



STATE AGENCY FOR PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORK OF CHILD PROTECTION UNITS

2015

Annual Data Report on Child Protection Units' work**July 2016**

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INTRODUCTION

The State Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights (SAPCR), conform to Law No. 10347, dated 4.11.2010 "On the Protection of Children's Rights", is responsible for monitoring and checking the implementation of this law, as well as the performance of the Child Protection Units (CPUs).

The Units for Child Protection function within the administrative structure of the municipality, as separate a unit, or as a unit of the structures charged with social issues, and their task is to identify and manage cases of children at risk, which are located within the area of the unit's authority.

CPUs report periodically, every three months and once a year to SAPCR. Based on the annual reporting of CPUs, a report is drafted containing the narrative data and figures on the work and cases managed by CPU's during the year 2015.

The figures are based on the reports of 124 CPUs or 61% of CPUs in the country.

Table 1: Cases being tracked by the Units of Child Protection for the year 2015

Total number of cases	New cases	Closed cases	Inherited cases *
1403	738	285	380

* "Inherited cases" have been estimated by SAPCR

From the cases managed, it results that children with various problems have been treated, such as: 645 cases of financial problems, 155 cases of domestic violence, 15 cases of trafficking, 285 cases of children in street situation, 29 cases of disabilities, 72 cases of school drop-out, 35 cases of children not enrolled, as well as 60 cases about other issues.

From the total number of children taken under the protection of CPUs (1403 children), only 555 children or 40 % of them have been reported as children who have suffered abuse, 352 cases neglect, 106 cases psychological abuse, 71 cases physical abuse and 26 cases sexual abuse.

1. OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION

During 2015, in compliance with DCM No. 573, dated 24.06.2015, the Service Standards of CPU's have been approved, which will serve for measuring and improving the quality of the services for child protection at the municipality, and, at the same time, they will set the basis for their inspection by the central level structures.

The standards rely on five specific fields, but are also interconnected to incorporate the quality criteria.

- Providing enough resources and an appropriate working environment facilitating the work on child protection, so that it is effective, proper and safe.
- Implementing the case referral and management procedures for children at risk, ensuring child protection in a systematic and ongoing manner.
- Engaging the child and its family actively and thoroughly.
- Applying a multidisciplinary approach, during the case management process, when the child and family are provided with the services.
- Quality service according to the child's needs.

The institutional collaboration has been regulated through a 4-Ministerial Guideline No. 10, dated 25.02.2015 "On collaboration ways and forms, and intervention procedures for assisting children at risk for the main institutions and structures responsible for child protection", within which the role of each actor is determined in the process of child protection, as well as the necessary guidelines for case identification and management of children at risk.

The Reform on Social Services has been focused on responding to the needs of individuals in need, especially of children. The Protection of Human Rights is an integral part for Albania being recognised as a candidate country for EU. The priority 5 of the Roadmap for European Integration specifies the obligations of a country concerning the strengthening of child protection system, involving the approval of the Protocol on child protection, participation and budgeting, whilst having in mind children and the effective coordination among local structures.

Based on the territorial division, in compliance with the Law No. 115/2014 "On administrative and territorial division of the local government units in the Republic of Albania", taking also into consideration the structural changes that came about, the designation of the new administrative borders, the well-functioning of the Child Protection Units (CPUs) at local level need to be reviewed aiming at the effectiveness of the services provided at these units.

The State Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights during the period 4 July 2016 - 18 July 2016, gathered information through phone commutations from 61 municipalities in the country, regarding the well-functioning of the Child Protection Units at the Municipalities and Administrative Units of the country. Based on the information gathered, it results that, throughout the country, 91 Child Rights Protection Units operate. 46 of which function only as CPU (24 are located only in Tirana) and 45 of which have functions, such as responsibility for economic assistance, gender equality, protection of disabled persons, but among these they carry out even the function of the Child Protection Unit. We are highlighting that the abovementioned information is extracted only through phone communication, thus it should be used carefully, until it is verified. We are under the process of gathering orders on the

setting up and functioning of Child Protection Units from 61 municipalities and respective administrative units.¹

Under the frame of the changes that these two abovementioned reforms will bring about, MoSWY in cooperation with SAPCR, have undertaken the drafting of the legal changes of the Law No. 10 347 "On protection of children rights". They aim at improving the implementation of children rights, the coordination among actors, in order to boost the mechanisms and interventions' effectiveness for the protection children in need, protecting them from abuse, exploitation and neglect.

After the new local elections, although not in many local units, the personnel of CPUs have already started to be displaced. On January, after the establishment of the new administrative structures at the municipality, at some administrative units, there have been discussions concerning the dismissal of the CPUs' position/responsibility, since, according to their interpretation of the legislation, this function belonged only to the new municipalities and not to the administrative units.

Regarding the functioning of CPU, the issue of financial support from the local units' budget for addressing the cases of children at risk and that of logistics support for carrying out home visits or the following up on cases remain a problem.

2. MONITORING OF CPUS' WORK

The State Agency for Protection of Children's Rights (SAPCR), conform to the Law No. 10347, dated 4.11.2010 "On the Protection of Children's Rights", is responsible for monitoring and checking the implementation of this law, as well as the performance of the Child Protection Units (CPUs). At the end of December 2015, SAPCR has requested annual information upon the work performed regarding the cases managed from CPUs during the year.

The reporting form has changed², containing in the reporting request new statistical data on the forms of abuse and the issues of children under protection, as well as qualitative information on new cases and the way of addressing them.

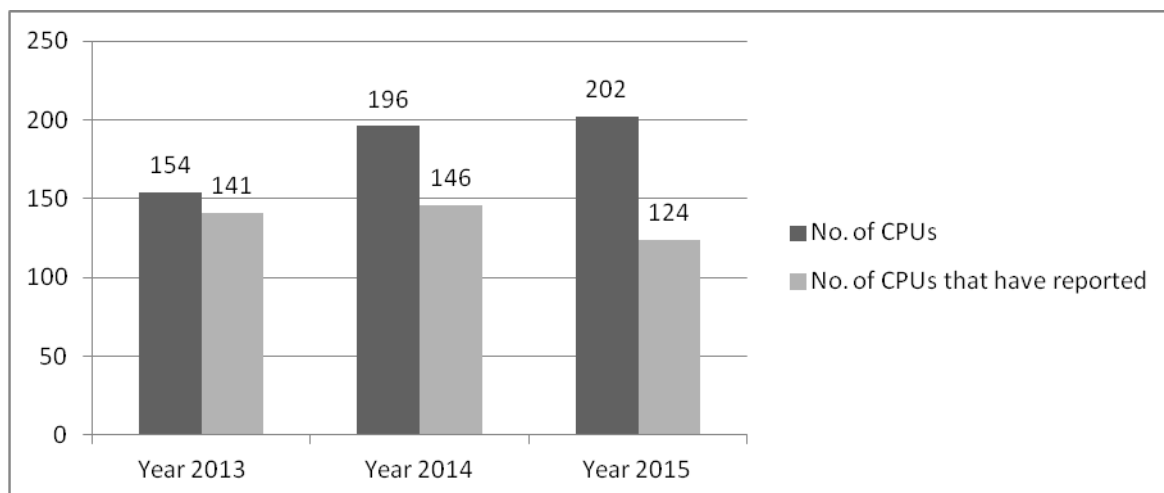
3. REPORTED CASES

Responding to the request for periodic information, 124 CPUs or 61% of them have reported³

¹ For further information, at the official website femijet.gov.al these is available the updated list of the Child Rights Protection Units at 61 municipalities, along with the persons responsible and their contact numbers.

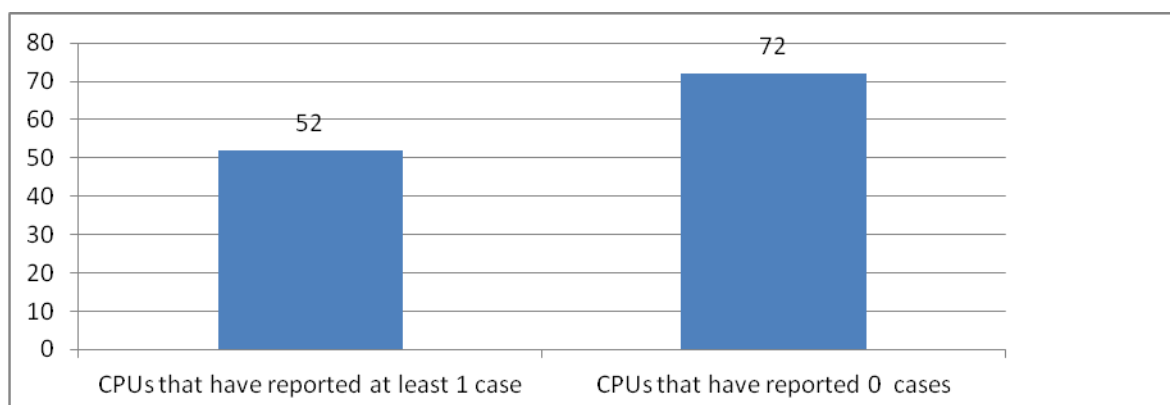
² Annex 1 periodic reporting form CPUs

³ Annex 2 List of the CPU that reported for 2015

Table 2: The reporting situation of CPUs per year

At the end of 2015, a decline in the number of reports by CPUs comparing to previous years has been observed. During this year, the implementation of the two important reforms commenced: the Administrative and Territorial Reform and the Social Services Reform, which have affected the local unit's organizational and institutional structures, including herein the CPU. During the reporting period, it resulted that some employees of CPU were dismissed or they were waiting for their replacement by other persons. For this reason, there was a decline in the number and quality of the reports of CPUs.

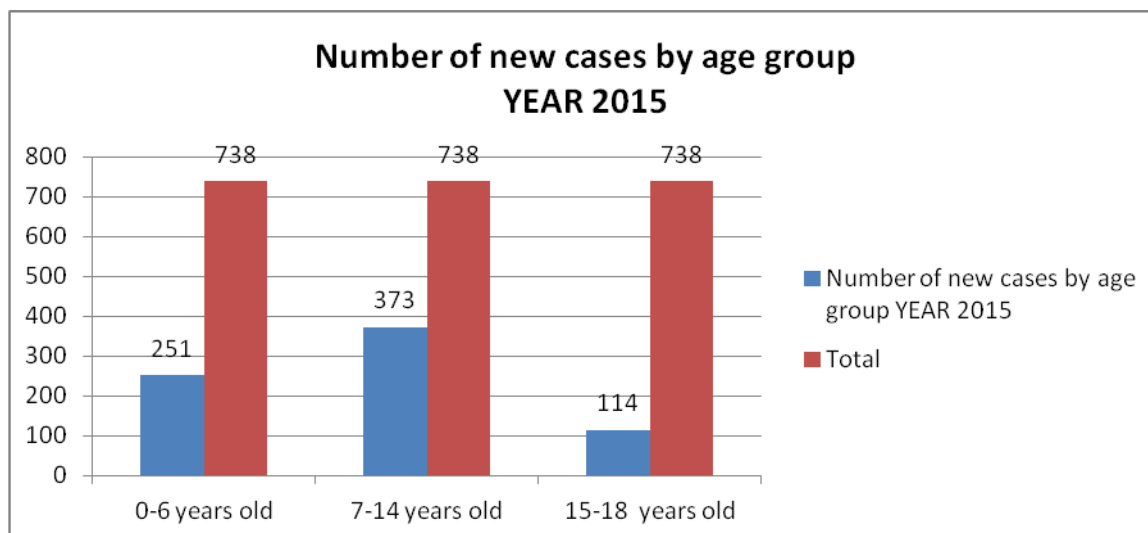
From the total number of CPUs that have reported, 72 CPUs or 58 % reported that they had not followed up any case for 2015. 52 CPUs reported that they had followed up on more than one case; these are mainly CPUs at the municipalities of major cities. CPUs of administrative units, located in rural areas, are mostly social administrators. In their report, they refer to problems that children have with the economic assistance scheme and they have not extended their monitoring scope for the children of the whole community.

Table 3. Number of CPUs according to the number of cases reported

During 2015, CPUs have managed a total number of **1403 cases of children at risk**, identified by CPU and other actors. Out of these cases, **738 new cases** have been identified, about half of the cases managed in total per year. The new indentified cases are divided into 394 females and 344 males. The rest are cases inherited from previous years.

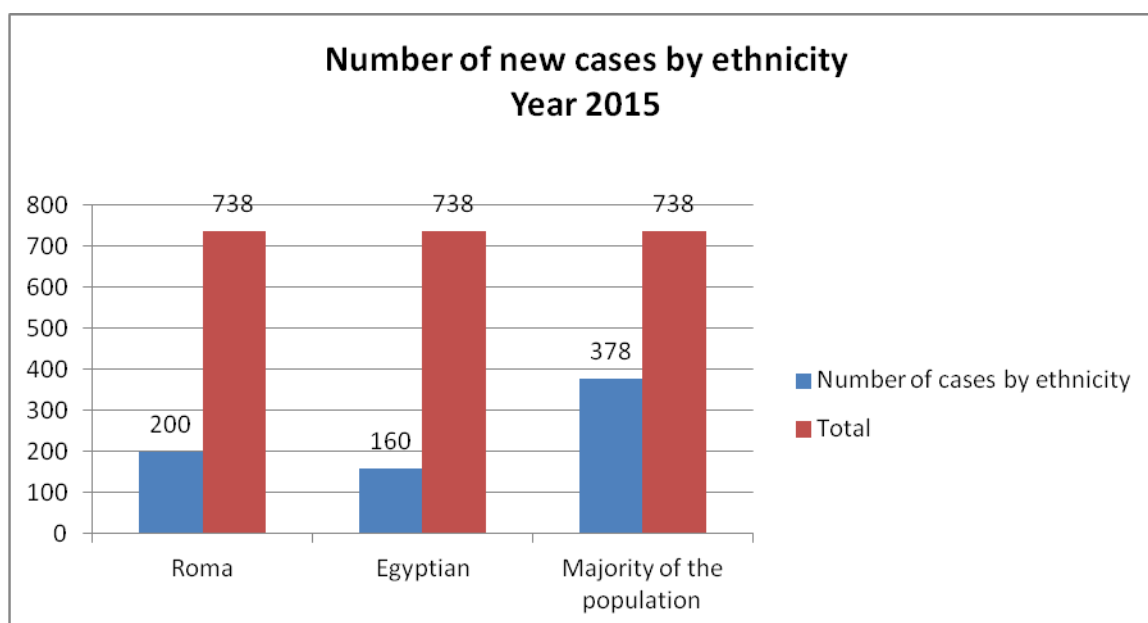
The biggest number of new children indentified in need for protection, are children aged 7-14, around 373 new cases for 2015.

Table 4: The number of new cases by age group



Almost half of the new cases identified are children from Roma and Egyptian communities. 200 children that are at risk are identified of the Roma community and 160 of the Egyptian community.

Table 5: Number of new cases by ethnicity



4. CASE IDENTIFICATION/REFERRAL

According to the requirements of the new form, for the first time we have gathered information with the aim of identifying the most active actors upon referral of child violence cases, as well as collaboration with CPUs. The cases have been identified by various actors at local level. The biggest number of cases, 168 cases, was identified by CPUs themselves, but education institutions have played a major role in the identification process, as well (106 cases).

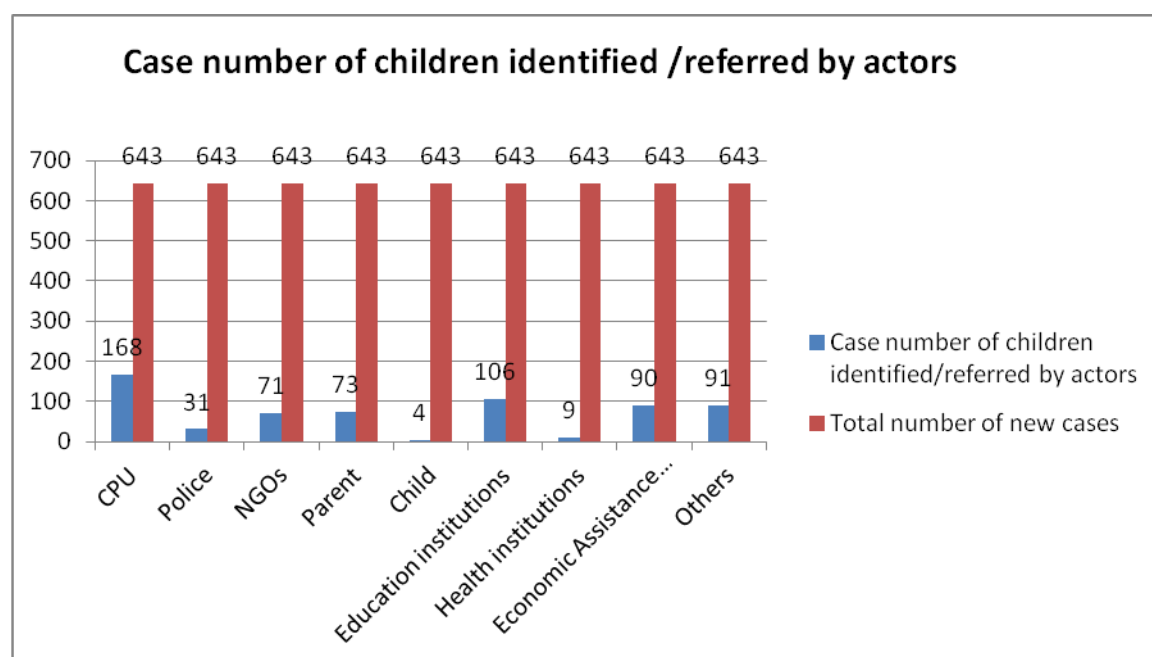
Although few in number (4 cases), there are children that have reported themselves to the responsible structures on the undergoing violence. Parents have reported 73 cases and NGOs have referred 71 cases.

The smallest number was reported by health institutions, although many of the cases resort to these institutions to be provided first aid.

The collaboration among CPUs and health workers is not consolidated, even though it has been stipulated in the 4-Ministerial Guideline No. 10 dated 25.2.2015 "On collaboration ways and forms, and intervention procedures for assisting children at risk for the main institutions and structures responsible for child protection".

272 cases identified have been submitted for being followed up by CPUs at other structures. After being referred to the institutions responsible, for such cases it was not deemed necessary the treatment by CPU.

Table 6: Case number of children identified/referred by actors



* The total of 643 cases is different from the total number of new cases managed for the year 2015 (738 cases), as the data from CPUs of municipalities of Berat and Pogradec, and of the Municipal Unit No. 9 of Tirana are missing.

Except for the cases referred to by institutions, even reports from media, citizens, onsite teams for children in street situation and other CPUs from other units have contributed greatly to this, comprising a number of 90 cases reported. On the above chart, these reports have been listed under the category "Others".

Media has pursued an important role in the identification of the child abuse cases, assisting the CPU and other institutions in their process of child protection. Nevertheless, the issues concerning the confidentiality of the child during the reporting on the media have been observed as well. Media often has mentioned personal details, such as: the place he/she lives, name of the child and /or parents, a picture, interviews of relatives, making the identification of the child easy, and thus violating their right on privacy and hindering the rehabilitation of the children victims.

5. CASE MANAGEMENT

In general, CPUs that operate in the main city of the municipality are committed and have addressed a considerable number of cases, but this does not apply for CPUs in the rural areas, or other smaller administrative units.

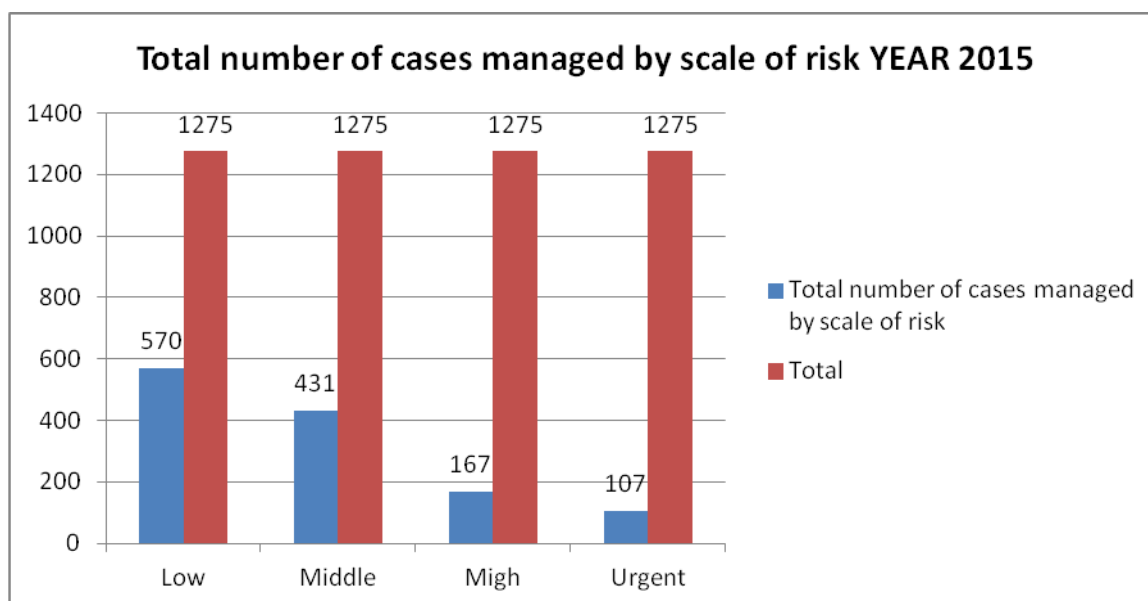
The workload of CPU varies from one municipality to the other within the country. Regarding the large municipalities, where the population counts up to approximately 70 000 - 100 000 residents, mainly the Municipalities of Elbasan, Fier, Vlora, and Saranda, CPUs have managed round 70 - 135 cases each. This is a huge workload, taking into consideration the fact that the units have only one employee and often they lack budget and logistics.

According to reports, unlike general patterns, there are some CPUs at the municipalities with small population that have reported a big number of cases under management. CPUs at the municipalities of Cërrik and Kuçova, have managed 114 and 98 cases respectively. At these municipalities, children under protection are from poor families, whom have been helped with books, school materials and food packages. In such cases, CPUs have been supported by NGOs active at the respective areas with logistics and materials.

The CPUs of the Tirana's Administrative Units No. 5, 6 and 7 have reported a big number of cases managed, 103, 85 and 69 cases respectively.

6. CASES MANAGED BY SCALE OF RISK

According to the reports, the biggest number of cases treated has been cases with low-scale riskiness, that is 570 cases and 431 cases with middle-scale riskiness. CPUs have managed 167 cases with high-scale riskiness, whereas the urgent cases treated are 110 cases or 8% of the total cases.

Table 7: Number of cases managed by the scale of risk

*The total of 1275 cases is different from the total of the cases managed for 2015 (1403 cases), as the data on risk scale form CPUs of the municipalities of Berat and Pogradec, Municipal Unit No. 9 of Tirana are missing.

The estimation method of scale risk by CPU is not very clear. Based on the communication with CPUs for providing technical support that SAPCR offers during the case management process, it resulted that CPUs often rely on their perception concerning the case's risk scale and seldom rely on the criteria set forth in the legislation. This highlights the need for treating and strengthening CPUs' capacities, aiming at ensuring proper implementation of the legislation.

7. HOME VISITS

During 2015, CPUs have paid 1955 visits to families, out of 1403 managed cases. The visits aimed at identifying new cases, assessing the child and family and monitoring the cases being followed.

The periodicity of home visits has been variable, depending on risk level that the case is demonstrating. For urgent cases, the visits might have been performed on a daily basis, and then it has been reduced depending on the scale of the risk.

Some CPUs, from rural areas, reported on high numbers of home visits compared to the low number of children under management. These CPUs sometimes function also as administrators of the economic assistance and are identification.

Some CPUs at large municipalities have reported a small number of home visits, compared to the big numbers of cases under management. Based on the discussions with these, it resulted that due to lack of logistics and transportation means home visits for attending the urgent cases have been restricted. This kind of practice is not in line with the legislation, but is does

turn the attention towards the concern over the provision of logistics for CPUs, especially at this moment that they operate over larger administrative units. For safety and ethics reasons, home visits are carried out mostly with an accompanying administrator or police, since CPUs raised the issue of families not being collaborative with them.

Ongoing case monitoring through home visits is a necessary step to ensure that children and/or families are being provided the needed services specified in the Individual Child Plan, and the planned intervention has affected the decline of risk scale for the child and the family.

According to the reports, but based also on the daily communication with CPUs, the employees have claimed that it has been hard to attend cases and to pay home visits, unless they have transportation means at their disposal. CPUs have tried to cooperate with NGOs and other institutions, for sharing the costs of transportation, but that is not always feasible. The creation of new municipalities, with larger territory expansion, has hampered the work of CPUs concerning case monitoring.

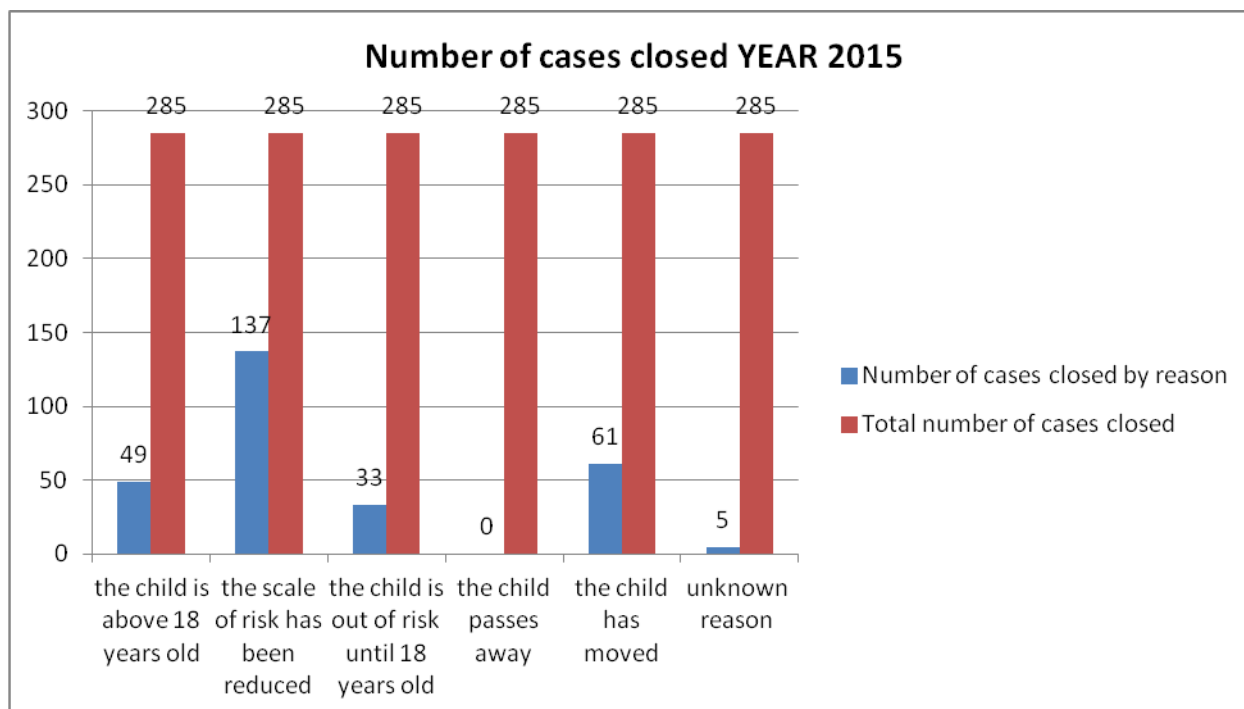
8. CLOSED CASES

During 2015, 285 cases were closed, which constitutes a slight increase compared to 2014 (277 cases addressed). The number of new cases identified is bigger than the number of cases addressed. This means that a big number of cases are left for next year.

Based on the stipulations in the 4-Ministerial Guideline No. 10 dated, 25.02.2015, CPU closes a case when:

- when the child is above 18 years old;
- the undertaken interventions have reduced the scale of risk to low scale risk or absence of risk;
- the child does not find himself/herself in that situation and when there are no indications of circumstances for returning to that situation before reaching 18 years old;
- the child passes away;
- the child moves to another area and the case is transferred to another CPU for follow-up.

60 % of the cases have been closed due to reduction or absence of risk for the child. The rest have been closed due to them having reached adulthood or moved to another place.

Table 8. Number of cases closed, by reason, year 2015

For the case closure process, when the case is not considered at risk, most of the CPUs take this decision upon consultation with their superior and other actors that are familiar with the case. However, generally speaking, it seems that local actors and the head of CPU support the CPU's work and follow its proposals on the closure of the case. Based on field monitoring of CPU's work, which SAPCR carried out in 2014, it results that, in general, CPUs keep the file open and postpone the closure process.

9. PROBLEMATICS OF THE CASES MANAGED

According to the reports of CPUs, the approach to child protection has been cross-sectoral and mainly two-directional: preventing child abuse and ensuring the child protection after the abuse has been inflicted. The children's problems treated have been various.

For the total number of cases managed, the following problems have been identified: domestic violence, trafficking, and children in street situation, which clearly shows that children have met with one or more types of abuse and CPUs in cooperation with other actors have provided services, necessary interventions for children's protection.

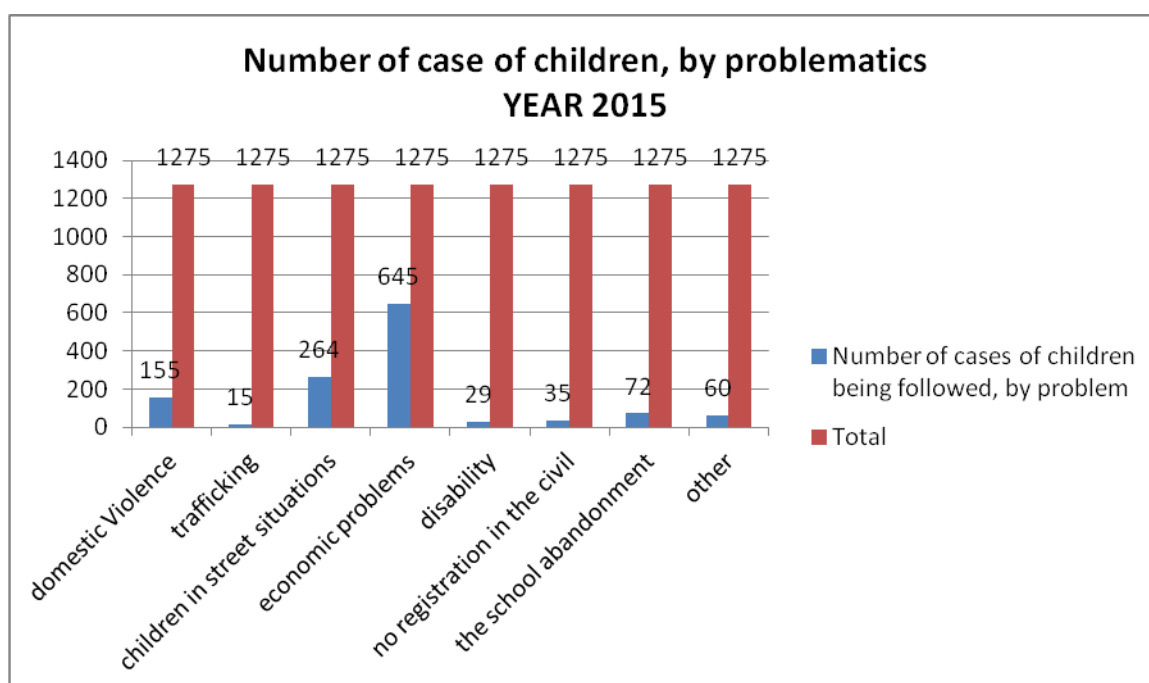
Out of the total number of children under protection by CPU (1403 children), only 555 children or 40 % have been reported as children that have suffered one type of abuse

(psychological, physical, sexual or neglect). The rest are children whose rights have been violated and are potentially at risk of abuse in the future.

There is a range of factors concerning the social context in which the child and/or family is found, which, when the child is present it may pose it to a potentially risky situation. Such factors are related to social disadvantages of the child and its family, which prove to be social barriers that hinder the child's access to basic rights, i.e. right to identity, right to education, right to healthcare, etc.

As shown on the chart, CPUs have addressed cases of children that live in a family with financial problems, children with disabilities, children that have dropped out of school or have not been enrolled, for which the intervention of CPUs and other actors has served for preventing the risk of abuse that might befall on the child in the future.

Table 9: Number of cases of children being followed, by problematics



* Total 1296 cases, is different from the total of cases managed in 2015 (1403 cases), since the data on the level of risk missing data from the CPU to the municipalities Berat, Pogradec.

Most of the cases of children under the protection of CPU belong to families facing financial problems. It is worth mentioning that "Poverty" or "Financial problems in families" in themselves do not constitute eligible criteria for CPUs to initiate the process of case management. If children, who live under such conditions, experience denial or absence of access to basic rights, they are given protection by CPUs. 645 such cases have been managed during 2015. Under the frame of preventive interventions for the protection of poor children, CPUs have provided services and support, mostly for ensuring the attendance of school.

285 children in street situation are under the protection of CPU throughout the country, excluding the CPUs data from the municipalities of Berat and Pogradec. For the

implementation of the Interministerial Agreement between MoSWY, MoFA and MoES "On identification and protection of children in street situation" (signed on 12 June 2015) the National Action Plan for the Identification and Protection of Children in Street Situation was drafted.

Upon initiation of the Plan's implementation, CPUs at the Municipalities of Durrës, Fier, Elbasan (Tirana had already started since 2014) in cooperation with local actors put in practice the plan on children in street situation. Case management of children in street situation has also been reported by other CPUs in the country, and thus municipalities set up 21 onsite teams for the identification of children in street situation. Until December 2015, 20 persons have been reported to be under prosecution for economic exploitation of minors, since the beginning of the implementation of the Action plan for children in street situation. The members of the family have been referred to vocational schools and employment offices. 78 persons have been employed as a result of the collaboration with various businesses.

During the period July-September, CPUs were involved in the process of collaborating with RED, respective schools and community for the identification of children not enrolled at schools, nurseries, and kindergartens for the period 2015-2016. There were 120 children enrolled at the education institutions.

According to the reports, 45 professionals in Tirana and 62 professionals in different districts have been trained on the working procedures with children in street situation. In November 2015, 115 inspectors, policemen of the police station from Tirana district, and specialists from the Operative Line No. 129 have been trained.

CPUs have paid special attention to children with disabilities or with health mental problems. What tracks our attention is the fact that during reporting, unlike previous reporting, the work of CPU has not focused only on ensuring the disability allowance, but also on ensuring access to services and attendance of compulsory education for these children. There have been treated 29 such cases.

*A teenage paraplegic girl lives in a village. Given that the girl finished in June 2014 the 9th class with good grades, she wished to attend high school. CPU carried out the enrolment for the girl at the school and has lobbied for the creation of a special room at the school's dormitory, as well as the provision of infrastructural facilities in order to eliminate barriers that would hinder the wellbeing and schooling of the child. **Vlora***

A child with mental retardation. The case has been reported by the Media. The family is part of the economic assistance scheme. The family accused the child's kindergarten for violence. CPU reviewed the case and intervened immediately. The accusation of violence proved to be unfounded. In cooperation with SAPCR, psychological support was provided for the case. The child started doing developmental therapy and is treated by a logotherapist. The child goes to a kindergarten in town and has a normal progress.

Saranda

At the beginning of the academic year, CPUs have identified children and families in need, i.e. those that could not afford buying the books. Children and families have been supported based on their needs for making sure that children will not drop out of school.

*30 cases of children risk school drop-out. Their families could not afford buying the books. After meetings with parents and consultations with the school directories, children were provided with books from the organisation ARSIS. Every month, families are provided with food packages. CPU is monitoring the progress at school of these cases. **Cërrik***

CPUs have intervened even for the treatment of cases for children with disruptive behaviour. The range of cases' difficulty varies a lot, from simple cases, which require only consultation with the family, to difficult and challenging ones.

*A girl aged 16. Her family lives in poor economic conditions. A year ago her family left Albania for asylum seeking in Germany. During this period the girl met with a young man, the child of whose she was expecting, as it was verified. As soon as her father found out about the pregnancy, he abandoned her, caring neither for her nor for her baby. The girl gave birth to the child last February, having bedside her neither her family nor her relatives. Her neighbours helped her to pass through this harsh situation. After case assessment and TMG meeting, there have been efforts for arranging a nursery for the baby, provision of economic assistance, as well as engaging the girl in some kind of job she can carry out being a minor. **Durrës***

*Two sisters, aged 18 and 14. The case has been reported on Media due to the severity of the happening that overwhelmed the family and the community. The girls after having poisoned their parents with sleeping pills, fled while putting the house on flames. Following the commutation to police and investigations, the girls were localized and returned to Durrës. Frightened of their parents' reaction and legal consequences, the girls requested Protective Order and were placed in a centre. The members of the family do not have a sound communication among them, one of the girls asserts that she has never discussed with her mother, who has never approached her; she also confirms that she has been inflicted physical and psychological violence by her father. After case assessment and meeting with TMG, there was an intervention in the family through individual and group advice-giving sessions, so that the situation would not deteriorate after the girls return home. Employment offices arranged the employment of the parents and enrolled the girls in a vocational school. **Durrës***

10. CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse is defined as:

“Abuse or maltreatment of children includes all forms of physical and emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, and exploitation that results in actual

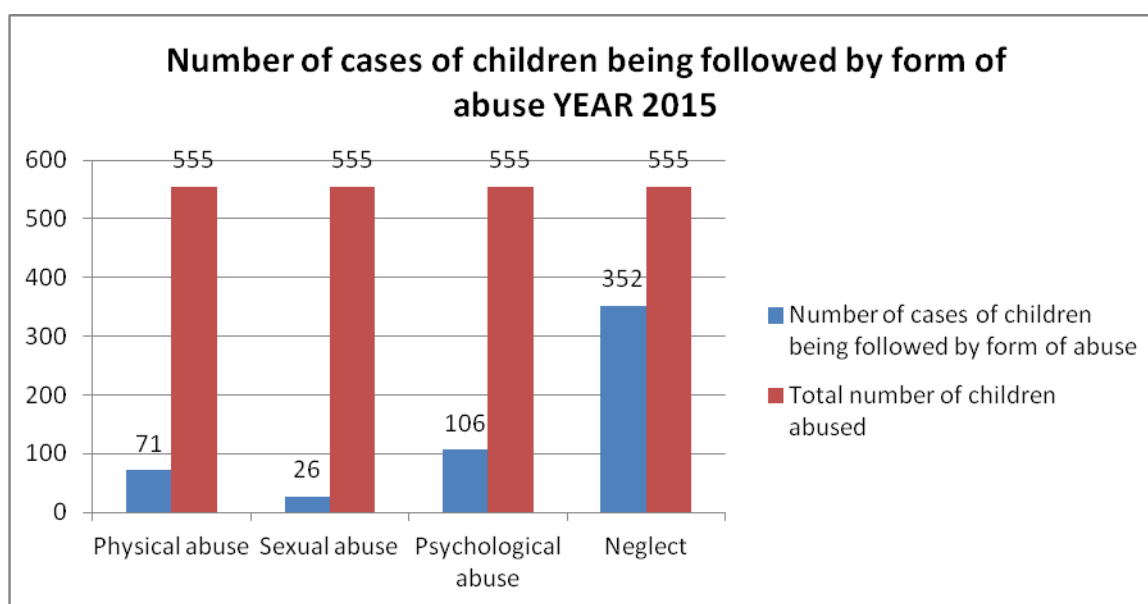
or potential harm to the child's health, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power" (WHO, 1999)

There can be distinguished five subtypes of child maltreatment:

- Physical abuse;
- Sexual abuse;
- Psychological abuse;
- Neglect

According to the reports for the cases followed up by CPUs, it results that 555 children have suffered one form of abuse, among 1407 children treated by CPU in 2015.

Table10: Number of case of children being followed by form of abuse



* The data from CPUs of Berat and Pogradec Municipalities and the Municipal Unit No. 9 Tirana are missing.

Neglect

The chronic and severe lack of caring and attention, intentionally or not, by parents/caregivers to the child's needs for accommodation, safety, overlooking, food, health and education that causes physical and/or emotional harm is called neglect.

Based on CPUs' data, the biggest number of cases managed belongs to children *neglected* by their parents, approximately 352 children or 63 % of the cases addressed. Most of these cases were identified in the municipalities of Elbasan, Shkodra, Kuçova and almost in every municipal unit in Tirana.

A good part of the cases befell on families with serious financial problems, when parents, being unable to take care of their own child, neglected them. It is also a case reported by CPU of a child that denounced their parents for neglect. The case was reviewed by the authorities and the child is under monitoring by the school's psychologist.

Generally speaking, neglect cases were managed by providing economic assistance to the family, employment opportunities and child referral to the educational institutions. The children were enrolled at school and were referred for advice and follow-up by the school's psychologist.

*A girl aged about 16. She felt neglected by her family. She did not attend school. After TMG met and a protection plan was drafted, the child was enrolled at school and at a vocational course. She has been provided psychological therapy. There are some efforts being made that after the age of 18 the girl be independent. **Tirana***

*A boy aged 13, did not receive the full attention and care of his parents, because they worked long hours. The boy with the school's psychologist help submitted a lawsuit to the prosecution. The case did not demonstrate any legal complications and was referred to the school's psychologist for continual therapy sessions with the minor and his family, **Lushnja***

Psychological abuse

This type of abuse includes all actions that cause harm to the physical, mental, moral and social health of the child and, among others, bring about the limitation of free movement, degrading, threatening, frightening, discriminating, mocking behaviour, or any other form of unfriendly or hostile treatment from parents, sisters and brothers, grandparents, legal representatives, relatives of the family or any other person that is responsible for taking care of the child.

There have been round **106 cases of psychological abuse, or 19 %** of the cases in total. The psychological violence/abuse cases, often being treated by CPUs, were identified in environments where violence towards the mother was present. According to the psychological abuse cases identified by CPU, children were present and witnessed violent situations. In cooperation with other actors, the Protective Order for the mother and the child, financial support (economic assistance), help for placing the children in a kindergarten or school and psychological support for the mother and the child, were provided when deemed necessary.

*4 children had been present when their father demonstrated violent behaviour towards the mother. The case was reported by the police. The abuser was arrested, whereas the mother and the minors received psychological support, they became part of economic assistance scheme and received food packages, **Kolonja***

Physical abuse

This subtype includes every attempt, physical harm or wound inflicted to the child, which are not accidentally and intend to cause harm or disturbance, no matter how mild they might be. Physical abuse includes such forms as: beating, shaking off/pushing forcibly, burning, hitting

(a slap or a kick), pinching, scratching, biting, reprimanding strictly, compelling by force to make an action, using substances that cause pain or disturbance.

There have been treated **71 cases, as physical abuse ones towards children or 13 %** of the total cases managed. Based on the CPUs' reports, the new physical abuse cases identified in 2015 were cases of physical harm towards the child, as a consequence of domestic violence. The children were maltreated by their parents, mainly fathers or older brothers. The cases were reported mainly by the police, after the mother was identified initially as a victim of domestic violence. In cooperation with the police and the municipal structures for the protection from domestic violence there were provided, based on the needs and case, the Protective Orders for the mother and/or the child. It was a case that a child itself reported the physical and psychological violence to the police that he suffered within the family and requested protection from local institutions. At first, the child was taken away from the family and placed in a care centre and after advice giving process with the family, the child returned to the family. The cases are under ongoing monitoring by CPU.

*A girl aged 16, maltreated physically by her parents left the house. She requested help by police authorities of the city. The case was referred to RSS (Regional Social Services) Durrës, which made possible the rehabilitation of the child in a centre. CPU intervened for the family and the child. It made possible the return of the child at home. There have been some home visits every so often. The child is out of risk. **Kruja***

*The girl lives with her parents and two older brothers from the first marriage of her mother. Her brothers had lived with their father in Italy. After they came to live with the current family of the mother, the older brothers started to physically violate the girl and the parents. This is a case referred to as violence case by school psychologist. As soon as the group meets, it decides that the steps to be undertaken should be a Protective Order and moving away the abusive brothers. **Durrës***

Sexual abuse

Any act or activity that is done for taking advantage or for sexual satisfaction of the abuser – regardless whether the child accepts or not is defined as child sexual abuse. This form of abuse might be “by contact” such as rape or “without contact” like, for instance, forcing or encouraging the child to watch or be part of communications or material with pornographic content.

During 2015, CPUs have addressed **26 sexual abuse cases towards children, or 5%** of the cases. The biggest number of such cases, 6 in total, is identified in Lushnja Municipality.

Almost in all cases, children were sexually abused by familiar persons, mainly from persons belonging to the closely related persons, with kinship relations, except for one case in which the abuser was a stranger.

All of the cases have been denounced, but CPUs do not possess much data on the court decisions against the abuser. The collaboration among judicial structures and CPUs is very poor, or rather inexistent. The cases are predominantly reported to the police by parents or by children themselves, but there are cases where the school's psychologist and family doctor have reported such cases.

With regard to the sexual abuse cases, local actors were organised and acted rapidly to provide the necessary support for the child and the family, respectively to the possibilities and services provided by the local unit. Even though there were even cases that the family accepted the help and intervention of CPU, they were cases that the family itself preferred to take care of the child.

There is an evident lack of services for the treatment of such abuse cases. Specialised psychological service for the child and the family was provided with the support of Terre des homes foundation.

11. INTERVENTIONS AND SERVICES PROVIDED FOR CHILD PROTECTION

For every child under protection, CPU drafts an Individual Care and Protection Plan, which contains the steps to be taken by different actors for meeting the child's needs and diminishing the scale of the risk. This plan addresses the child and family's needs concerning the necessary services, the providers of such services and the terms within which the services will be provided.

For the children that are victims or at risk of abuse, violence, exploitation and neglect, there are not enough specialised services. The services have been settled mainly at bigger municipalities. Therefore, for children from areas far away from the centre of the municipality, access even to the few services available is difficult. For urgent cases, the actors at local and central level have demonstrated willingness and coordination while providing the necessary services, yet providing specialised ongoing treatment to the child is difficult and it is provided mainly with the support of NGOs. There are no services for parents' capacity enforcement.

The services provided for the family:

- Economic assistance for the family;
- Disability allowance, for the child or family members with disability;
- Information and help providing for filling in or transferring documents;
- Mediation for the employment of the family members and enrolment to a school;
- Specialised psychological counselling. This service is provided with the help of NGOs;
- Housing assistance for poor family by paying the rent. This service is provided for some cases from municipalities, but is mainly provided with the support of NGOs or businesses;

- Food packages for poor families. This service is provided mainly with the help of NGOs or businesses;
- Small loan for generating income. This service is provided only with the support of NGOs.

The services provided for the child:

- Custody of the child to a kinship family;
- Residential service at the Social Care Institutions;
- Daily services for the child in need or in street situation;
- Disability allowance for the child;
- Registration at the civil office registry;
- Enrolment at the education institutions (schools, kindergartens, nurseries);
- Vaccination and health care provision at polyclinic centres and hospitals;
- Psycho-social counselling and support for the child by the school's psychologists;
- Specialised psychological counselling. This service is provided only with the support of NGOs.

12. FUNCTIONING OF THE TECHNICAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY GROUP (TMG)

The members of the technical multidisciplinary group (TMG) and the way how this group meets are stipulated in the legislation. Based on the reports, it is observed that, in general, CPUs and local actors recognise the responsibility concerning the cooperation for case management.

The meeting of TMG is usually regular for the treatment of urgent cases and the first meeting, when CPU submits the new cases of children at risk. The case reassessment meetings do not take place regularly. CPUs often contact individually every member of the technical multidisciplinary group concerning the case progress.

There is reported a good collaboration with schools and police, yet there is no consolidated collaboration among health and judicial structures at local level.

The technical multidisciplinary groups meet for the management of middle and high scale risk cases. The low risk cases are managed by CPUs. For less complicated and low risk cases, there are organised individual meetings with the necessary actors for the case settlement. This is a pragmatic approach, mostly used by CPUs for managing the cases' volume, but especially for their management, taking into consideration the lack of service variety for the children at local level.

There have been reports on domestic violence cases settled by CPUs, through meetings with the policemen and school psychologists.

NGOs in such cases have played a major role in calling and organising coordinating meetings, especially in areas where CPUs do not possess a good professional level, neither much knowledge. In these areas, NGOs have often improved capacity building for CPUs, TMG actors and have also organised coordinating meetings for case management. This is positive, but NGOs do not have a legal mandate for playing this role and such approaches are not continual or systematic. NGOs acquire this role during the treatment of specific cases similar to their own projects.

At the meetings with TMG, local institutions do not always send the same persons, or the due persons for the case treatment. The continual follow-up of the cases is not carried out by the same person or the suitable persons. They take part in meetings based on the institution director's order, given case by case and it is often seen as "additional work".

*The school psychologists' participation in the TMG meetings should be more active, since sometimes only the psychologists' coordinator of RED takes part, although the presence of the school psychologists is deemed important, taking into account that the case is treated in the TMG meetings, its history and the steps that each actor should undertake its effective settlement. **Vlora***

TMG meetings are called depending on the case and their periodicity is connected with the risk scale of the child. The collaboration with local level institutions for case management has been improved. This collaboration sometimes is linked with the personality or knowledge of the persons engaged in the TMG meetings.

*For some high risk cases, representatives of TMG have hesitated to take over their own responsibilities or they are not familiar with the procedures. **Elbasan***

With the new territorial expansion of the municipalities, the training of new actors in the multidisciplinary group, who have not been part of TMG before, is deemed necessary.

13. INFORMATIVE/AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES

A small number of CPUs have reported the follow-up of treatments or activities for their capacity development. The course "On Child Protection" is the most professional training and it is provided continuously. This course is provided by the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth in cooperation with UNICEF, Terre des homme foundation and the Faculty of Social Sciences. The course aims at capacity building of the child protection professionals and it is taking place for the third year with the participation of Child Protection Units, employees from the organisations and from child residential centres. Most of the trainings are provided by NGOs in cooperation with state institutions.

The trainings have been provided with the aim of capacity building for CPUs, local actors and organisations' representatives that operate near them. Trainings on treating children in street situation were provided mainly for CPUs of Tirana, Elbasan, Durrës and Fier Municipalities.

Other topics of training focused on institutional collaboration for case management, sexual abuse, domestic violence, child trafficking and children's rights.

The trainings received by CPWs are predominantly linked with specific NGO's projects and are not provided according to requests and needs for CPWs' training. There are not many data on impact that these trainings have had on the work of CPU.

In a few cases, in Tirana and Elbasan districts, there have been reported CPUs' meetings to exchange experience. The range of skills and qualifications of CPWs is different throughout the country, similarly the work experience varies a lot.

CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of two important reforms commenced in 2015, the Administrative - Territorial and Social Services Reforms. Both these reforms have deeply affected the organisation and functioning of local structures, including also CPUs.

In some local units, some displacements of CPUs' staff have taken place or there was confusion over CPUs' responsibility. Municipalities and Child Protection Units are experiencing a transitional phase, trying to adapt to the changes brought about by the reforms. The reports' number and quality has declined, and this also linked to the abovementioned problem. It is important that the undertaken reforms, and the new legal framework on child rights and protection, ensure the expansion of child protections services throughout the country, and the transitional period for setting up and functioning of the service may be as short as possible.

The provision of funds, financial and logistical support for CPUs is an important factor in the well-functioning of the CPUs. Such an issue is under the focus of all recommendations for improving the child protection system. However, this issue is not addressed yet.

Taking into account that part of CPUs are even social administrators, who perform also the CPU's work, in the forms, they present the number of children and families treated under the frame of measure to fight poverty through economic assistance or other social protection payments. As a result, the figures reported often might not be linked with the work that CPU should perform for children at risk case management. However, the improvement of the reporting forms enabled that such cases be identified by SAPCR and this be reflected in the CPUs' reporting.

The filling in of the form has brought up some difficulties for all CPUs. There are reported unmatched figures based on the indicators or fractional reports. The new added rubrics in the

form have posed difficulty for the understanding and data completion. SAPCR has offered support to CPU for the clarification of statistical data and their correct completion. CPUs' training on case management and correct filling in of the reporting forms remains an actual need.

Local level actors, but even children themselves have been active in the case identification and have enhanced collaboration. CPUs have a good collaboration with education institutions and police, yet there is no consolidated collaborative practice with health and justice structures.

The professional capacity level of the professionals, who work on child protection, remains a challenge. There is a lack in proper professional preparation and suitability of professionals' profiles that deal with child protection in all areas, not only at CPU.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The strengthening of the protection system of the children at risk for all categories of children is deemed necessary, through ensuring necessary human and financial mechanisms and sources to apply their protection. The setting-up of Child Protection Units at all municipalities and administrative units is necessary for making sure that all children in the country enjoy the right to protection.

The legal framework, which ensures the implementation of cross-sectoral collaborative principles, responsive ability of the system for prevention and protection of children from any form of violence, should be improved and strengthened.

The professional profile and training of CPUs' employees should be as "social employee", in compliance with the legal provisions. The new municipalities should maintain the human capital created during the last years and strengthen the structure of CPUs in proportion with the workload and the number of children in their territory. The municipalities should allocate funds from the local budget, to provide the financial sources and logistics needed for ensuring an effective service by CPU.

The range of services and help provided to the child and family should be enriched with specialised services for the treatment of children victims of various forms of abuse, early identification and prevention risk programmes. The development of a series of services for supporting and empowering the family are also necessary, like parent rehabilitation services and programmes, aiming at respecting the standard of children's rights for returning home, in case they were settled to an alternative care, or intervening for the improvement of family relations, in case the child is still treated within the family.

The professional authority of CPUs' heads should be given importance. CPU should not be alone during decision-making for the cases. The CPUs' heads ought not only to be supportive of CPU's work, but be decision-makers.

The data on child protection, concerning case management method, should be documented and kept according to the requirements of the 4-Ministerial Guideline No.10, dated 25.02.2015. The digitalisation of the CPUs' data is deemed necessary, as well as the establishment of a special system for gathering them.

The quality inspection and monitoring of CPUs' service/work is an urgent request.

Child protection employees should be given opportunities for developing their professional capacities, especially in field work. They should have possibilities for discussing the case and exploring new intervention strategies with someone possessing the necessary skills and knowledge. The collaboration possibilities or ways that experienced CPUs may support young CPUs should be considered.

The practice for the assessment of needs for CPUs, their heads and other professionals training should be specified, so that the professional capacity building is targeted, according to the employees' needs and not based only on the NGOs plans for training provision. Awareness-raising of professionals, parents and children concerning the identification of child violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, reporting ways on violence cases, as well as the familiarisation with structures, mechanisms to request or to provide help for children in need should be considered.

	Specify the closed cases by reason:	
	the child is above 18 years old	
	the scale of risk is reduced, low risk/no risk	
	the child is out of risk and there is no indication that it returns before reaching 18 years old	
	the child passes away	
	the child has moved to another place	
5	Number of cases managed by scale of risk: (refer to the total number of cases)	
	low	
	middle	
	high	
	urgent <i>(a child in urgent situation is considered one that if left in the actual circumstances, without protective intervention, he/she may die, be harmed or seriously wounded, or be a victim of maltreatment considered a criminal act, conform to DCM No. 265, dated 12.04.2012)</i>	
6	Number of home visits performed	
7	Total number of children referred by the Child Protection Unit to other structures <i>("Referred cases" means cases which have received immediate settlement, after CPU referred it to other institutions and there is no need that it should be managed by CPU)</i>	
8	Number of child cases followed by problem (refer to the total number of cases Nr.) <i>(The child might have more than one problem, list them by importance)</i>	
	domestic violence	
	trafficking	
	children in street situation	
	financial problems	
	disability	

	not enrolled	
	school drop-out	
	Other (specify)	
9	Number of child cases followed by type of abuse (refer to the total number of cases) <i>(The child may be suffering more than one form of abuse, classify them by importance)</i>	
	physical abuse	
	sexual abuse	
	psychological abuse	
	neglect	
	Others (specify)	

B- Periodic reporting form for Child Protection Units

Year 2015 (narrative information)

Municipality/Administrative unit _____
1. For every new case of 2015, describe the problem and the measure taken (add other pages if need be)
2. Describe home visits, their purpose and periodicity (add other pages if need be)
3. Describe the function of the Technical Multidisciplinary Group in relation to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functioning and actors' participation

• Meetings periodicity
• Problem
(add other pages if need be)

4. The information related to informative/consciousness-raising activities by topics and periodicity
(add other pages if need be)

5. Which are the training topics, new practices gained and experience exchange
(add other pages if need be)

ANNEX 2 – LIST OF CHILD PROTECTION UNITS THAT HAVE REPORTED FOR THE YEAR 2015

	Qarku	Bashkia	Qendra e Bashkisë	Njësitë administrative përbërëse
1	Qarku Berat	Berat	Qyteti Berat	Berat
2				Velabisht
3				Roshnik
4		Ura Vajgurore	Qyteti Ura Vajgurore	Ura - Vajgurore
5				Poshnje
6		Kuçovë	Qyteti Kuçovë	Kuçovë
7				Kozare
8				Perondi
9		Skrapar	Qyteti Çorovodë	Çorovodë
10				Qëndër- Skrapar
11				Leshnje
12		Poliçan	Qyteti Poliçan	Poliçan
13	Qarku Dibër	Dibër	Qyteti Peshkopi	Peshkopi
14				Zall-Dardhë
15				Arras
16		Bulqizë	Qyteti Bulqizë	Bulqizë
17				Zerqan
18				Rukaj
19				Komsi
20				Lis
21		Klos	Qyteti Klos	Klos
22				Suç
23	Qarku Durrës	Durrës	Qyteti Durrës	Durrës
24				Sukth
25				Ishëm
26		Shijak	Qyteti Shijak	Shijak
27				Xhafzotaj
28				Gjepalaj
29		Krujë	Qyteti Krujë	Krujë

30				Bubq
31	Qarku Elbasan	Elbasan	Qyteti Elbasan	Elbasan
32				Labinot-Mal
33				Papër
34		Cërrik	Qyteti Cërrik	Cërrik
35				Mollas
36		Belsh	Qyteti Belsh	Belsh
37				Kodovjat
38				Kukur
39				Kushovë
40				Lenie
41				Poroçan
42				Sult
43				Tunjë
44		Librazhd	Qyteti Librazhd	Librazhd
45				Qendër Librazhd
46				Lunik
47		Prrenjas	Qyteti Prrenjas	Qukës
48				Rrajcë
49	Qarku Fier	Fier	Qyteti Fier	Fier
50				Levan
51		Patos	Qyteti Patos	Ruzhdie
52		Roskovec	Qyteti Roskovec	Roskovec
53		Lushnje	Qyteti Lushnje	Lushnje
54				Allkaj
55				Fier Shegan
56		Mallakastër	Qyteti Ballsh	Ballsh
57				Greshicë
58				Kutë
59	Qarku Gjirokastrë	Gjirokastrë	Qyteti Gjirokastrë	Gjirokastrë
60				Qëndër Bulgarec
61				Voskop
62		Maliq	Qyteti Maliq	Maliq
63		Pustec	Fshati Pustec	Pustec (Liqenas)
64		Kolonjë	Qyteti Ersekë	Qëndër Ersekë
65				Leskovik
66		Devoll	Qyteti Bilisht	Bilisht

67		Pogradec	Qyteti Pogradec	Pogradec
68				Buçimas
69				Bicaj
70				Tërthore
71				Shtiqën
72		Has	Qyteti Krumë	Krumë
73				Gjinaj
74				Bujan
75	Qarku Lezhë	Lezhë	Qyteti Lezhë	Lezhë
76				Balldre
77		Mirditë	Qyteti Rrëshen	Rrëshen
78		Kurbin	Qyteti Laç	Laç
79	Qarku Shkodër	Shkodër	Qyteti Shkodër	Shkodër
80				Postribë
81	Qarku Tiranë	Tiranë	Qyteti Tiranë	Njësia Bashkiake Nr. 1
82				Njësia Bashkiake Nr. 2
83				Njësia Bashkiake Nr. 3
84				Njësia Bashkiake Nr. 4
85				Njësia Bashkiake Nr. 5
86				Njësia Bashkiake Nr. 6
87				Njësia Bashkiake Nr. 7
88				Njësia Bashkiake Nr. 8
89				Njësia Bashkiake Nr. 9
90				Njësia Bashkiake Nr. 10
91				Njësia Bashkiake Nr. 11
92				Dajt
93				Bërzhitë
94				Vaqarr
95				Pezë
96				Ndroq
97				Zall-Herr
98		Kamëz	Qyteti Kamëz	Kamëz
99		Vorë	Qyteti Vorë	Vorë
100				Bërçullë
101		Kavajë	Qyteti Kavajë	Kavajë
102				Synej
103				Luz i Vogël
104				Golem

105		Rrogozhinë	Qyteti Rrogozhinë	Rrogozhinë
106				Kryevidh
107				Lekaj
108	Qarku Vlorë	Vlorë	Qyteti Vlorë	Vlorë
109				Orikum
110				Novoselë
111		Selenicë	Qyteti Selenicë	Selenicë
112				Kotë
113		Himarë	Qyteti Himarë	Himarë
114		Sarandë	Qyteti Sarandë	Sarandë
115		Konispol	Qyteti Konispol	Konispol
116				Xarrë
117		Finiq		Livadhja
118			Fshati Dermish	Dhivër
119				Aliko
120				Finiq
121				Mesopotam
122		Delvinë	Qyteti Delvine	Delvinë
123	Qarku Tiranë	Tiranë	Qyteti Tiranë	Petrelë
124	Qarku Shkodër	Malësi e Madhe	Qyteti Koplik	Koplik