

# Child-Sensitive Social Protection & Poverty Alleviation

## UNICEF Programme Framework & Strategies

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# Outline

1. Global Situation & Overview
2. UNICEF's Approach to Social Protection: Principles & Elements
3. UNICEF's key action areas for child sensitive and integrated social protection systems & alleviating child poverty
4. Action Examples

# Global Situation of Children: Poverty and Inequality

- **Unprecedented increase in child poverty:** double challenge— reverse negative impacts and accelerate progress towards 2030

## But also— structural inequalities:

The crisis is projected to increase inequality **between and within countries** in the long term.

- Rural/Urban divide
- Critical vulnerable groups: Children with Disabilities, refugees, girls and women
- Informal sector has been particularly impacted.

**350 million children** living in slums and informal settlements

**New profiles of children and families living in poverty:** increase in urban areas, conflict and humanitarian settings, families working in informal sector (including care economy).

## Poverty and Care Crisis

- Women and girls disproportionately impacted: risk of job loss and economic instability, rising care responsibilities.
  - 85% of women's total employment in low-income countries is in the informal sector

# Gaps in social protection coverage: Gaps in combatting poverty

- Only 35 per cent of children worldwide have social protection coverage.
- 1 in 6 children lives in extreme poverty
- The coverage is lowest in countries where child poverty is the highest.

# If social protection financing gaps continues, poverty alleviation cannot be achieved

On average, countries spend 1.1% of their GDP on child benefits, but more and better financing is needed to ensure coverage, access and quality.

OECD estimates **\$4.2 billion additional gap** as a result of pandemic

Social sector spending gaps per year:

- Education: \$200 billion
- Health: \$320 billion
- Social Protection: \$1.2 trillion

Cuts in education and health budgets and ending of many temporary social protection measures  
On average, the least developed countries are now spending **14% of revenue on debt servicing**

# Eliminating child poverty requires a multi sector approach and changes at macro and national level

## **UNICEF's key contribution:**

Understanding who are the children and families living in poverty; promoting their right to social security and ensuring that social programmes, effectively reach the poorest and most vulnerable, are adequately financed across sectors, while responding to territorial specificities across contexts, including in emergencies

# *UNICEF's approach to social protection*

- *Principles*
- *Definition*
- *Operational framework & Action Areas for Results*

# UNICEF's strengths in social protection

- *Extensive on the ground experience and presence*
- *Holistic (and multisectoral) focus on children*
- *Support to integrated systems beyond a child focus*
- *A trusted partner*
- *Bridging the humanitarian and development gap*

# Four principles of UNICEF approach to social protection

1. The best interests of the child
2. Progressive realization of universal coverage
3. National systems and leadership
4. Inclusive social protection

## Operational definition of social protection.

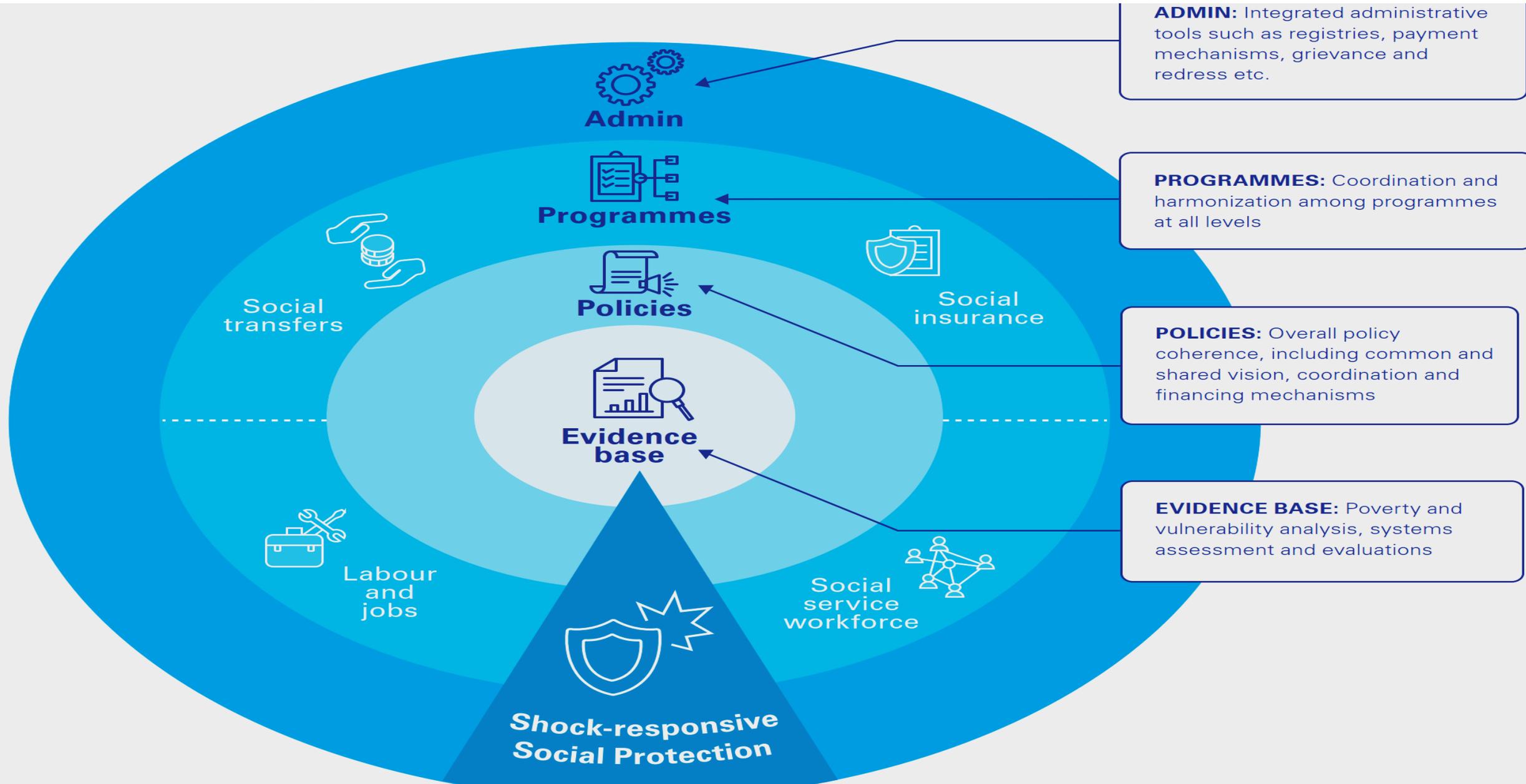
*Social protection is “a set of policies and programs aimed at **preventing or protecting all people against poverty**, vulnerability and social exclusion throughout their lifecycle, with a particular emphasis towards vulnerable groups.*

# Social protection: addressing economic & social vulnerability

- **Economic vulnerability:** About 45 per cent of all children – or 1 billion – are living in households subsisting on less than \$3.10 a day.
- **Social vulnerability:** Children and families can also face social vulnerabilities due to how personal characteristics ranging from age to gender to disability status interact with social dynamics and discrimination.

*Child-sensitive social protection systems are those that can address child poverty and deprivation and with a special focus on those that are economically and socially vulnerable*

# Elements of integrated social protection for effective mitigation of poverty



# What child-sensitive social protection system should offer every child?

Every child should:

1. Live in a household with **sufficient financial resources** to develop and fulfil their potential
2. Have **access to quality basic services** and the knowledge needed for development, regardless of income or personal characteristics
3. Have **direct contact with a social or outreach worker** when needed, who can help support the responses they need

## FOUNDATION OF EVIDENCE

### **Action Area 1:** Child poverty analysis, impact evaluation and systems assessment

- **Child poverty measurement and analysis:** Supporting national measurement analysis of child poverty, deprivations, wellbeing gaps.
- **Impact evaluations:** Assess programme impacts using evaluation designs including randomized controlled trials to inform national policy.
- **Social protection systems assessments:** Evidence on the strengths and weaknesses of how social protection system works for children

## POLICY, LEGISLATION AND FINANCING FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

### **Action Area 2:** Policy and strategy development, coordination and financing

- **Strategies and policy frameworks:** Supporting national dialogue on social protection laws/policies, supporting the drafting of social protection strategies.
- **Coordination: Supporting the** development of national coordination capacities; assisting lead ministries, and partner coordination
- **Public financing:** Sector expenditure reviews, costings of programmes, fiscal space analysis and working with governments to increase resource allocation for social protection.

# SOCIAL TRANSFERS

## **Action Area 3:** Expanding and implementing cash transfers

**Building political support:** Advocacy and stakeholder engagement to build understanding, support and financing for cash transfer programmes.

**Supporting programme design:** Including targeting, addressing exclusion, transfer size, frequency and links to other programmes.

**Implementation, Delivery:** Running beneficiary identification, communication, cash payment systems, linkages to other services, programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation, implementing management information systems

## **Action Area 4:** Connecting cash transfers to wider level of information, knowledge and services

**Providing recipients with information, knowledge and connections to services:**

Understanding the non-financial needs of beneficiaries, connecting cash transfer programmes to information, knowledge and relevant services, and building the evidence base on best practices. Strong accountability to beneficiaries/children.

## SOCIAL INSURANCE

### **Action Area 5:** Expanding and improving health insurance

**Increasing coverage to poor and marginalized populations:** Advocacy for health insurance expansion, linking cash transfer beneficiaries with health insurance, and improving identification of poorest for non-contributory insurance.

**Defining health services included in health insurance:** Analysis of gaps in health coverage and defining minimum package of health services for child and maternal health to be included under universal health coverage

## LABOUR AND JOBS

### **Action Area 6:** Supporting childcare and adolescent employability

**Childcare & Economy of Care:** Development of policy and normative frameworks, increasing convenience, affordability and quality of childcare and supporting family-friendly workplaces.

**Adolescent learning and skills:** Support systems-based approaches to adolescent learning and skills for employability, improving quality and relevance of programmes and flexible approaches to education.

## SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE

**Action Area 7:**  
Strengthening the social welfare workforce and direct outreach to families

**Building and strengthening the social welfare workforce:** clarifying roles and responsibilities, expanding the workforce quality of services.

**Family outreach and case management:** Integrate family outreach and support into social protection programmes including case management approaches.

## INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY & INFRASTRUCTURE

**Action Area 8:**  
Strengthening integrated administrative systems

Improving **integrated management information systems (MIS):** Needs assessments, developing MIS, building technical capacity and developing grievance and redress mechanisms.

Improving **coordination and service delivery at sub-national level:** Improving overall capacity of sub-national social protection system to plan, coordinate and implement social protection programmes in an integrated way.

### Action Area 9: Strengthening national shock-responsive social protection systems

**Evidence and analysis:** Inclusion of an analysis of risks and shocks in child poverty analysis, impact evaluations/ M&E/learning, social protection costing exercises and system assessments.

**Policy, strategy, legislation, coordination and financing:** Reviewing and adapting relevant policies for scale; making budgetary provisions; contingency planning; and strengthening horizontal and vertical coordination between social protection, emergency response and other relevant local authorities.

**Programmes and design features:** Reviewing and adjusting the mix of programmes and their design features, such as eligibility criteria and transfer values, to enhance coverage and provide adequate levels of assistance in crisis; inter-linkages and complementary services.

**Administration and delivery systems:** Adjusting the administrative and delivery systems of routine social protection programmes so they can be leveraged fully, partially or in combination to respond to the needs of children and families affected by crisis.

## Action Area 10: Linking humanitarian cash transfers to social protection systems

Designing **humanitarian cash transfers to achieve sectoral outcomes**: Context analysis including children's needs, transfer design and coordinating with stakeholders

**Determining the role of national systems in implementation of a humanitarian cash transfer programmes**: Ascertaining the compatibility of the national system, assessing capacity and choosing the most appropriate delivery option.

**Using the national social protection system to implement a humanitarian cash transfer**: Delivery of humanitarian cash transfers through national or mixed (national/parallel systems). Building linkages with national approaches if stand-alone systems were established.

# UNICEF's approach: What is the place of conditionality in cash transfers?

UNICEF does not automatically promote the use of conditionality; UNICEF approach is **context specific** and aligns with national priorities for most impactful results for children

To address non-income related barriers and constraints to realizing children's rights, UNICEF promotes

- **Clear, accessible communication of programme objectives**, operations and participants' rights, to participants, communities and the general public.
- **Design and implementation of accompanying training and information**, for example on nutritional information or early childhood development.
- **Strengthening linkages between cash transfers and social services**, and the required supply response.
- **Strengthening provision of social support services**, including referrals to other social services and programmes.

# UNICEF's approach to disability and social protection

Effective and inclusive social protection is crucial in addressing various challenges faced by children with disabilities, including financial barriers.

A twin track approach must be employed to address these risks, inequalities and obstacles:

- Ensure inclusion throughout the design, implementation and monitoring of social protection programmes
- Develop disability-specific programmes

Furthermore, all social protection programming should include the considerations:

1. Non-discrimination and accessibility.
2. Respect for dignity and personal autonomy
3. Full and effective participation and inclusion.
4. Consultation and involvement of persons with disabilities.
5. Attitudes and awareness.
6. Adequacy of benefits and support.
7. Eligibility criteria and disability assessments.
8. Monitoring and evaluation.

# UNICEF's approach to social protection and the private sector

Provision of social protection is primarily the responsibility of the state and a foundation of the social contract. However, private sector and enterprises have an important role to play in the development of comprehensive, child-sensitive social protection systems:

- **As service providers supporting the delivery of national social protection programmes**
  - By developing payment mechanisms, management information systems and biometrics for cash transfer programme, among others
- **As contributors to social protection as employers and as part of supply chains**
  - For example, by ensuring full compliance with national labor and social security legislation
- **Social protection also benefits business.** Strong social protection systems provide a conducive environment for the private sector to thrive, ranging from boosting the local economy to supporting social and political stability.

# Towards coverage for every child

*Social protection is **the right of every child**. We have the tools and resources to build, strengthen and expand social protection for children – **together we can provide every child with coverage and give every child an equal chance.***

## UNICEF's Goal Area 5:

«Every Child, including adolescents, has access to inclusive social protection and lives free of poverty»

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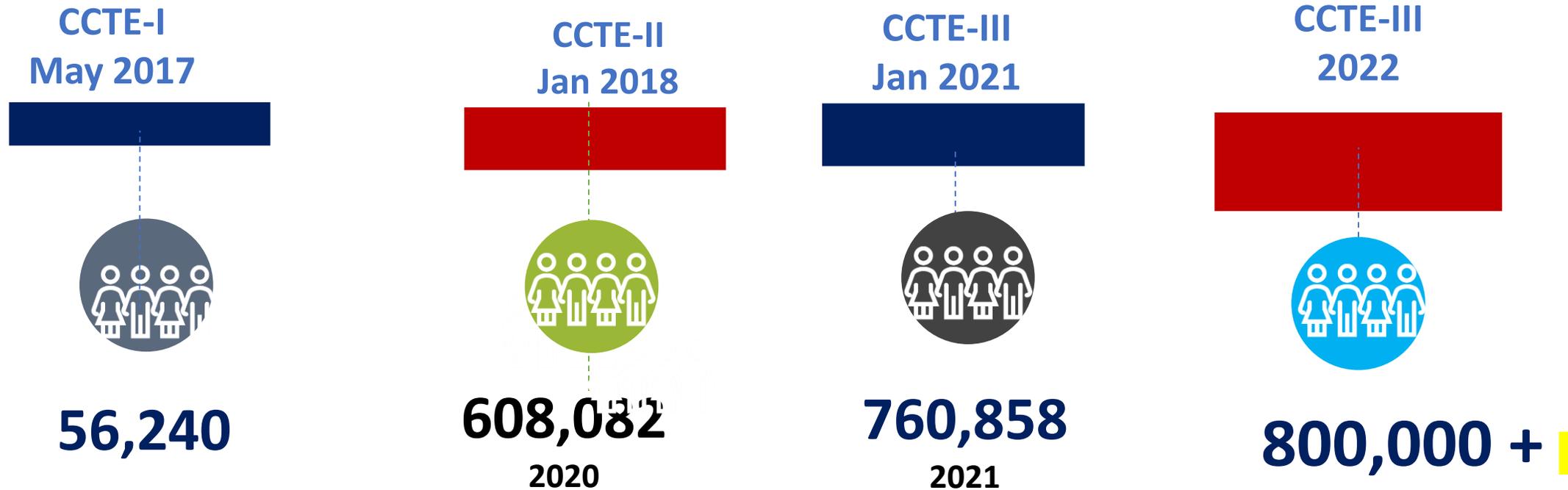
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# Action Example: Conditional Cash Transfers for Education for Refugees in Türkiye



- ✓ Building on the national CCTE System & efficiency gains from joint humanitarian platforms
- ✓ Incorporating new aspects as the programme continued
- ✓ Global flagship programme across Humanitarian-Developmental Nexus
- ✓ All targets surpassed
- ✓ Never missed any payment for 6 years
- ✓ Cash+ Programming, with also more than 100,000 child protection beneficiaries
- ✓ High-Tech IT & MIS Investments for national machinery: Business Intelligence - Data Warehouse
- ✓ Strong collaboration & technical dialogue between UNICEF, Government of Türkiye, Turkish Red Crescent

# Action Example: UNICEF technical assistance for realization of European Child Guarantee

The EU Child Guarantee is an initiative of the European Commission to lift children out of poverty, ensure access to education and school activities, health care, early childhood care, adequate housing and healthy nutrition

UNICEF supports the EU and 7 member states to demonstrate **how Child Guarantee can be made a reality** programatically and financially, what are the **processes** that should be activated or accelerated, what should be **key principles and core services**

# THANKS

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