

NORTH MACEDONIA

Safe and innovative health services in times of COVID-19

End Date: 31 March 2022

SUMMARY

The project increased access to life-saving sexual and reproductive health services in remote areas for vulnerable women and adolescent girls, including through mobile clinics. It digitalized COVID-19 vaccination with a modern and easy-to-use e-immunization portal and an e-immunization registry to improve data collection and coverage rate calculation.

Achievements under Pillar 1: Health First

- **1,300+** health facilities applied behavioral insights to address vaccine hesitancy
- **400 health workers and managers strengthened capacities** to collect data on immunization through a digitalized immunization registry
- A website was created for easy access to COVID-19 immunization certificates; **users downloaded 787,143 national certificates and 179,898 EU certificates**
- Access to immunization increased via mass notification, such as over 400,000 text message vaccination reminders
- **60 managers from health centres and public health institutes were trained** on planning, managing, monitoring and evaluating immunization
- **Two mobile gynaecological clinics were equipped** with sexual and reproductive health commodities and equipment; 21 health professionals learned to provide mobile services
- **A Vaccine Saves Lives campaign addressed misinformation** and hesitancy, reaching 806,000 people; behavioural insights surveys showed increased trust in vaccines, from 56 percent in December 2020 to 69 percent in June 2021



Mobile gynaecological clinics provide free check-ups for early detection of cervical cancer for women and girls from remote areas.
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- **Campaign assets building on experiences and regular social media listening** will support ongoing promotion of routine childhood vaccines

Achievements under Pillar 2: Protecting People: Social Protection and Basic Services

- **10 family doctors learned to pilot targeted inquiries** to detect adverse childhood experiences
- **10 municipalities conducted mappings** of needs for social protection services for **260 at-risk families**
- Seven mobile teams of lawyers and social workers **enabled 87 families to apply for social welfare schemes** for the first time
- **Seven local civil society organizations learned to support families at risk**
- 160 social service frontline workers were trained on mental health and psychosocial support, COVID-19-related gender issues and gender-based violence
- **245 parents and caregivers received counselling** on positive parenting techniques; 750 children, youth, parents and caregivers gained mental health and psychosocial support through helplines
- Social media outreach **provided over 370,000 people with advice on positive parenting techniques** and mental health and psychosocial support

Learning and Innovation

Mobile sexual and reproductive health services for remote and underserved areas addressed the impact of COVID-19 and the uneven geographical distribution of gynecologists. The model allowed the digitalization of patient data in the national health system, easing referrals and follow-up, and ensuring safe data management. Training health-care workers is crucial as they play an important role in COVID-19 vaccine acceptance. Their knowledge and attitudes not only determine their own vaccine uptake but also their recommendations to their patients.