, necessary for improvement of quality of services for PwDs.

Last but not least, under this outcome, with ITU Office for Europe support, the first **Child Online Safety National Assessment** was conducted by the Ministry of Information Society and Administration. The Assessment includes qualitative and quantitative research concluding with an operational roadmap based on identified challenges, opportunities, and recommendations. The report's recommendations guided the National ICT Strategy 2023-2027. The assessment led to the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Information Society and Administration and the Ministry of Education and Science to advance child online protection in the country.



## OUTCOME 3

# Healthy environment



*By 2025, people in North Macedonia benefit from ambitious climate action, sustainably managed natural resources and well-preserved biodiversity through good environmental governance and disaster resilient communities.*



Children learn about climate change and build scientific curiosity through experiments and learning by doing. Teachers and educators joined the UNICEF supported capacity building workshops on teaching about climate change through experiments. The workshops helped teachers and educators acquire knowledge on how to apply new cost-effective experiments in their classes. The approach helps children to learn the basics of science and the effects of environmental and climate change phenomena, such as degradation on water, oil, air, heat and warming cycles. The experiential school activities also help children develop skills such as problem-solving, perseverance and collaboration. *Credit: UNICEF*

## THE ENABLING POLICY, REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT, CAPACITIES AT CENTRAL AND LOCAL LEVEL AND COMMUNITY ACTIONS STRENGTHENED FOR LOW-EMISSION DEVELOPMENT AND MULTI-SECTOR RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

In 2022, UNDP supported the development of the **4th National Communication (4th NC)** which was adopted by the Government in January 2023. **National GHG Inventory** for the period 2015 – 2019 has been developed, complementing the existing time series for 1990 – 2014. Several innovative tools such as foresight and remote sensing were used which resulted in mainstreaming of climate change considerations into spatial/urban planning, improved the quality of the GHG inventory in the AFOLU sector, enhanced estimation of potential sinks and introduction of new level of vulnerability on a municipal level by introducing livelihood vulnerability index. Sustainability of future updates of the GHG inventory is ensured through systematic transfer of knowledge in relevant institutions, capacity building activities and close

cooperation with main data providers such as the State Statistical Office.

Country's **mitigation potential by 2040** was revised and validated to ensure alignment with relevant national priorities. The 4thNC together with the 3rd BUR present clear vision for ambitious climate mitigation targets, based on sound scientific research and the existing robust and comprehensive GHG inventory. They fed the new Energy Strategy, the National Energy and Climate Action Plan (NECAP), the enhanced NDC and the Long-term Strategy on Climate Action. As part of the 4th NC, information on country's vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change was updated, and **adaptation measures** needed to meet the specific needs and concerns arising from these adverse effects were proposed. Scenarios for future extreme weather events are developed. The **Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) Platform** has been developed. It is designed to serve as a foundation for continuous transparent reporting both to the UNFCCC and the EU /Energy Community on climate change. UNDP also supported the preparation of the project proposal for the development of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) which

will be submitted to the GCF in the first quarter of 2023.

The country is also part of UNDP's flagship initiative, the **Climate Promise**: From Pledge to Impact - Leveraging the Climate Promise to turn enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions into ambitious climate action. It aims to create a groundwork for undertaking initial activities necessary for the **implementation of the enhanced NDCs** by creating an enabling environment for better coordination among the key national stakeholders, and for delivery of its ambitious climate actions by development of concrete project proposals and resource mobilization for their realisation.

The collaboration with the City of Skopje in the last 4 years resulted in expanded base of environmental data, information and studies needed for informed decision making, and created field **models for enhancing urban resilience**. The capacities of the **City of Skopje** administration have been strengthened for delivering faster and high-quality services to its citizens and involvement of local stakeholders during program design and implementation. Several studies which determine future actions that will advance the local environmental agenda have been completed: Biotope Map for the Skopje Region, Inventory of Riparian Habitats and an Action Plan for Skopje agglomeration. Groundwater Study of the Skopje agglomeration, Water Management Strategy for the Skopje region, Study for identification of possible transmission paths of hexavalent chrome in Zeden Mountain underground waters and their impact on Rasche spring that supplies the city with drinking water, Strategic planning document for the redesign of the public spaces in the city central area of the City of Skopje, as well as the technical documentation for establishment of a green corridor along the Serava and Lepenec Rivers. The City of Skopje has established models for enhancing urban resilience and has tested those models to provide proof of concept: Skopje Green Cadastre, Construction of Green Roofs on Gradski Trgovski Centar and on Dom na Kultura "Koco Racin", Greening of slopes of Kale Skopje Fortress. The Skopje Lab, the Center for Innovation of City of Skopje that was established with UNDP's support, built capacities of the City of Skopje administration in new approaches and techniques of service design and delivery, help in designing or re-designing two services to increase the satisfaction of citizens that are using that service, and created an enabling environment for enhanced cooperation with citizens and businesses.

## Models for urban resilience

enhanced

In 2022, FAO supported the development of an **E-agri web platform**, "E-Agriculture (<http://e-zemjodelstvo.mk/>)" to improve climate resilience of agriculture. The platform integrates national agriculture data, including market info, climate data, and spatial data, from various digital systems and databases (such as the Agricultural Market Information System, the national "Agro-meteo" platform of the National Hydro-met Service, as well as information from the National Spatial Database through the **global Earth Map platform** (<https://northmacedonia.earthmap.org>)). The tool will inform policymakers in creating policies and measures for sustainability transitions in agriculture. The platform also offers a free "My Farm" tool for farmers to track inputs and outputs and improve their farm productivity and income, while maintaining environmental sustainability. (Contribution

to SDCF Output Indicator: 3\_1\_30).

Further, the government was supported to develop national strategy and mechanisms to promote **climate-resilient seed systems**. In 2022, the following results were achieved: i) Completion of a legal **analysis of the national seed legislation**, highlighting key shortcomings and gaps against best international practices and offering recommendations for improving the institutional and legal framework for seed and planting material production. ii) In partnership with the UKIM Institute of Agriculture, in 2022 FAO implemented on-farm demonstrations and online training programs aimed at enhancing the skills of around 60 farmers, agricultural producers, seed farm representatives, agricultural cooperatives, and National Extension Agency representatives. This effort is aimed at promoting the recovery and propagation of climate-resilient, local seed varieties, aligning with one of the National Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development 2021-2027's goals of increasing biodiversity in agriculture and securing food supply through the production of high-quality, climate-tolerant seeds for key crops. (Contribution to SDCF Output Indicators: 3\_1\_10 and 3\_1\_30). In 2022, FAO supported the Government to successfully conclude North Macedonia's second Green Climate Fund (GCF) readiness project. A major step to enhance the private sector engagement in climate action and investments has been the Government's decision in April 2022, for nominating the Fund of Innovation and Technology Development (FITD) of North Macedonia to be the **first national entity to initiate the GCF accreditation process**. If accredited as a National Direct Access Entity, FITD will be side by side with International Access Entities to the GCF, such as United Nations agencies, multilateral development banks, international financial institutions. Through the FITD, the country could access the GCF directly, exercising full country ownership of climate change funding and better integrating it with its national climate action plans. As a first step, a first joint Public Call entitled "Climate Change Challenge 2022" was launched, awarding five private companies to implement their project ideas that propose development or use of innovative climate-friendly, clean technologies that can contribute to climate change mitigation or adaptation in the country priority sectors. (Contribution to SDCF Output Indicator 3\_1\_30). In collaboration with the Deputy Prime Minister's Cabinet for Economic Affairs (NDA for GCF) and the Ministry of Finance, FAO completed the **Procedure for monitoring, tracking and streamlining of climate finance** for the short and medium term. A web system was developed and piloted, accessible via [www.greendevlopment.mk](http://www.greendevlopment.mk) to aid in climate finance data collection and reporting. The first pilot report on the climate finance of the Agency for Financial Support of Agriculture and Rural Development was produced and validated. This supports the government's goal to establish a national System to track, monitor and streamline climate finance. The system could also monitor climate change finance from public, private, and alternative sources and gauge the country's progress in fulfilling its UNFCCC commitment to mobilize climate finance for climate adaptation and mitigation. (Contribution to SDCF Output Indicator 3\_1\_70)

To support the Government in engaging the private sector in low-emission and climate-resilient development, FAO developed the first **online toolkit for private sector engagement in climate action**. The online toolkit serves as navigation across crucial terminology, concepts, experiences, and opportunities that should help private sector actors engage with climate action and climate investment. It

contains information on climate change, threats, and opportunities for the private sector triggered by climate change, climate finance, climate technologies, and the roles of private sector actors in mitigating and adapting to climate change. The toolkit also guides private sector actors across the institutional and policy context related to climate action in North Macedonia. (Contribution to Output Indicator: 3\_1\_30). In 2022, FAO supported the NDA for the GCF in delivering [eight thematic trainings on climate topics](#) identified during a 2021 Capacity Needs Assessment for the GCF. The trainings enhanced the skills of 140 government employees from relevant institutions to govern and coordinate climate action and finance. (Contribution to Output Indicator 3\_1\_30)

FAO worked closely with the Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy and of Environment and Physical Planning, to prepare a full project proposal for the Adaptation Fund aimed at enhancing the climate resilience of Radovish's agricultural production through better irrigation, land and water management. The proposal, with a budget of USD 9.9 million, is pending submission.

In 2022, UNDP, IOM and UNECE started the main implementation phase of the **Green Financing Facility**. Main activities were focused on the development of the renewable energy and energy efficiency tools and finalising the legal framework for establishment of GFF. In 2022, UNECE prepared a revision and update of the GEFF Technology Selector Tool for North Macedonia. As online platform, it allows users to access a global directory for green technologies. Among the technologies currently included in the platform, the selection ranges from energy efficient heat pumps and solar panels that produce renewable energy to water efficient drip irrigation systems and no-till seeding machines that support sustainable land management. Further, UNECE selected two consultants for designing and implementing trainings and started developing a training curriculum for Project Consultants and Verification Consultants, who in turn will support the companies in designing and verifying EE and RE projects. The clearance process of the agreement between UNDP and EBRD is in a final stage, and the due diligence process of the participating local banks have been completed.

In 2022, UNICEF in partnership with the Bureau for Development of Education (BDE) contributed with inputs in the natural sciences curricula development for the 2nd and 5th grade in primary education. Additionally, UNICEF in partnership with the BDE developed teaching materials for climate change and environment education with experiential learning activities for preschool (kindergartens) and primary education. The teaching materials, accompanied with videos, serve the teachers and educators for advancing the climate and environment education in kindergartens and schools. Further, UNICEF in partnership with the CSO "Macedonian Ecological Society" developed a framework for the network of science centres to support the implementation of science curricula in the education system based on experiential learning. The science centres that were involved in the developing of the framework were: Hydrobiological Institute - Ohrid, Natural History Museum - Skopje, National Park Galichica, Education Centre "Negrevo in Pehcevo, National Technics - Skopje, Botanical Garden Natural Sciences Faculty - Skopje. Design and implement evidence-based communication for development initiatives on youth led climate action. UNICEF communication team reached 140,929 people and engaged 5,113 on social media with posts related to environment and climate change.

UNIDO accomplished the adoption of the rulebook on types of categories of licenses for the management of refrigerants and/or products containing refrigerants; monitoring and permanent control of consumption of HCFC and other substances controlled by the Montreal Protocol on the substances that deplete the ozone layer (evaluation of 50 import licenses); monitoring of the recovery and recycling scheme with 25,009.50 kg of controlled substances and their blends recovered and recycled in 2021; development of a study on refrigerant waste quantities, including methodology for data on waste refrigerants and waste RAC equipment development and questionnaire related to the RAC equipment life cycle. Within stage II, UNIDO completed the review of the current national legislation and data collection; assessment of the service shops to be granted with recovery and recycling equipment; assessment of the additional equipment for service shops; and the list of the equipment to be granted to the service shops.

UNIDO conducted a climate technology assessment for the industrial sector; finalized the development of secondary legislation on Energy Audits of Large Enterprises with the Ministry of Economy and North Macedonia Energy Agency; completed the energy management system (EnMS) implementation and third-party certification to ISO 50001 for the building complex of the Government and Presidency of North Macedonia; continued the execution of the technical assistance facility and the performance-based financial reward mechanism; and conducted the final evaluation of the project and data collection for the project's impact evaluation.

During the reporting period, UNESCO worked in coordination with UNESCO National Commissions of beneficiary countries and participating sites in the Western Balkans to support capacity development in the field of climate change, disaster risk management, and protection and promotion of Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage sites. In particular, a training programme was developed and delivered for relevant stakeholders in UNESCO designated sites, including three Online Sessions held between the 4th and the 11th of October 2022, and a Regional Workshop held in Ohrid, from the 17th to the 21st of October 2022. The training provided the participants with knowledge on identifying relevant data to implement disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) measures, procedures for rapid assessment of climate and disaster risks, and identifying DRR and CCA options. The training also contributed towards creating a knowledge network made of professionals working in cultural and natural sites in South-East Europe that, after the training, is expected to keep on interacting and sharing DRR/CCA experiences and solutions for the preservation of UNESCO designated sites.

#### **SOLUTIONS ARE IDENTIFIED AND SCALED-UP AT CENTRAL AND LOCAL LEVELS FOR INTEGRATED, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (WATER, LAND, FORESTS, BIODIVERSITY)**

The first **National Red Books of Reptiles and Amphibians** was developed with UNEP support, assisting the country's conservation policies, information needs, analyses of the status, trends and threats to these species and catalysing specific actions for biodiversity protection. The 2022 initiative for valorisation of old individual trees with exceptional natural characteristics and localities with important plant

communities will improve the **effective management** in terms of application of protection measures for its natural, health, cultural or other values. A **strategic environmental assessment procedure** for the **draft management plan for Shar Mountains national park** contributes to the process of adoption of such planning document, guiding the actual sustainable management of the area and its natural values. In addition to the **draft management plan for Ohrid Lake**, the region will receive an expert opinion i.e, a **Feasibility study of natural and cultural values** that will further support the urban planning decision-making processes, while at the same time protecting the Ohrid Region unique values. The identified high **nature value forests** (at least 188, spreading over almost 56 000 ha) with proposed forest management guidelines for two pilot areas (Bukovikj and Belasica), as well as the experiences gained through the identification of quotas for non-timber forest products for selected plant species performed during the past several years, will serve both for sustainable management of these values, but also for identification of specific SLM/SFM practices to be implemented during 2023/4 in targeted municipalities. The produced guidelines for implementation of measures/design of green/bio-corridors for large carnivores (specifically Balkan lynx and brown bear) during construction of new infrastructure projects, are expected to contribute to increasing both traffic safety and biodiversity protection.

The legal and institutional analysis in the land sector prepared in 2022 with UN support sets the **baseline for development of the first National Soil Protection Strategy and Soil Protection Law**, thus progressing in the regulation of sustainable land management in the country. In parallel, review and update of the Local Environmental Action Plans and erosion plans for targeted municipalities (Arachinovo, Gazi Baba, Lipkovo, Zhelino, Saraj and Jegunovce) was initiated with the main objective to contribute to SLM and erosion control. The same municipalities continue working with national experts on assessment of forest and grasslands ecosystem (services), to contribute to SLM/SFM in the region. These results, as well as the lessons learned from different capacity building activities (six rangers/PAs' representatives, 16 representatives of mountaineering associations and 20 local women) are also paving the way in successfully tailoring and implementation of a SLM/SFM/LDN Training programme for national and local authorities for application of methods, approaches and practices in halting and reversing land degradation and deforestation. The **first National UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Report** presents an overview of the collected bio-physical and socio-economic data necessary for development of a sound UNCCD monitoring and reporting system, that is to be structured to serve national LD and statistical needs, as well as to respond to the obligations of North Macedonia stemming from the ratified international conventions.

UNDP also supported the development of a **feasibility study for improvement of irrigation and drainage system in Bregalnica River Basin**.

Over the year, data and information on the ongoing and planned intervention in the Prespa region were collected, and consultations with the key stakeholders on national and local level about the priorities in the areas of agriculture, tourism, water and waste management, as well as transboundary collaboration were carried out. The draft Action Document for the EU for Prespa Programme has been submitted to the EU Delegation in Skopje, and the negotiations have been initiated. The signing of the agreement with the EU and the

commencement of the Programme is expected in the second quarter of 2023.

### **CAPACITIES AT CENTRAL AND LOCAL LEVELS ARE STRENGTHENED TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO THE AIR POLLUTION THREATS AND HEALTH CONSEQUENCES IN MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES**

In 2022 **UNDP** piloted a support scheme for energy-efficiency improvements in residential buildings proved effective in reduction of the air pollution, resulting in 41% decrease of PM10 (60.359 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2020 vs. 35.5 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2021) in this area, and the decrease of polluting emissions of 60% (5.56 t in 2021 vs. 2.23 t in 2021). 129 households and low-income families from Lisice were supported to replace inefficient heating devices, and to implement energy efficiency measures (roof/façade adaptation, replacement of old windows/entry doors), and additional 270 socio-economically vulnerable households in Skopje were supported to replace their old heating devices. Support the Government in transposing the relevant pieces of secondary legislation by preparing 23 correspondent tables for the Rulebook on Labelling of Energy-Related Products and the draft Rulebook for Quality of Solid Fuels should contribute to the reduction of air pollution countrywide by forcing market operators to place new efficient stoves in the market. The monitoring data and the modelling that was done as part of the development of the Source Apportionment Study for the Skopje agglomeration provided the basis for an informed Plan of Action for the City of Skopje which should bring together multiple stakeholders to implement necessary actions and measures that will reduce the air pollution in the city. The online platform that was created will facilitate dialogue between the Government, civil society, private sector in identifying the bottlenecks and seeking consensual solutions that will tackle the problems in the medium and long term.

UNDP scaled up the activities aimed at reduction of air pollution in five new municipalities (Kumanovo, Kavadarci, Gostivar, Strumica and Struga, with the new mobilized resources. This should result in their strengthened capacities to prevent and respond to air pollution. The mobilizing capacity of academia and civil society organizations shall continue to be tapped to create solutions and help change public behavior.

### **CAPACITIES AT CENTRAL AND LOCAL LEVELS ARE STRENGTHENED TO IDENTIFY MULTI-HAZARD RISKS AND TO PLAN, FINANCE AND IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND RESPONSE, INCLUDING HUMAN DISPLACEMENT, IN LINE WITH THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK**

With **WHO** support and in collaboration with partners, strategic public health intelligence operations across all public health structures within the country was established (Public health emergency operation center and functional digitalized public health laboratory network). With engagement of the International Expert Institution -Epicconcept, the Government has tailored a Field Epidemiology Training Programme (FETP) and by strengthening capacities of 8 senior epidemiologist, have trained 48 epidemiologists from all over the country for field epidemiology, risk assessment, rapid outbreak response, using the new digitalized surveillance system, data analysis

and emergency management. This training will be rolled out and contribute towards strengthening country capacities for rapid detection of pathogens and better responding to future pandemics, epidemics and other health emergencies in line with SDG 3.d Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks. The MOH together with the National Laboratory of Public Health Institute, with WHO and USAID support, developed a Public Health Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), which contributed to tracking and saving data in real-time and improving microbiology laboratories data management and reporting. LIMS software will assist health care professionals to achieve efficient quality control and assures patient safety and compliance by meeting stringent regulatory requirements. This action contributes to SDG 3.d Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks. The MoH with the WHO support increased the capacity of 3 clinical hospitals and 8 repurposed hospital wards with equipment shortages for monitoring and intensive care at the hardest – hit regions of the country, following the donation of 50 patient monitors with 6 positive pressure ventilators (BiPAPs) and 4600 oxygen masks and allowed for appropriate oxygen therapy of COVID-19 patients, with severe respiratory illnesses.

In 2022, through UNDP's support, in line with EU Water Framework Directive, high-level basin wide hydrological and hydraulic models and flood hazard maps of the Drin River Basin have been developed, accompanied by a comprehensive socio-economic and vulnerability assessment of communities within the basin. This resulted in the identification of the most appropriate flood risk mitigation measures and activities. For the first time after more than 40 years, serious measures for rehabilitation of critical sections of the riverbed of Sateska have been initiated, including its diversion into the old riverbed. Once completed, this structural measure shall significantly reduce the flood risk for the communities along Sateska river.

Disaster preparedness for effective response of relevant emergency agencies and other local institutions in the Polog region have been enhanced through provision of equipment, organization of drills to test their capacities to efficiently respond to major floods. Draft concept for the establishment of an early warning system in the Polog region has been prepared and is expected to be operationalized by the end of 2023. Members of the Resilient Polog Network participated on a study tour in Kraljevo, Serbia and had a chance to learn from the experience of the emergency agencies and local government about measures they implement to reduce the risk of disasters in their municipality. An outline of a national-level flood risk mitigation strategy has been prepared thus creating a basis for better planning and prioritization of investments in flood risk measures countrywide. The draft regulation for preparation of municipal flood defence plans was prepared, and once it is endorsed by the Minister of Environment it will become a tool for better preparedness of municipalities to prevent and respond to floods on the local level. Guidance for mainstreaming disaster reduction in urban planning was developed and piloted on the detailed urban plan for the village of Kamenjane. Investments in flood risk reduction were made throughout the Polog region. More than 40 ha of erosive land was afforested/reforested in the National Park Shara Mountain. The riverbed of Bogovinjka

Reka was reconstructed, and the storm water network in Gostivar was cleaned thus reducing the risk of urban floods.?

UNDRR supported the strengthening of evidence-based decision making for DRR, through the roll out of the INFORM sub-national model risk index, mapping vulnerability, exposure and coping capacity across sub-national entities in North Macedonia and the broader Southeast European region. The implementation of the INFORM sub-national model risk index was done in collaboration with the National Sendai Focal Point and the European Commission Joint Research Centre, with financial support by USAID, and results are available online.

### **NATIONAL AND LOCAL CAPACITIES STRENGTHENED, AND AWARENESS INCREASED FOR WASTE REDUCTION AND EFFICIENT WASTE MANAGEMENT (CHEMICAL, WATER, MUNICIPAL WASTE, HAZARDOUS WASTE, MEDICAL WASTE – INCLUDING IN RURAL AREAS)**

In 2022, UNOPS started remediation activities. Excavation started in June, and until end of December 480,25 tons of HCH waste was excavated from the former chemical factory OHIS - major environmental hotspot for the capital. The HCH was packed and transported to France.

UNIDO completed the purchasing of the laboratory equipment and consumables for enhancing the analytical capacities of two laboratories on environmental and human bio-monitoring; site set-up activities, i.e. fencing, zoning and marking of the site; erection of environmental enclosure; installation of compressors for negative pressure and the air purification system; delivery of the needed equipment and tools (UN approved drums and containers; PPE; wastewater collection tanks and wastewater filtration unit; decontamination units for the workers; air monitoring instruments; a handheld instrument for soil analyses (XRF); machinery (conveyor belt with the mounted funnel; trucks, bulldozers, cranes, etc.). The foreseen quantities of 477.1 tons of HCH waste excavated, packed, exported and destroyed, while 126.37 tons of HCH contaminated soil excavated, packed and temporarily stored awaiting exportation, out of which around 20 tons have recently been exported. Environmental and human bio-monitoring was regularly performed and the results of the same did not exceed the limit values, confirming that the installed safety features and implemented safety procedures and standards during the site remediation activities minimize and eliminate the risk for the environment and humans.

IOM supported vulnerable migrants' health and hygiene and environmental cleaning infrastructure through access to quality water and wastewater management in migrant reception centres including waste collection and proper disposal.

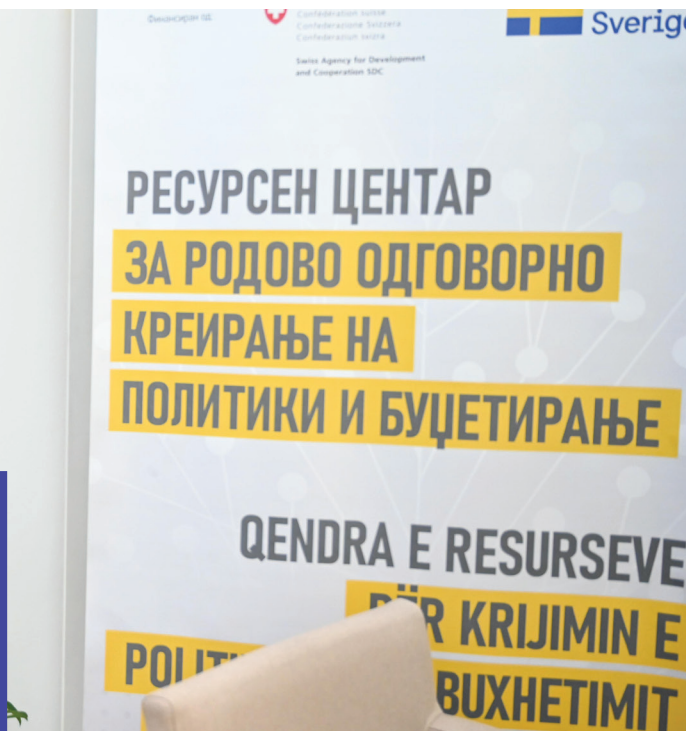
ITU, UNEP and UNITAR started the work on a regional e-Waste monitor, through trainings, questionnaires and discussions, and research and data collection / status on e-waste legislation, statistics and management at national level. These activities were developed in close partnerships with national counterparts.

## OUTCOME 4

# Good governance



*By 2025, people in Whole country benefit from improved rule of law; evidence-based, anticipatory and gender-responsive policies; greater social cohesion; and effective service delivery by transparent, accountable and responsive institutions.*



The first Resource Center on gender-responsive policymaking and budgeting was promoted in North Macedonia, under the leadership of MLSP and thanks to the continued support by Sweden and Switzerland-SDC. The Centre will further advance the Government's gender equality commitments and will provide opportunities for continued exchange, learning and replication of good practices, not only in the country but across the region. The role of public administration is crucial in developing policies and programmes that are responsive to the needs of women and men in society. *Credit: UN Women*

## THE RULE OF LAW, ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL, ESPECIALLY THOSE LEFT BEHIND ADVANCED THROUGH INCLUSIVE AND GENDER RESPONSIVE LEGAL, POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND STRENGTHENED CAPACITIES BUILDING

Throughout 2022, the UN supported the national partners to accelerate policy, legal and institutional reforms critical for EU accession and attainment of SDGs. Capitalizing on their comparative advantage and complementarity, multiple UN agencies contributed to aligning national laws and policies with EU *acquis* and international standards, focusing on people at risk or left behind.

UNICEF commenced a major transformation of the justice for children into a non-punitive and restorative system. The amendments to the Criminal Code on violence against children, Justice for Children Law and Law on Execution of Sanctions were developed to ensure a justice system that prioritizes the protection and development of children in conflict with the law. The reforms were sustained through the development and adoption of the **inter-sectoral Strategy for Prevention and Justice for Children for 2022-2026**, designed with participation of children, along with expenditure analysis

with recommendations for adequate and equitable budget allocations, capacity building, awareness raising, and advocacy. A common framework for standardized training for all professionals dealing with children at risk, and children in conflict and in contact with the law was designed. More than 800 professionals were engaged in different capacity building activities, such as, in implementing the trauma informed approach, multisectoral work in the J4C system, establishment of the Barnahus model. Out of this number 150 were trained on trauma informed approach, while 200 were trained on multisectoral work. The target groups included judges, prosecutors, mediators, lawyers, social workers, school support staff, and staff in small group homes, educational correctional facility, and the juvenile prison. UNICEF elaborated five programmes on rehabilitation, reintegration and resocialization of these vulnerable children.

Specific measures stemming from the **Judicial Sector Reform Strategy (2017-2022)** were implemented with UNOPS support. They are related to enforcement of the Hague Conventions on international Legal Cooperation in Civil Matters (HCCH) by judges, lawyers, and social protection professionals. The Civil Procedure Code and amendments to the Law on Civil Liability for Defamation and Insult were prepared, jointly with national partners. Eleven bylaws for implementation of the Public Prosecution Law

were elaborated, out of which seven were adopted, including a rulebook on cooperation of the authorities with EUROJUST.

Together with national partners and other UN agencies, **OHCHR contributed to human rights compliant policies and legislation.** The law on compensation of victims of violent crimes, 2022-2026 Equality and Non-discrimination Strategy, and criminal code revisions on violence against women and children were enacted. The authorities were supported in engaging with UN human right mechanisms, especially in preparation of the state periodic report under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). NHRIs, organizations of persons with disability and civil society benefited from participation in regional thematic consultations, among others, on reviewing and developing CRPD general comments.

**UN Women contributed to several milestones on gender equality,** achieved jointly with national partners. They include the new [National Strategy on Gender Equality \(2022-2027\)](#), which provides 17 specific objectives and emphasizes the importance of adequate financing for gender equality, and the [Organic Budget Law](#) that includes gender equality among its key budgetary principles and stipulates provisions that require budget users to consider gender equality priorities in budget planning and execution. The new [Public Finance Management Reform Programme \(2022-2025\)](#) developed by the Ministry of Finance foresees gender tagging of budget programmes (contributing to SDG 5.c.; SDG 16.6). The second Gender Equality Index (2022) was developed in cooperation with SSO, which scores North Macedonia 64.5 points, an increase of 2.5 points compared to the previous index.

**Important advances were made on disability inclusion.** UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and OHCHR supported the development of a new Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023-2030. Consultations with persons living with disabilities and their representative organizations, and civil society enabled their voices to be heard. OHCHR supported the Ombudsperson in leading a subregional dialogue on the best practices in monitoring the CRPD implementation, involving 120 stakeholders from Western Balkans and EU countries, and the CRPD Committee. Through joint advocacy, 100 marginalized people became more aware of their rights and the pathways available to seek protection, access to justice and effective remedy.

**UNHCR's advocacy and strategic engagement resulted in improved capacities and framework on international protection of displaced persons, and free legal aid.** In 2022, there were 27,425 new arrivals, and total of 168 asylum applications, with less than 1% of them decided on the merits. UNHCR undertook 162 advocacy interventions and provided expert advice in 39 instances to align the national legal framework and practices with international protection standards. In the context of the influx of refugees from Ukraine, response plans were recommended to the government. The strengthened advocacy and partnerships **to end statelessness by 2024 resulted in a Roadmap** outlining the key steps to be taken towards a systemic solution, including changes to the Civil Registration Law. A total of 190 people, majority of whom directly assisted by UNHCR and MYLA, were granted citizenship based on the amendments of the Citizenship Law.

**UNODC continued strengthening national capacities in countering organized crime.** Criminal justice professionals increased knowledge and skills in investigating, prosecuting

and adjudicating cases of illicit drug and arms trafficking, trafficking in human beings, smuggling of migrants, and illicit financing of terrorism. 30 representatives of various agencies and 12 prosecutors and judges familiarized with strategic risks to security, including terrorism and associated threats from transnational organized crime and corruption. 36 stakeholders improved their understanding of the systemic gaps and risk factors of human trafficking based on the analysis of 13 trafficking cases, validation discussions and production of a national report. These efforts informed the draft amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code, a multidisciplinary workshop for 55 national representatives, and a launch of the report "The Scale and Scope of Human Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe".

IOM supported the mobile teams in identification, referral, and assistance to victims of trafficking and smuggling of migrants. 691 vulnerable people were reached, out of which 13 victims of trafficking (VoT) and 142 potential victims of trafficking. Almost 80% of the identified VoTs were women and girls, minors, and country nationals, mostly trafficked for sexual exploitation, sexual and labour exploitation and forced marriages.

#### **CAPACITIES OF CENTRAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS STRENGTHENED TO BETTER PLAN, BUDGET, MONITOR AND TRACK EXPENDITURE AND LEVERAGE RESOURCES AND IMPROVE DESIGN AND EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES**

**UNOPS contributed to enhanced national capacities on EU integration, EU policies and negotiation process.** 500 administrative staff from the Parliament and key executive institutions, such as SEI, ministries of foreign affairs, justice, economy, defence, interior, agriculture, finance, financial intelligence agency and others were trained. The NPPA Portal and digital solutions connected the institutions engaged in the European negotiation process into one system. The preparations of the Macedonian version of the EU acquis accelerated with provision of translation, technical editing, linguistic revision, and proofreading services. Various policy analysis, standard operating procedure, baseline studies, reports, manuals were produced to support the SEI and the Government in making informed decisions in the accession process.

**UNDP supported both central and local government in public finance management reforms.** The focus was on alleviating the multidimensional crisis' adverse effects, but also on strengthening institutional resilience to future potential shocks. The changes made to the Law on financing of LSGs introduced new mechanisms for local financing. Digital tools on decentralization and informal economy were developed for MLSG and MF respectively. The Performance-based and Equalization Fund was created, and one additional municipal tax collection platform was updated. **UNDP also updated of the Municipal Development Index (MDI)** which was recalculated with the 2021 Census data. As a result, 50 municipalities have installed and regularly publish their financial information on the [e-Dashboard](#). The Model of E-municipality was implemented in 19 municipalities. Five more municipalities (or a total of 46) were supported to report through the [e-Dashboard on municipal budget execution](#). Tangible results were achieved in the **delivery of people-centred and better quality services** - seven municipalities

benefited from the inter-municipal cooperation, including digitalization, that decreased costs and improved quality of services; 30 municipalities improved firefighting services, 17 fire brigades, covering the territory of 46 municipalities were equipped with vehicles and equipment; three rural municipalities piloted a model of public-private-partnership on biowaste management to increase revenues; and seven municipalities benefited from the SDG aligned Technical Documentation Fund. The municipal grants scheme continued to be implemented that supported priority community projects in 40 municipalities selected through public consultations. More than 170 councillors and civil servants from 10 municipalities strengthened their capacities in executing their decision-making, oversight and representation powers at local level.

**As a result of UN Women support, key government institutions mainstreamed gender and aligned their planning and programming with the EU gender equality acquis.** The SEI and Sector Working Groups, as leading and coordinating entities in the EU accession process, engendered parts of their EU integrative work. Also, IPA dedicated departments within ministries and public institutions reached better understanding of gender mainstreaming in IPA processes. Sustainability and local ownership of gender mainstreaming processes was achieved with the creation of gender champions in 7 institutions, who successfully completed the first Training of Trainers. The main producers of administrative gender data and availability of sex-disaggregated data were identified, through the mapping of SDG gender indicators throughout the statistical system. Furthermore, two modules for training of IPA staff were developed, based on the findings and mapped needs of administration on gender mainstreaming. Additionally, **two draft public administration laws, alongside the 5-year Programme of the State Statistical Office were engendered.** The 20 year-trends were identified through the trend-analysis of the Women and Men publications; recommendations on how to improve gender equality in sports through the conducted analysis were produced. Public administration staff from 16 institutions as well as representatives from various institution in the statistical system were trained in utilizing gender statistics and equipped to conduct gender analysis.

**UN Women contributed to improved public oversight on gender responsive policies.** The State Audit Office was capacitated to mainstream gender perspective in audit practices. As a result, SAO completed the first Performance Audit on Gender Equality as important step forward ensuring an independent oversight of public spending and strengthening the accountability of the institutions to advance gender equality, and produced a [Methodological Guidance on Gender Mainstreaming Gender in the Audit Practices](#). UN Women facilitated discussions between the Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities and the Club of Women MPs on advocacy and lobbying for gender responsive policies and budgets. The Committee held two public hearings, one on mainstreaming gender in the draft [Organic Budget Law](#), and second on the new [National Strategy on Gender Equality \(2022-2027\)](#) (SDG5; SDG 16). 169 representatives from 13 state institutions strengthened their capacities through the MLSP's led [Resource Centre on Gender Responsive Policymaking and Budgeting](#). In 2022, 11 ministries and state institutions mainstreamed gender and provided specific budget allocations under selected

sectoral programmes. 307 representatives (212 public officials and 95 municipal councillors) were trained on GRB and GE. As a result, 67 programmes and 357 measures have been engendered at local level that address the needs of women and the most vulnerable. At local level, [Municipality of Kriva Palanka](#) was supported to develop its first gender responsive Strategy for local development (2022-2025).

**UNICEF contributed to transforming the primary school network and budget allocations,** with a view to improve public expenditures for children. Capacity building and advocacy at both national and municipal levels were undertaken to ensure that all primary schools can deliver good quality education and that allocations are based on objective criteria and are equitable. The new formula and funding mechanism for primary education were publicly endorsed by the Ministry of Education and Science and Ministry of Finance. Support was provided to MoES and the Bureau for Development of Education to revise the standard. In addition, UNICEF produced the baseline assessment of the **adequacy of justice for children funding**. It helped national and local institutions in better tracking, planning and executing expenditures related to justice for children and prevention programmes. The findings of the Child Rights Monitoring Landscape Analysis were used for advocacy and broad consultations on the establishment of a monitoring system across various sectors concerned with child rights.

The **high-level Conference on “Sustainable Migration Governance in the Western Balkans”** on 15-16 November 2022, supported by IOM, resulted in a Declaration to strength sub-regional cooperation in addressing smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, notably by increasing access to regular pathways for migrants and fostering social inclusion, readmission and reintegration practices and procedures.

#### **INCREASED UTILIZATION OF FORESIGHT AND QUALITY AND DISAGGREGATED DATA FOR IMPROVED FORWARD LOOKING, EVIDENCE-BASED, RESULTS-ORIENTED AND TRANSPARENT POLICY-MAKING**

The UN invested its collective expertise to improve evidence-based, anticipatory and inclusive policy making and long term strategic visioning, based on data. The process of formulation of the first **National Development Strategy** that sets the country's development path for the next two decades was a turning point in whole of government and whole of society policy making. **UNDP** supported engagement and consultations of more than 2,500 citizens and multisector development actors in the NDS dream labs and consultations creating the future. In parallel 23 baseline analyses were elaborated on areas relevant for the sustained development of the country, including education, water management, transport infrastructure, waste management and waste infrastructure, culture and culture heritage, economic development, public finance and fiscal policy, youth and sport, tourism, balanced regional development, labour market, spatial planning, environment, climate change and habitats, digitalization, social policy and pension system, health and health infrastructure, energy system, rule of law and fight against corruption, public institutions, green economy and green jobs, and finally science and research. The first reiteration of the NDS is expected to be



## 2022 DETAILED RESULTS

completed before the end of 2023, along with the Action Plan to operationalize its implementation and set up the NDS governing and institutional financing framework. UNWomen contributed to engendering all NDS areas encompassed in the initial phase of its development.

The JP “**Evidence-based Migration Policy Planning and Discourse in North Macedonia**”, implemented jointly by UNHCR, IOM and UNFPA, various institution and capacity building and other activities were undertaken. UNHCR’s foresight needs assessment for migration management in North Macedonia was based on desk research and 14 interviews with key national stakeholders’ members of the Intergovernmental Body for Development and Implementation of the Migration Policy 2021-2025 and other relevant stakeholders. 328 representatives of government, parliament, judiciary, academia, private sector, CSOs, NGOs, IOs and others increased their competence on anticipatory migration with UNHCR and IOM support. Three data management tools/mechanisms were produced for the SSO purposes. Also, support was provided in procurement of new IT systems/databases/software or upgrades of the existing ones to the MISA, MoI OKRA Unit and the NBRNM to further enhance the migration management data collection and analysis and institutions’ digitalization processes.

Under the same joint programme, UNFPA, IOM and UNHCR increased the national partners’ capacities in exploiting alternatives sources of data. The landscape analysis on remittances was followed by a national survey of remittance which provided the NBNM with insights into the channels for receiving and household use of remittances. A pioneering effort for mapping potential data sources for migration estimates using Big Data was completed based on the Integrated Modelling of European Statistics (IMEM). The capacities of 169 national stakeholders (ministries, national institutions, academia, civil society), of which 108 women (64%) and 61 men (36%), were strengthened in remittance data and application of Big Data in estimating migration and policy making. 44 representatives from different institutions were trained both in the application of Integrated Modelling of European Statistics (IMEM) mirror statistics model.

UNFPA support to the first official publication and dissemination of the 2021 Census results was critical. The publication, containing key results and visualizations, in print and electronic format, increased knowledge and awareness about major demographic tendencies in the country. As North Macedonia was the first country in the Western Balkans to conduct a census using combined methodology of field enumeration and data from population registries, UNFPA supported SSO in disseminating good practices at international and regional fora. Additional expert support was provided in the development of a **new Programme for Statistical Surveys 2023-2027**, identifying relevant data needs in national and ratified international documents, dedicating a separate segment of the analysis on the needs for SDG indicators data. SDG Target 17.18. The review of the Strategy for Demographic Policies 2022-2024 revealed areas e more effective policy response to demographic challenges is needed. The regional forum “Building Youth-Friendly Cities in a World of 8 Billion People”, organized in November 2022 in Bosnia and Herzegovina that gathered 120 mayors, municipal representatives, and young people focused on youth participation and strengthening demographic resilience in societies.

MISA was supported with ITU technical support for developing a National ICT Strategy 2023-2027 that provides a strategic framework for the process of accelerated digital transformation of the country through the digitization of public services for citizens and businesses, including advanced digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, and cloud services.

### **SOCIAL COHESION AND TRUST IMPROVED THROUGH DIALOGUE AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION BY YOUTH, WOMEN, ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES, REFUGEES, AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS**

In 2022, UN strengthened social cohesion by promoting youth and women participation and inclusion of people left furthest behind, like people with disabilities, migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, stateless people and certain ethnic minorities. UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF supported the Agency of Youth and Sports in the creation of a new National Youth Strategy 2023-2027. The needs and views of young people of different backgrounds were generated through broad youth engagement and U-report consultations across the country. The process of establishing local youth councils and empowering youth was supported in five municipalities.

Under the **Regional Youth Project, UNDP and UNFPA** broaden up partnerships around constructive narratives to include regional, public media and local youth media networks, and young social media influencers. 35 high school students and 6 teachers from North Macedonia expanded their knowledges on misinformation, disinformation and fake news. Young people with disabilities, youth in rural areas, high school and university association engaged in efforts to build mutual trust and understanding.

UNICEF scaled up opportunities for young people to have a say in major national policies, including the National Transforming Education Commitment – as part of the Global Transforming Education Summit, National Development Strategy, National Strategy for Prevention and Justice for Children. Their engagement through multiple live debates, consultations, and U-Report, which increased its base in 2022 from 200 to 920. A total of 465 young people from diverse backgrounds (majority of which were girls) actively participated and developed 94 innovations and products through four major programmes: UPSHIFT, Generation Unlimited, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Justice for Children (J4C). 150 young people participated UPSHIFT programme focused on youth-led solutions to environmental challenges in three areas: water, air, and energy. Out of the 30 developed solutions, 15 received seed funding and were implemented in communities. UNICEF’s nation-wide campaign “Just a child” raised awareness about children in contact with the law. It attracted 313,546 engagements and 315,783 views. The innovative programme of child and youth advocates enabled a safe space for 13 children and young people from small group homes and the educational correctional facility to meet, interact and learn about their rights and share experiences and concerns about the justice system. The programme was beneficial for both the children in conflict with the law and the institutions responsible for reintegration.

Within the JP “Evidence-based Migration Policy Planning

and Discourse in North Macedonia”, implemented jointly by UNHCR, IOM and UNFPA, UNHCR promoted positive public narratives towards refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons in partnership with CSOs, such as YEF, MYLA, media and other stakeholders. 87 narrative transformation activities were implemented, including advocacy, Communication Strategy for Social Change, support to Skopje Jazz Festival and Skopje Marathon and other public events, and flagship #IBelong campaign to end statelessness by 2024. In cooperation with the Law Faculty Justinianus Primus of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje, the first Education Pathway was piloted providing an opportunity for refugees and asylum seekers to enrol at the university, increase their self-reliance and economic and social empowerment.

UN Women supported [13 women’s grassroots organizations](#) in voicing their needs in local decision making. This resulted in [74 policy recommendations](#) to policymakers on engendering local public infrastructure and services, including counselling for victims of domestic violence. As a result, over 3,000 women from local communities were empowered to voice their needs and priorities in the local decision making in 16 municipalities (contributing to SDG 5.c; SDG 5.5; SDG 16.6; SDG 16.7). In addition, UN Women supported NALAS in organizing the [4th Forum of Women Mayors in SEE](#). Over 60 mayors and local level officials exchanged experiences, best practices, and challenges on promoting gender equality in local life.

OHCHR and the UN family, national and international partners jointly marked the Human Rights Day amplifying the voices and vision of young people. Under the slogan “Dignity, Freedom and Justice for All”, 300 young people of different age, gender and backgrounds through artwork stood up for their rights and the rights of their peers who are vulnerable and invisible, and action they take for equal rights and freedoms.

#### **ENHANCED NATIONAL AND LOCAL CAPACITIES IN ASSET RECOVERY AND COUNTERING CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC LIFE THROUGH BETTER ENFORCEMENT OF ANTI-CORRUPTION LAWS AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES**

UNODC supported the Government, law enforcement, prosecution, judiciary and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the **Western Balkan Anti-Corruption and Illicit Assets Flows Recovery Roadmap**, as part of the

Berlin process. Capacities of national partners to counter institutional and low-level corruption were increased through supporting the implementation of the National Strategy on Financial Investigations and Asset Recovery. UNODC proposed normative changes to ensure safeguards for integrity and accountability. Several new initiatives were launched, including corruption in sports, and combating low-scale corruption.

UNDP supported the country’s anti-corruption efforts in the UNCAC implementation (Articles 7, 8 and 10; as well as articles 53 to 59) and prepared an Assessment of the corruption risks within the national and municipal owned public enterprises. More than 200 civil servants, mayors and municipal councillors increased capacities in areas related to local governance, oversight, anticorruption, and public finance management. UNDP facilitated cross-border cooperation between North Macedonia and Kosovo in combatting illicit arms trafficking. 415 police officers from the country increased capacities and exchanged experiences with their peers on data collection and analysis, weapons categorization, and conversion. Joint awareness raising campaigns on misuse of small arms and light weapons and celebratory shooting took place on both sides. 200 police officers were trained how to use the new Police Information Management System.