

2017-2018 THE MID-TERM IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

OF THE NATIONAL AGENDA
FOR THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

May 2019



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REPUBLIKA E SHQIPËRIE
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The Report, prepared on behalf of the Government of Albania, is compiled by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection with technical support provided by UNICEF in Albania, through the Observatory for the Rights of Children and Youth.

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2017-2018

THE MID-TERM IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

OF THE NATIONAL AGENDA
FOR THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN



Leave
No One
Behind

Introduction

The National Agenda for the Rights of Children 2017–2020 (hereafter, Agenda), was adopted by Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) no. 372, on 26.04.2017. The Agenda is a strategic document whose vision is to create favourable conditions for the healthy physical and healthy psycho-social development of children, and for their social inclusion and participation in all processes, through effective protection and promotion of children's rights based upon the principle of protecting the best interest of the child.

The Agenda was drafted in the light of the following:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.
- Council of Europe Strategy on the Rights of the Child.
- European Union Agenda on the Rights of the Child.

It sets out three strategic pillars:

Good governance in promoting, respecting and protecting the rights of the child. In this regard, the Agenda aims at strengthening the regulatory and institutional framework, including

the establishment of independent monitoring mechanisms, improving the monitoring processes of the situation of children's rights in order to generate reliable data to inform effective policies, and establishing appropriate mechanisms to guarantee children's participation in decision making.

Elimination of all forms of violence against children. The Agenda aims at establishing an integrated and effective child protection system, through a significantly improved legal and institutional framework.

Establishment of child and adolescent-friendly systems and services of development, education, justice, health, nutrition and social protection. In this regard, the main purpose of the Agenda is to identify the main actions of sectoral strategies, in order to assess the progress of children's rights in these fields.

Pursuant to the authority granted by Law 18/2017 'On the Rights and Protection of the Child', and by the requirements set forth in the Agenda, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MoHSP) coordinated the Agenda's monitoring process for the period 2017–2018. The State

Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights (SAPCR) supported the data collection process. The entire process was supported by UNICEF Albania, which, through the Observatory on Children and Youth's Rights, provided the technical expertise to design the methodology and analyse the information collected from the responsible institutions. The effort was made under the framework of the Joint United Nations Programme 'Leave No One Behind', funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The process for the mid-term monitoring of the Agenda took place simultaneously with another important process undertaken in the field of children's rights: the drafting the 5th and 6th periodic report of the Albanian State to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. This process—coordinated by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs in collaboration with MoHSP—produced a representational report of the actions taken in Albania for the progressive achievement of children's rights for the period 2012–2018, in compliance with the UNCRC.

NATIONAL AGENDA FOR THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Creating the favourable conditions for the healthy physical and psycho-social development of children, and for their social inclusion and participation in all processes, through effective protection and promotion of their rights, based upon the principle of the best interest of the child.

**GOOD
GOVERNANCE
FOR RIGHTS
OF THE CHILD**

**ELIMINATION OF
ALL FORMS OF
VIOLENCE
AGAINST
CHILDREN**

**CHILD AND
ADOLESCENT
FRIENDLY SYSTEMS
AND SERVICES**

Executive Summary

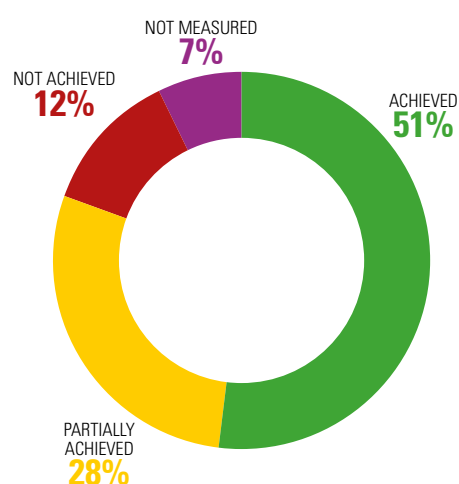
The National Agenda for the Rights of Children 2017–2020 (the Agenda) aims to achieve effective protection and promotion of children’s rights in the Republic of Albania, by applying national and international standards in this field, and by fostering an integrated and inclusive approach for guaranteeing their rights.

The present report outlines progress made with implementation of the Agenda over the period 2017–2018, through analysing the biennial level of progress made in the work of the responsible institutions and their partners with regard to implementation of the adopted measures. The report is based upon the data collected by institutions at the central and local levels, including civil society organizations, and from consultations with children groups.

The Agenda summarises a total of 265 measures and 75 result indicators, designed to monitor achievement of the objectives, divided among three strategic pillars.

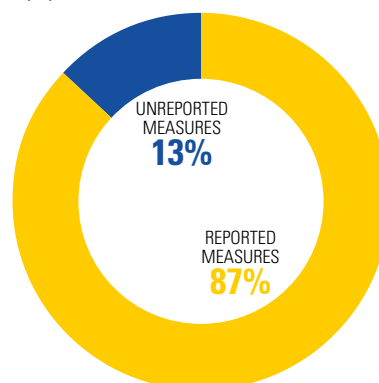
The progress reported in achievement of the **Result Indicators** by the various institutions is presented in Chart 1.

CHART 1. STATUS OF RESULT INDICATORS’ ACHIEVEMENT (%)



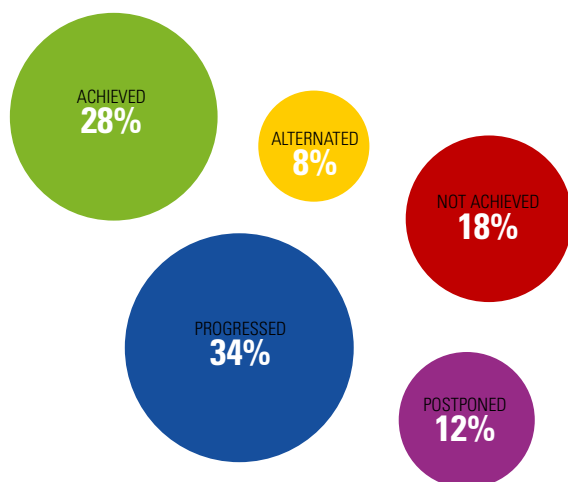
The responsible institutions provided information on implementation progress of 231 Agenda **action measures** (from the 265 adopted in the Agenda), as shown in Chart 2.

CHART 2. REPORTING OF ACTIONS/MEASURES BY RELEVANT INSTITUTIONS (%)



Meanwhile, the Progress made in Reported Measures is shown in Chart 3.

CHART 3. STATUS OF MEASURES' IMPLEMENTATION (%)



The need to review some of the action measures and result indicators has been stated throughout the reporting process. It is unclear whether the implementation time frame for the measures that are not yet implemented should be postponed and revised to fit with the remaining time frame of the Agenda, or whether those measures should be removed entirely, or replaced by new measures.

The progress reported under the **First Strategic Pillar** notes the implementation of several important initiatives intended to improve the legal framework on children's rights. These include approval of the new law 'On the Rights and Protection of the Child', the 'Criminal Justice for Children Code', and a series of improvements made to other legal packages that will make positive changes for all children in the Republic of Albania.

The Albanian Parliament has played an important role in advancing the children's rights agenda

and empowering a child-focused governance, through reactivating the Friends of Children Parliamentary Group. Independent human rights institutions, including those focused on children (Ombudsperson, Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination, Commissioner for the Right to Information and Protection of Personal Data) have demonstrated professional growth and have intensified their children-focused activities.

The 5th and 6th State Reports on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child have been completed, pursuant to UNCRC and its optional protocols for the 2012–2018 period.

There have been a number of initiatives and activities held in the spirit of improving the availability and publication of child-related data, including establishment of a Prototype of an Integrated Juvenile Justice Data System, and a data collection system for monitoring Children Growth and Nutrition Practices, as well as publication of the Albania Demographic and Health Survey 2017–2018.

However, an important assessment of the impact of the revised legislation and of the budget component focused on children is yet to be completed. Meanwhile, activities focusing on children's participation, alteration of social norms, and strengthening of capacities for promotion, respect, monitoring and reporting of children's rights at the local level remain incomplete.

Under the **Second Strategic Pillar** approval of by-laws in the framework of children's protection

is noted, as is the finalisation of other draft decisions that need to be approved thereafter. A comprehensive review of the legal framework remains to be conducted in order to comply with the latest legal changes in the field of child protection.

Progress is noted for establishing child protection structures at the local level, with an increase in the number of Child Protection Workers (CPWs), to 235 across the country. Nonetheless, this progress is far from effecting the establishment of all necessary, relevant structures in accordance with the legal provisions. Capacity building of all professionals involved, case management budgeting at the local level, supportive monitoring, and inspections based upon updated standards remain a challenge for CPWs, so that they to exercise their functions effectively.

The National Action Plan for the Protection of Children from Economic Exploitation, including Children in Street Situations (2019–2021) has been drafted, as has a draft decision to guide professionals in the management of such cases.

Progress has been made in the field of child online safety. Parallel to analysis of the legal and institutional framework in this area, as well as of existing capacities in the field, a variety of data on children and parents' online experiences has been collected. A series of measures and actions will be identified based on the information collected. A draft decision on Child Protection Measures from Access to Illegal and/or Harmful Online Content was developed in support of the Action Plan.

Raising awareness among children was made possible through the peer educators Online Safety Programme.

The financial support for the hotline ALO 116—a platform designed to collect reports of child abuse and maltreatment—has been transitioned from UNICEF to the Albanian Government/MoHSP.

In addition to the work carried by the Committee on Discipline and Ethics on cases of violence reported by children, an action plan has been drafted and educational staff training initiated to create a violence-free environment in schools.

Through government funds, the Lilium Centre has been established and inaugurated at Tirana's Mother Teresa Hospital Centre, providing specialised services for child victims of sexual abuse or other forms of violence.

Approval and review of standardised action procedures has reinforced the inter-sectoral approach required for the protection of victims and potential victims of trafficking, allowing for the protection of at least 94 children over these two reporting years.

Under the **Third Strategic Pillar**, progress has been made in the field of education and child development. The Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth (MoESY) has drafted several regulatory documents that address competence-based education concepts intertwined with components of rights, gender equality and non-discrimination,

including 'Professional standards for the qualification of pre-school teachers', and 'Pre-school education programmes for children of ages three and four years'. The actions and measures needed to enrol 5- and 6-year-old children in pre-school or kindergarten remain in focus.

The trilateral agreement between the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA), MoHSP and MoESY 'On the identification and school enrolment of compulsory school-age children', re-ensures the commitment of central level institutions for the identification and resolution of cases of out-of-school children. It is important to mention that the practical implementation of the agreement has proven to be relatively difficult, both in terms of inter-institutional cooperation and in convincing children and their families that the children must return to school.

The Action Plan for Inclusive Education, which focuses on children with special needs, has started to be implemented, while another action plan targets children of foreign citizenship, aiming to facilitate their integration into the pre-university education system in Albania.

The development and implementation of standards for the project 'Schools as community centres' has increased the opportunities for wider participation of stakeholders in school governance, especially for children and parents. Although the roles and responsibilities, as well as the membership selection process in these structures, are well defined, they still face challenges for implementation of their mission and achievement of their goals.

In the field of justice, approval of the Juvenile Justice Strategy marks the first policy document of the Albanian government that defines the main pillars of the juvenile justice reform. This strategy, along with the Criminal Justice for Children Code, and other secondary supporting legislation, is in compliance with the UNCRC and other international standards. The concepts, principles and new legal mechanisms provided for in the Code are both a novelty and a challenge to all the professionals in the field of juvenile justice. Although the professionals are being trained with the new provisions, much remains to be done to bring them up to the required standards.

The structural reorganisation of the Courts and Prosecution Offices to allow for children's sections within their judicial districts is still pending in all but seven districts, where these sections are already established and functioning.

In the field of health and nutrition, MoHSP is currently undergoing a process of reviewing and updating the primary health-care standards, in a process expected to be completed during 2019. A series of protocols to monitor maternal and newborn health in civil emergency situations has been developed.

The Albania Demographic and Health Survey 2017–2018 presents a wide range of data that allow measurement of progress in several fields, and also provides the data necessary to report the Albanian government's progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The National Committee on Iodine Deficiency Disorders, established in 2018 as experts working group, has proposed legal changes to improve the monitoring and inspection of iodised salt control.

Meanwhile, another cross-cutting working group has been established to develop the National Strategy and Action Plan for Child and Adolescent Health and Welfare.

In the field of social protection, impact of the economic aid scheme on the targeted groups at the national level remains to be assessed. In 2018, work began on drafting a law 'On Social Protection'. This draft law intends to regulate the distribution of economic assistance, the disability allowance, to ensure social protection of all citizens, especially families and individuals in need. The DCM to provide financial support to the families of the newborn is being widely implemented, catering immediately for the the needs of the child and the family.

The process of drafting the methodology and social plans has been inclusive and has involved representatives of various related sectors who play a role in guaranteeing social protection in general, including child protection. This process was also supported by international organisations. Sixteen LGUs have drafted their social plans, not all of which are budgeted, which might compromise their ability to meet the objectives.

Finally, the MoHSP has presented a national plan for the deinstitutionalisation of children placed in residential care centres. Concurrently, cases of

institutionalised children, and the capacities of their biological families, are being assessed with the purpose of reintegrating these children into their families.

Regarding budget projections, the report analyses the current expenditure for implementation of the Agenda's measures during 2017–2018. The report attempts to analyse the correlation between the projected action plan budget expenditure and the actual expenditure incurred by various funding sources. The report shows that there is no strong correlation between the measures provided for in the action plan and the budget expenditure planning. Some other conclusions drawn from this analysis include the following:

- Based upon reports covering the 2017–2018 time frame, the expenditure for implementing the action plan for this period amounted to, approximately, ALL 222 million.
- 61% of the actual expenditure is funded by the state budget and 39% by donors.
- The actual expenditure incurred and reported for the 2017–2018 period comprises 9.4% of the total projected budget for implementation of the 2017–2020 action plan.
- The actual expenditure covered by the state budget for implementation of the activities in 2017–2018 makes up 8.9% of the total expenditures planned to be covered by the state budget for implementation of the Agenda measures.
- In some cases, there have been discrepancies between the progress status of certain

measures and the actual expenditure report, while in others, the actual expenditure of implementing a measure is reported to be higher than its projected cost.

In conclusion, several factors should be taken into account when deciding upon the changes to the measures or modalities for the upcoming years. These factors include, among others, the large

number of changed, postponed, or unrealised Agenda measures until now; the thorough revisions of the legal and regulatory framework in the field of social protection and child protection; changes in institutional structures at the central level since 2017; new roles and responsibilities for local government; and findings from the State Periodic Report on the Committee on the Rights of the Child.



Photo credit: Beci/UNICEF/Albania

Methodology

The mid-term monitoring report of the Agenda presents an analysis of the results achieved and the expenditures for the 2017–2018 time frame. It also presents an overview of the progress made so far, as well as the trend for implementing and achieving the objectives by the end of the strategic period.

In view of its obligation for mid-term monitoring and reporting of the Agenda's action plan, MoHSP, supported by UNICEF in Albania, undertook the following steps for drafting the present report:

- A technical group of representatives from MoHSP, SACRP, UNICEF, Observatory for Children and Youth Rights and independent experts was established to design the methodology and data collection instruments.
- Some 40 instruments have been designed and adopted by each reporting institution (20 for the measures, and 20 for the indicators). The instruments were developed to collect detailed information for each Agenda measure and result indicator and include budget data for the 2017–2018 period.
- The instruments were presented and critiqued in seven meetings organised for this purpose. These meetings were attended by

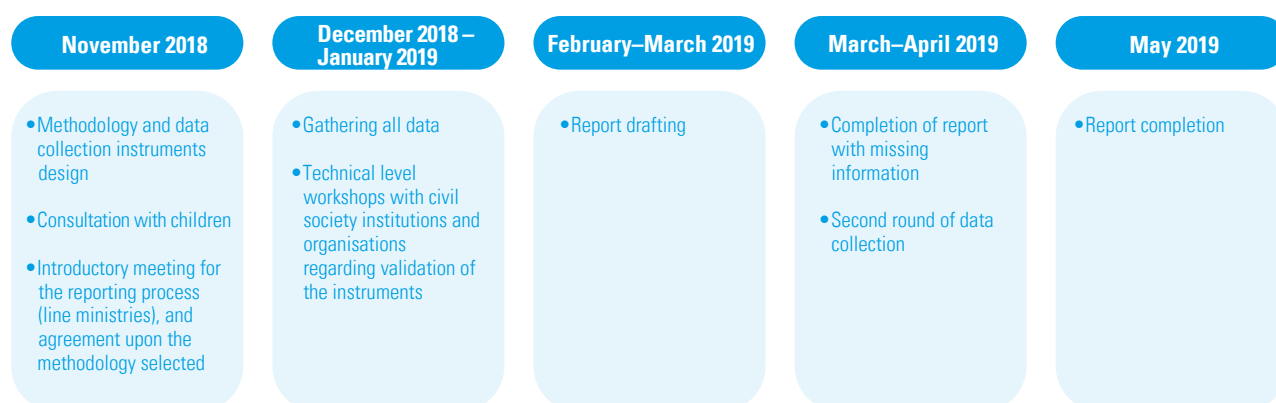
representatives of reporting institutions at both the central and the local level, as well as civil society representatives who had shown interest in this process. The focus of the meetings aligned to the Agenda's main action areas.

- Consultation with children's groups.

Following collection of the initial information, the institutions were given the time necessary to review, refine and complete the reported information. In total, twelve responsible institutions at the central level and 24 LGUs submitted information based upon which the present Report has been drafted.

Information was also provided by five civil society organisations. Their information was used to support the reported information from governmental institutions. It describes their contribution to implementing the Agenda's measures. The information was reviewed and agreed upon with the institution responsible for drafting this report.

The process was carried out during the November 2018 - May 2019 period, and underwent the following steps:



INFORMATION COLLECTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

A model instrument was designed to report on implementation of the measures provided in the Agenda. The instrument identifies all the activities planned for the 2017–2018 time frame. It requires the institutions involved to report on the completion or implementation progress status of each activity, specifying what has been completed, the challenges and issues dealt with during the implementation phase, the stakeholders involved in implementation, specific suggestions for reviewing the action plan, or replacing specific activities with new interventions, where appropriate, as well as information on actual expenditure. The instruments were tailored to the needs of each institution that had a leading or interactive role in the process of Agenda implementation.

It was a requirement to report the progress status of implementation of the activities according to the categories specified in Table 1, to ensure the harmonisation between the narrative reporting and activity implementation progress assessment by the reporting institution.

TABLE 1. ASSESSMENT OF MEASURES' IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

Status	Explanation
Implemented	Activity has progressed as planned (both results and time frames).
Progressed	Activity implementation has been initiated, but no progress has been made according to the plan (either results or time frames).
Changed	The activity has been revised. Implementation of the new activity has been initiated or completed.
Postponed	Implementation of the activity has been postponed but is still relevant.
Not achieved	The activity will not be implemented.

The second part of the instrument collected data for potential plans for the 2019–2020 period. This part of the instrument aims at collecting suggestions and opinions for potential alterations to the projections, whether made at the activity level (changes, suspension, or replacement with new activities) or the indicator level. Potential changes could be related to the institutions responsible for implementing the action plans, as well as the potential partners to be engaged, whether public or otherwise.

Upon achieving the objectives, the institutions can freely suggest new activities not planned when drafting the Agenda 2017–2020, but which are now considered more relevant.

Shortcomings and challenges identified

- The National Agenda on Children's Right was adopted in April 2017; yet, it includes activities that should have been implemented during the 2016–2017 time frame. This period of time was left out of the mid-term monitoring process.
- The level of reporting by the institutions responsible for implementing the projected measures at the central and the local level was less than 100%. This had an impact on the real progress of some of the measures, as well as on the geographic expansion of their implementation. Only 39 (12, central; and 27, LGUs) out of the 81 institutions contacted (20, central level; 61, LGUs) submitted the required information.
- Not all reporting institutions provided complete information according to the instrument matrix. Although the instrument was reviewed and the responsible institutions were given extra time to complete the missing information, this was not done in all cases. As a result the information presented in the report does not provide a complete and accurate account of the situation. As presented in the chapters of the present report, for some measures no information was presented on their progress status. As such, the progress document is limited only to those measures for which information was collected and analysis conducted.
- Based on the information collected, it is still unclear what will happen with the implementation of measures not completed over the 2017–2018 time frame. It is difficult

to estimate whether the implementation of these measures should remain a priority for the rest of the 2019–2020 period or whether their implementation is unrealistic. The 2019–2020 plans remain unchanged even though their implementation is closely related to the budget allocated for this period.

INFORMATION COLLECTION ON RESULT INDICATORS

The Agenda contains 75 outcome indicators, presented in both the table of indicators and the table of activities. The indicators are both cross-sectoral (complex indicators) and sectoral (simple indicators). The cross-sectoral indicators will have to be reported by several line ministries and institutions, while the sectoral ones require reporting and information from a single sector only.

Customised instruments were provided to each reporting institution for collection of information on the progress recorded by specific indicators.

The instruments, in addition to providing numerical and statistical information and narrative explanation, require the information specified in Table 2.

The information analysis was based not only upon

TABLE 2. STATUS OF ACHIEVEMENT OF TARGETS

Status	Explanation
Achieved	Target has been achieved.
Partly achieved	Target achievement against plans (projections) is still in progress; provide explanations in the comment matrix.
Not achieved	Target has not been achieved; explain why in the comment matrix.
Not measured	Specific cases where the data to measure the indicators are missing are classified as 'Not measured'. The reasons for these cases should be noted in the comment matrix.

the evaluation and comparison made against the baseline information and data collected during the Agenda drafting phase, but also against the mid-term and the long-term targets for the year 2020. In cases where such information is missing, the conclusions were drawn based upon the information collected overall.

Shortcomings and challenges identified

The Agenda contains 75 indicators, of which:

- 71 % do not contain baseline information.
- 76 % do not have a defined mid-term goal.
- 12 % do not have a defined long-term goal.
- 81 % are missing at least one of the data points, either the baseline data value or the target value.
- 19%¹ are either immeasurable or in need of alteration, creating challenges during the reporting process.

COLLECTION OF INFORMATION ON EXPENDITURE

This instrument reports the financial resources and the budget allocated for implementation of the Agenda's action plan. The instrument seeks to report on planned and actual expenditures for the implementation of each activity for the 2017–2018 time frame, and also requires information on the funding sources. The data were collected by the institutions responsible for implementing the Agenda measures. Based on the Action Plan and the data collected from the responsible institutions, LGUs and

NGOs, the following measures were identified:

- number of budgeted measures
- number of non-budgeted measures.

The information collected for the *budgeted measures* is classified into three categories:

- partly reported
- fully reported
- unreported.

The information on the actual expenditure for the *reported measures*, either fully reported or partly reported, is presented in this report as follows:

- actual expenditure from all the financial resources for achieving each objective
- actual expenditure versus planned expenditure for each objective and strategic area
- actual expenditure according to financial sources (state budget or donor funds).

In a few cases, the institutions have reported actual expenditure for measures reported as Not implemented, Postponed, or Information missing. Such expenditures have not been included in the estimates made in this report.

Shortcomings and challenges identified

- The required budget for implementing the Agenda has not been detailed for each budgeting year; rather the budget is an estimate covering the entire implementation period. Such illustrative presentation makes it difficult for responsible institutions and stakeholders to monitor planned and actual expenditure on a yearly basis.
- The National Agenda for the Rights of Children was adopted by DCM no. 372, dated

¹ This value does not contradict the one mentioned earlier in the Executive Summary, where 7% of the indicators are said to have been reported as immeasurable by the institutions. The value of 19% also includes the indicators that have been reported but for which, according to the institutions, there have been several difficulties while reporting; thus they propose certain changes be made.

26.04.2017. The Agenda includes activities that should have been implemented in 2016. The report only provides information on the planned and actual expenditure during the 2017–2018 time frame, as it was able to compare between the planned expenditure versus the actual one only for this period.

- The Agenda includes 41 measures (15.5% of the total number) for which no budget has been allocated. It is difficult to estimate the cost for implementation of these measures as it would require some new analysis based on planned targets. The largest number of unbudgeted measures, compared to the total number of measures, concern Objective 4, with 46.6% of measures, and Objective 8, with 57.1% of measures.
- The institutions have not provided any information about the actual expenditure for 181 (80.8%) of the measures.
- The institutions have reported higher than planned expenditure for 20 budgeted measures (8.9%). In certain cases, the reported expenditure is not related to the cost of implementing an activity planned in the Agenda, but to the total expenditure incurred by the institution for a product where the relevant measure has been included. The erroneous perception is that the actual expenditure exceeds the planned expenditure. Other cases do involve the actual expenditure reported by NGOs and donors exceeding the planned expenditure.
- Institutions have not provided any information about budget estimates for the

implementation of planned measures for the 2019–2020 period. Such estimates have been reported only for 26 budgeted measures (11.6%). Generally, these data have been provided by donors, a few LGUs, and NGOs. This level of information, unfortunately, predicts that the final report on implementation of the Agenda by the end of 2020 will face the same issues with budget reporting.

CONSULTATION WITH CHILDREN

Consultation with children was undertaken to obtain their opinions and thoughts on topics and issues included in the Agenda, but not only on those. Six consultations were held in total, in Tirana, Shkodra, Korça, and Peshkopi, with the participation of 106 school-age children (56 of whom are girls), of age 11–18 years. Two other consultations were held with 23 children with disabilities, and seven children from a residential institution. The methodology for holding consultations with children was agreed upon with the technical group in charge of drafting the present report. In addition, assessment of the ethical considerations of the methodology was undertaken by a board of experts in the field of scientific research and ethics, created by UNICEF. Prior to a child's participation in the consultation meetings, the consent of their legal guardians was first obtained, while the process of consultation was carried out by trained facilitators. In addition to obtaining the opinions of the children, the methodology aimed at collecting materials prepared by them with the intention of using them as illustrations in the report.

Voice of Children

The children involved in consultations gave their opinions on several topics that concern them. Those opinions are presented below, ranking them by topic, from general to specific.

The children point out the importance of being well informed about strategic documents that have been adopted that promote and guarantee their rights. They state that adults of every sector of society ought to be familiar with such important documents, including the Law 'On the Protection of the Rights of the Child', and with the roles and duties of institutions responsible for realising those rights. Children also ought to have knowledge in this area through implementation of the optional curriculum in the country's educational institutions.

Such a practice would ensure that children have a better understanding of the package of laws and policies concerning their rights, as well as the roles and responsibilities of each institution. Accordingly, children would become more aware of their rights and the methods of reporting cases of rights violation.

It seems that children do not fully appreciate that they have a right to participate; a right that is real and not a token. Although processes that

require the gathering of the views and opinions of children are in place, the children report that adults are reluctant to consider those opinions, and are farther still from implementing their proposals.

"The ambition of children to have their voice heard is overridden by the fear of having their opinions rejected by adults."

"Adults usually do not take the work of children seriously, and prejudice them."

Despite having well-defined roles and duties, as well as a clear process for electing the members and the mechanisms to bodies such as student governments, ensuring the right of children to participate and give their input into decisions that affect them at school, they still face challenges realising the goal for which they were established. Children think that there remains much to be done to strengthen and make these structures more functional in order for them to incorporate the thoughts of all children in decision-making processes in schools.

"Only children with good grades participate in activities. The rest are excluded."

"Members of the school government always participate in activities. There should be more activities to engage all students."

The children report the issue of different forms of violence as a matter that requires special attention. They raise real concerns, which should be analysed and addressed accordingly, not solely by school professionals, such as teachers and psychologists, but by other professionals such as social workers, child protection workers, etc.

"Bullying and its hierarchy—the bullies and the bullied—are always present in school. Sports activities can serve as a means of unification, bringing together the bullies and the bullied and fostering a friendly environment. In order to establish mutual trust, activities need to be organised by teachers and the students themselves."

"Unwittingly, children are bullying when they say, for example, 'Look at how he or she looks.' Also, there are many instances of teachers discriminating between students, saying, for example, 'These students will do this particular exercise, because they are good. The rest of you do not know how to do it.'"

Children express the need for bullying and the violence involved, current concerns for most of the children who were consulted, to be addressed more vigorously.

"Bullying goes unnoticed by teachers, because children do not talk about it. But what we see in school is very different from what adults and teachers see. It is difficult for adults to see the picture we see, because children hide the bullying, which is why something different should be done."

The children are also vulnerable to other forms of bullying.

"Something should be done about Internet safety, too, because there you can be bullied more often than in school."

The strengthening of mechanisms ensuring the observance of children's rights is viewed as related to the training of adults to better deal with and address cases of bullying.

"We want our teachers to be trained in managing cases of bullying among students. They should know how to prevent conflict and turn it into a matter of debate and reflection, which would help overcome the difficult moment more easily."

"Adults think of themselves as grown ups and us always as children. Around adults, parents, teachers, leaders and class teachers, we feel excluded, causing us to feel as if adults are in some way superior. This is why, in order for us to trust adults with our problems, these relationships must be strengthened."

Greater sensitivity is noted among the older children, those of age 16–18 years, with regard to communication between children and parents, who expressed their views on the child–parent roles and relationships, and wished for greater and more quality engagement of parents in their issues or concerns. The children talk openly about discrimination, and in most cases associate it with the acceptance of children from Roma and Egyptian communities, children with disabilities or those from poor families, at school.

"In our class, there is a student with disabilities. We try our best to make him feel included, but students from other classes mock and insult him. This upsets us as well as him."

The children show sensitivity to poverty, difficult economic conditions of families in their communities, and to children of these families in school. They are convinced that families should be provided every possible support, to allow their children to grow up well.

"All families in need should receive help, in order for their children to attend school and not feel bad."

"There are many abandoned children whose families cannot support them. These families should be assisted. Also, children without parents should be helped. They can be adopted by other families."

Children in residential care feel more vulnerable to difficult financial conditions.

*"We wish we could afford to buy clothes."
"What will happen to us when we leave here?
We wish we could at least receive support for an apartment."*

The children say that they lack sufficient information on health issues, particularly on sexual and reproductive health, juvenile justice issues, and generally on the free services that they can access. For this reason, they suggest having periodic information meetings with specialists from various fields.

We do not know what services are provided for children. We do not have contacts with professionals from different fields, either."

"We do not have sufficient health information; that provided at school is not enough. We do not have many connections to health centres, and hospital visits are only for serious concerns."

The suggestions of children that they be provided with space and opportunities to discuss various topics are of great interest.

We are faced with an unsupportive mentality. It is necessary to become empowered and change it, to cope with it every day."

The request for engagement in different leisure activities was repeatedly mentioned in consultations with children with disabilities and children in residential care.

We need adequate facilities for our specific conditions, for sports activities, or settings where we can spend our leisure time, especially during summer holidays." (Children with disabilities.)

"We want to travel and visit other cities, as well as to be able to know more about what lies beyond this institution." (Children in residential care.)

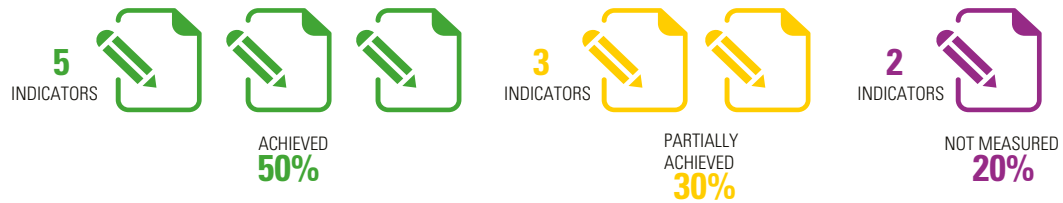
REPORTING ON IMPLEMENTATION'S PROGRESS FOR AGENDA'S STRATEGIC GOALS



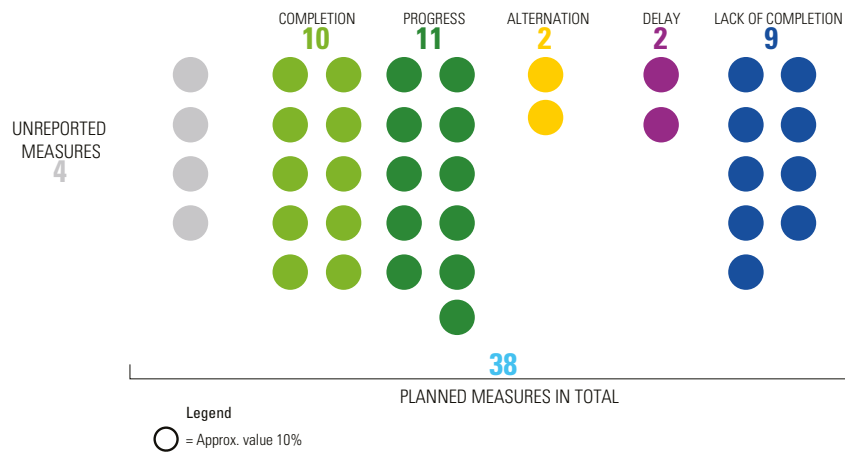
Photo credit: Benzenberg/UNICEF/Albania

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

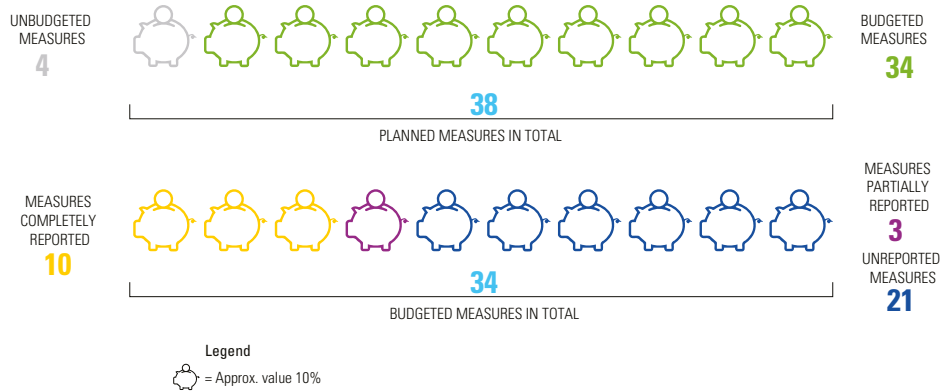
STATUS OF RESULT INDICATORS' ACHIEVEMENT (in no. & %)



STATUS OF ACTION MEASURES' REALIZATION (in no. & %)



BUDGETED AND REPORTED MEASURES WITH FINANCIAL INFORMATION (in no. & %)

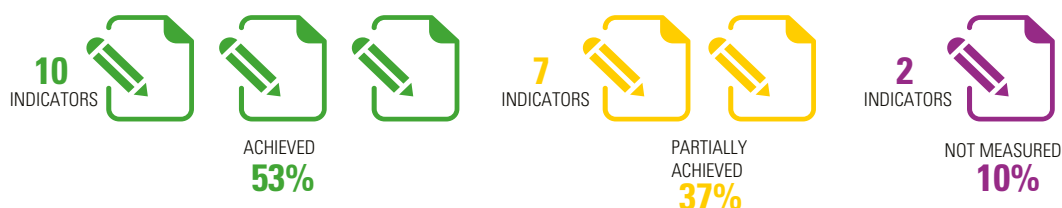


PLANNED AND ACTUAL EXPENDITURES ON REPORTED MEASURED

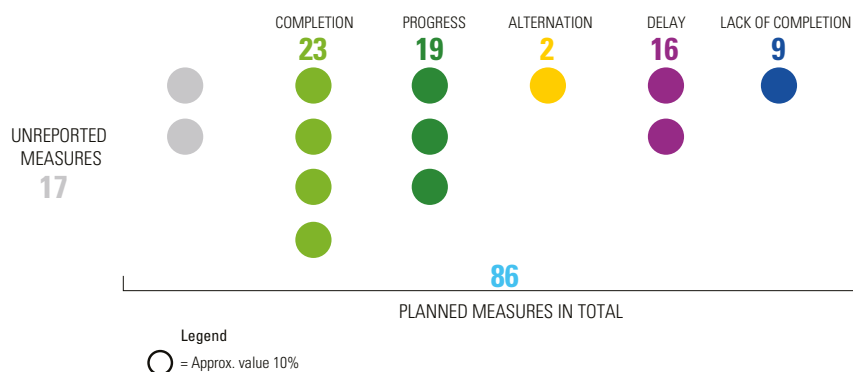
Status of progress	Planned expenses in ALL	Expenses in %	Actual expenses in ALL	Completion of expenses in %	Financial source	
					Budget	Donors
1 Completed	26,535,000.00	29%	25,940,850	98%	6%	94%
2 In Progress	23,947,500.00	27%	19,193,120	80%	77%	23%
3 Alternated	31,000,000.00	34%	0	0%		
4 Delayed	2,225,000.00	2%	0	0%		
5 Uncompleted	6,249,500.00	7%	0	0%		
Total	89,957,500.00	100%				

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

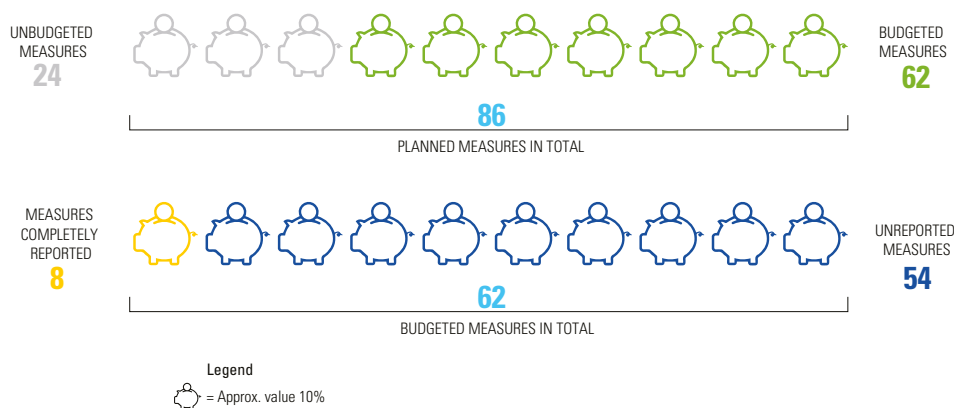
STATUS OF RESULT INDICATORS' ACHIEVEMENT (in no. & %)



STATUS OF ACTION MEASURES' REALIZATION (in no. & %)



BUDGETED AND REPORTED MEASURES WITH FINANCIAL INFORMATION (in no. & %)



PLANNED AND ACTUAL EXPENDITURES ON REPORTED MEASURED

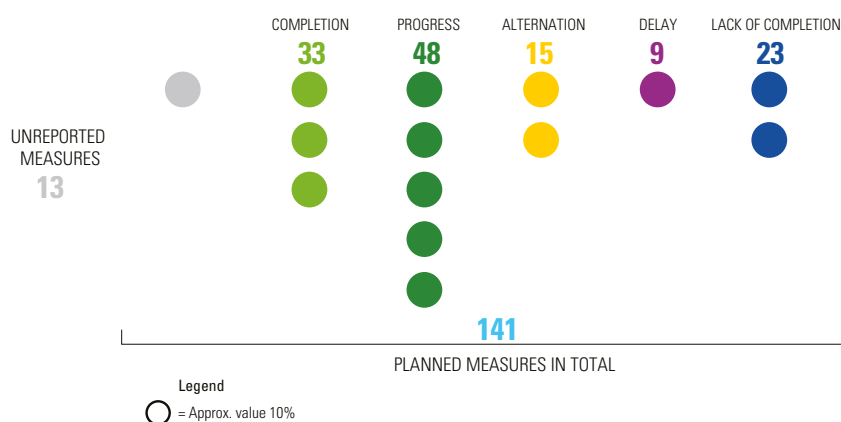
Status of progress	Planned expenses in ALL	Expenses in %	Actual expenses in ALL	Completion of expenses in %	Financial source	
					Budget	Donors
1 Completed	16,780,000	9%	1,565,000	9%	3%	97%
2 In Progress	124,212,500	70%	15,662,500	13%	61%	11%
3 Alternated	600,000	0%	0			
4 Delayed	14,025,000	8%	0			
5 Uncompleted	16,145,000	9%	0			
6 Without information	5,187,500	3%	0			
Total	176,950,000	100%				

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: ESTABLISHMENT OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT FRIENDLY SYSTEMS AND SERVICES

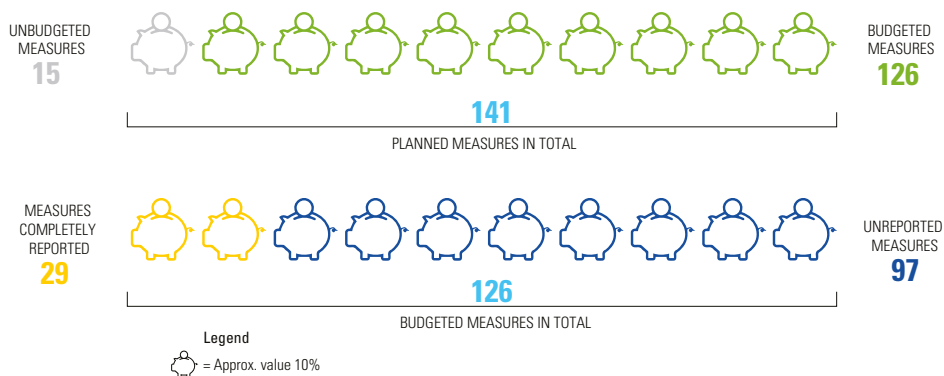
STATUS OF RESULT INDICATORS' ACHIEVEMENT (in no. & %)



STATUS OF ACTION MEASURES' REALIZATION (in no. & %)



BUDGETED AND REPORTED MEASURES WITH FINANCIAL INFORMATION (in no. & %)



PLANNED AND ACTUAL EXPENDITURES ON REPORTED MEASURED

Status of progress	Planned expenses in ALL	Expenses in %	Actual expenses in ALL	Completion of expenses in %	Financial source	
					Budget	Donors
1 Completed	536,285,000	42%	24,955,400	5%	11%	89%
2 In Progress	403,802,000	32%	118,606,689	29%	63%	37%
3 Alternated	61,870,000	5%	952,000	2%		73%
4 Delayed	5,957,500	0%	0			
5 Uncompleted	33,164,368	3%	0			
6 Without information	239,537,500	19%				
Total	1,280,636,368	100%				

Reflections for the future

In terms of defining the degree of changes in the plans of actions for the upcoming two years (2019-2020) by each relevant institution, the information collected was not sufficient. Therefore, the following insights take a broader view / perspective on the Agenda - a strategic, cross-sectoral instrument to advance children's rights.

- The mid-term monitoring report of the Agenda should be viewed in an integrated way, with the 5th and 6th Periodic State Reports to the UNCRC. Both these reports should inform the planning of relevant measures for the upcoming years, in the spirit of achieving fully every child's rights in Albania and in response to the Convention on Children's Rights.
- The regulatory framework for child rights has significantly changed since this Agenda was drafted in 2016. Improvements include the adoption of the Law on Children's Rights and Protection, the Criminal Justice for Children Code, National Justice Strategy for Minors, the Cyber Security Action Plan, the All-Inclusive Education Action Plan, and the National Plan on Children's Protection from Economic Exploitation, among others. The drafts of the National Strategy on Pre-University Education, the National Strategy and Action Plan on Child and Adolescent's Health and Wellbeing, the Social Protection

Strategy, among others, are being processed. These important documents and processes should be taken into consideration by the country's institutions to articulate the effectiveness and validity of future measures, and to harmonise their institutional approach.

- With the changes effected by the process of decentralisation and the delegation of a series of functions and authority from central to local government, the role of LGUs should be revisited for the implementation of the Agenda. It is therefore necessary to re-discuss the roles and responsibilities / commitments, and to reflect them clearly in the Agenda for the coming years.
- In addition to the decentralisation reform, there have been other actions, resulting in the structural re-design of national and subnational institutions. As a result, there are, in several cases, newly established institutions responsible for implementation and reporting of important Agenda measures, as well as re-distribution of the responsibilities and roles.

In conclusion, based on the overall findings of the report and the above-mentioned rationale, there is an immediate need to review and adequacy / realistically plan for the implementation of the actions / measures projected in the Agenda in the coming years.

2017-2018 | **THE MID-TERM
IMPLEMENTATION
REPORT**
OF THE NATIONAL AGENDA
FOR THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

