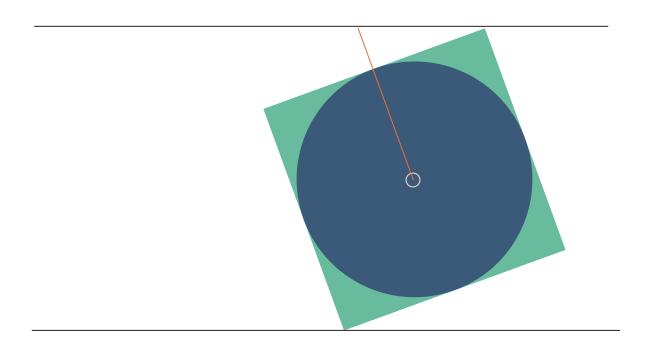
Final Report May 2021

Pilot Test of Alternative Childcare Indicators in Moldova







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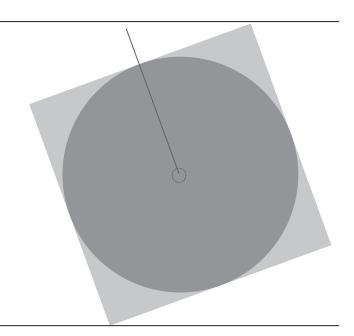


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Abbreviations

APP professional parental assistance/assistant (abbreviation in Romanian for this type of foster

care/foster carer)

CCTF family-type children's home (abbreviation in Romanian for this type of foster care)

CPCD Commission for the Protection of the Child in Difficulty

CSA community social assistant

D4I Data for Impact

GDCRP General Directorate for Child Rights Protection

IRS indicator reference sheet(s)

IT information technology

M&E monitoring and evaluation

MOHLSP Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection

NCDWAA National Council for Disability and Work Ability Assessment

SAPP psycho-pedagogical assistance service (abbreviation in Romanian for this type of service)

TSAS territorial social assistance structure

USAID United States Agency for International Development

Introduction

The alternative childcare indicators were developed in 2018–2019 by a working group led by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection (MOHLSP). The activity was conducted with support from the MEASURE Evaluation project, which was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), during the period 2017 to 2019. The development of the alternative childcare indicators was triggered by several challenges identified during an assessment of the alternative childcare system undertaken by MEASURE Evaluation, 1 namely:

- The inability to measure important aspects of alternative care (for example, prevention of separation, reseparation after a child's reintegration, assessment of the development level of children in placement services, main functional deficiency of children with disabilities), caused by the lack of relevant indicators, disaggregations, and insufficient understanding of data flow processes.
- The low quality of some data collected caused by the lack of uniform procedures for data collection, recording, and aggregation at community, rayon/municipal, and national levels, and the use of ununiform registries for keeping beneficiaries' records by the territorial social assistance structures (TSAS).
- Poor use of collected data for decision making, caused by the manual collection of data; difficulties with data aggregation, analysis, and visualization because of the lack of a functional automated information system; and government procedures that require reporting on an annual basis only.

The working group agreed to 28 alternative childcare indicators (Appendix 1)² and subsequently developed indicator reference sheets (IRS) for them. Each IRS has the indicator definition, disaggregations, and the calculation formula; methods of data collection, aggregation, and reporting; indicator utility; quality issues that may arise; frequency of reporting and dissemination; and relevant references.

Given the absence of digital data collection, the MOHLSP decided to pilot test the indicators using electronic tools. The first version of the electronic tools for collecting data for 26 of the 28 indicators³ was developed during the MEASURE Evaluation project. The tools were further developed in 2020 with the support of the USAID-funded project, Data for Impact (D4I): Harnessing the Power of Data for the Benefit of the Child. Specifically, the functionalities of data aggregation, reporting, and visualization were automated. Five community tools and 11 rayon/municipal tools were developed to capture data for the 26 indicators (Appendix 2). The electronic tools were prepared in Microsoft Excel. They contain several components, depending on the specifics of the data that they capture, report, and visualize (Appendix 3). The most frequent component is the registry in which data on the child, parents, or other caregivers are recorded. The tools also include reports and dashboards that are generated automatically for any set reporting period (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly), based on the data entered in the registry.

¹ Cannon, M., Gheorghe, C. and the Moldova Country Core Team. (2018). Assessing alternative care for children in Moldova: assessment report (volume 1), p. 12. Chapel Hill, NC: MEASURE Evaluation, University of North Carolina. Retrieved from https://www.measureevaluation.org/resources/publications/tr-18-262a.

² The disaggregations of indicators presented in Appendix 1 embed the amendments of the initial ones that were done during the pilot preparation phase, as presented in Tables 1 and 2.

³ Except for indicator I5.5, *Number and percentage of children hosted in the assisted social housing service*, because this service is

³ Except for indicator I5.5, *Number and percentage of children hosted in the assisted social housing service*, because this service is not yet regulated, and indicator I13, *Number and percentage of accredited placement services providers*, for which data are mainly collected by the National Council for the Accreditation of Social Services Providers in its national database.

The MOHLSP decided to pilot test the indicators and related electronic tools to assess their utility for increasing the efficiency of the data collection and reporting processes, and for evidence-based decision making, with the ultimate goal of scaling them up at the national level.

This report presents the objective of the pilot test, its purpose, location and duration, the pilot test process, findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Pilot Test Objective, Purpose, Location, Duration, and Period

The alternative childcare indicators were pilot tested under the D4I project. The project aims to strengthen the capacity of the government and its national and local partners to collect, analyze, and use data to generate a positive impact on children in adversity in the Republic of Moldova.

The objective of the pilot test was to prepare for the institutionalization of alternative childcare monitoring indicators.

The purpose was to determine the necessary changes to the IRS and electronic tools for collecting, aggregating, reporting, and visualizing data for the indicators, specifically:

- 1. Checking whether the primary data sources specified in the IRS were accurate.
- 2. Testing the feasibility of collecting data by the disaggregation elements established for each indicator.
- 3. Testing the frequency of data collection and reporting.

The location of the pilot test was decided by the MOHLSP on the basis of criteria suggested by D4I. Chişinău municipality and Cahul, Fălești, and Hâncești rayons (hereinafter referred to as the "pilot regions") were selected.

Chişinău municipality, the capital of the country, was selected because of its uniqueness⁴ and the need to ensure that the indicators captured the childcare situation for the large number of children in difficulty who live there.

At the same time, the selection of the pilot rayons was guided by the following criteria:

- Level of data collection and aggregation capacity: Rayons with varying capacities thereby providing an opportunity to draw lessons learned that would be useful for rolling out the indicators and tools across rayons with a heterogeneous capacity level.
- Level of social services development: Rayons that run the whole range of prevention, placement, and reintegration services captured by the indicators thereby enabling the validation of the IRS content and the testing of all tools.

⁴ Chişinău municipality is composed of Chişinău town (divided into five sectors) and 18 suburbs. The General Directorate for Child Rights Protection (GDCRP) includes the head office, five sector Directorates for Child Rights Protection, and a large range of alternative care services. The community social assistants (CSAs) in the suburbs are employees of town halls and the mayors are local guardianship authorities in these suburbs. The GDCRP is the territorial guardianship authority for the suburbs and the local guardianship authority for the sectors of Chişinău town. The situation at the rayon level is different: the CSAs in the communities composing the rayon are employees of the rayon Social Assistance and Family Protection Directorates, which play the role of territorial guardianship authority, whereas the mayors of communities are local guardianship authorities. The IRS and electronic tools reflect these differences.

The pilot test was coordinated by the D4I Resident Advisor and was supported in the field by two local consultants. It involved TSAS-relevant specialists and all community social assistants (CSAs) in the pilot regions.

The pilot test was implemented during the period September 16, 2020 to March 16, 2021.

Preparations for the Pilot Test

Preparations took place between March and September 2020. They involved several phases, which were carried out with some difficulty due to the COVID-19 pandemic (limited time availability of the MOHLSP caused by competing priorities related to the epidemiological situation in the country; impossibility to deliver face-to-face training to CSAs and TSAS personnel and to provide support in the field, etc.).

In a first phase (March 2020), two local consultants were contracted to provide support to the TSAS involved in the pilot test, under the coordination of the D4I Resident Advisor. A monitoring sheet was drafted as the main tool for monitoring the pilot test process and the local consultants' activities (Appendix 4).

Also in March 2020, MOHLSP management selected the four pilot regions: Chişinău municipality, and Cahul, Hâncești, and Fălești rayons, consisting of a total of 128 localities (towns and communes).⁵

Another important activity was finetuning the 16 community and rayon/municipal electronic tools. During this process, the D4I team identified some areas where the indicators' disaggregations could be improved and amended them to make them consistent with the electronic tools. The indicators on adoption were also revised to comply with changes in the legislation that occurred in mid-2020. Table 1 summarizes these amendments.

Table 1. Amendments to indicator disaggregations proposed by D4I before the pilot test

All indicators	Replacement of "Rayon" disaggregation with "Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level" disaggregation to capture all rayons, municipalities, etc. at this level.
I5. Number of children in placement services	To capture all types of placement as per Law 140/2013, "with family of relatives or of other people with whom the child established close relationships," was added to the disaggregation, "Type of placement services (kinship care, foster care APP, foster care CCTF, residential-type care)" to finally read: "Type of placement services (with family of relatives or of other people with whom the child established close relationships, kinship care, foster care APP, foster care CCTF, residential-type care)."
II1. Number and percentage of adoptable children	To comply with amended legislation on adoption, "with one or more siblings aged over 7 years (yes/no)" sub-disaggregation was amended to finally read: "with one or more siblings (yes/no)." To capture data at certain points in time, disaggregation, "Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period)," was added.

⁵ Chişinău municipality – 19 localities; Fălești rayon – 33 localities; Hâncești rayon – 39 localities; Cahul rayon – 37 localities.

I12. Number and percentage of adopted children	To be consistent with the disaggregations in I11, a new disaggregation was added, (i.e., "With special needs (yes/no); if yes: - with disability (yes/no) - aged over 7 years old (yes/no) - with one or more siblings (yes/no)" The word "mixed" was added to the disaggregation, "Citizenship of adoptive parents (Moldovan, foreign)" to finally read: "Citizenship of adoptive parents (Moldovan, foreign, mixed)."
I14. Number of kinship carers I14.1. Number of carers of children whose parents/only parent are/is temporarily in another locality	The word "primary" was added to the disaggregation, "Education level (secondary, post-secondary, higher)" to finally read: "Education level (primary, secondary, post-secondary, higher)."
I17. Number and percentage of prospective adoptive parents	To comply with amended legislation on adoption, "over 7 years old" sub-disaggregation in relation to siblings was deleted to finally read: "with one or more siblings (yes/no)." The word "mixed" was added to the disaggregation, "Citizenship (Moldovan, foreign)" of the couple prospective adoptive parents to finally read: "Citizenship (Moldovan, foreign, mixed)."
I20. Number and percentage of children reseparated after reintegration	A new disaggregation was added, (i.e., "Period elapsed between reintegration and reseparation (<3 months, 3-6 months, 7-12 months, >12 months)."

The electronic tools and the amendments described in Table 1 were presented to the Directorate Policies for the Protection of the Rights of the Child and Families with Children of the MOHLSP. During this presentation, which took place on July 3, 2020, the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders were defined and next steps were agreed on. The D4I team was assured that all TSAS personnel and all CSAs would have access to functional computers and the Internet, and had basic knowledge of Microsoft Excel.

To inform the TSAS heads from the pilot regions about the objectives, process, indicators, and tools for the pilot test, MOHLSP management convened a meeting on August 5, 2020 during which D4I made a presentation, answered questions, and provided clarifications on various issued raised by participants. The TSAS representatives confirmed that their specialists and the CSAs had access to computers and the Internet, had Microsoft Excel installed on their office computers, and could perform basic operations using this software.

After this meeting, collaboration agreements between D4I and TSAS in the pilot regions were signed to lay the groundwork for collaboration and establish the responsibilities of the stakeholders in the pilot test process.

The TSAS heads assumed responsibility for providing personnel involved in the process with access to computers with Microsoft Excel installed and with a good Internet connection; facilitating the pilot test at the rayon/municipal level; providing feedback on the pilot test process and any problems encountered; and recommending improvements to the tools. The TSAS specialists and CSAs aimed to complete the electronic

tools accurately, completely, and in a timely manner. They also agreed to provide feedback on the problems they faced and come up with recommendations for improving the tools.

According to the collaboration agreements, the responsibility of the D4I team was to provide support (by phone, e-mail, virtual platforms, and field visits, when possible) to the CSAs and TSAS specialists at the rayon/municipal level on the following issues: entering data in the electronic tools; sending community reports and extracts from community tools (where applicable) to the TSAS; transmitting extracts from rayon/municipal tools (where applicable) to the CSAs; and aggregating community reports into rayon/municipal reports by the TSAS specialists. The agreement specified that the D4I team would collect feedback from the CSAs, rayon/municipal specialists, coordinator, and TSAS heads on the pilot test process, indicators, and electronic tools, and would recommend improvements to the IRS and electronic tools with a view to their institutionalization.

The collaboration agreements also included provisions on communications between the parties and confidentiality, according to current legal provisions in the Republic of Moldova (Law no. 133/2011 on personal data protection, Government Decision no. 1123/2010 concerning the requirements for assuring personal data security during their processing in information systems of personal data), internal regulations of TSAS on handling and working with personal data, and relevant Palladium policy.

In August and September 2020, an online training was delivered to about 170 TSAS employees from the four pilot regions. The training was also attended by two representatives from the Directorate Policies for the Protection of the Rights of the Child and Families with Children of the MOHLSP. The training provided a unique opportunity for interaction between the MOHLSP representatives and the TSAS specialists and CSAs. The MOHLSP representatives learned about several problems faced at the local level and clarified some issues about the application of legal provisions when filling in the registries from the electronic tools.

The objective of the training was to familiarize participants with the alternative childcare indicators, the procedures for filling in the registries from the electronic tools, and the tools' functions enabling automatic data aggregation, reporting, and visualization. The responsibilities of the parties throughout the pilot test process were also presented during the training. Given that some CSAs reported difficulties using Microsoft Excel, the D4I team provided a link to an online introductory course in Romanian, which they could take for free. The training program had a total duration of 48 hours (12 hours for each pilot region) and was predominantly practical. Five case studies were used and practical exercises were conducted on filling in the registries and generating reports and dashboards. The impossibility to deliver the training face-to-face because of the epidemiological situation in the country was a significant obstacle to in-depth learning on the subjects covered and for acquiring practical skills for working with the Excel electronic tools.

During the training, the pilot regions suggested several amendments to the disaggregations of some indicators, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Amendments to indicator disaggregations proposed by pilot regions during the training sessions

I1. Number of children in risk	Replace "reintegration" with "dossier closed" in the disaggregation
situation	"Reason for removing the child from registration" to finally read "Reason
	from removing the child from registration (placement, maturity, leaving for another locality, death, dossier closed , other)."

13. Number and percentage of children whose separation from parents was prevented	Add "monetary" to the disaggregation, "Beneficiaries of secondary support within the family support social service for families with children" to finally read, "Beneficiaries of monetary secondary support within the family support social service for families with children (yes/no)."
	Slightly reformulate the denominator, "no. of cases of children in risk of separation which were examined by the gatekeeping commission," to read "no. of children whose separation was proposed to the gatekeeping commission during the reporting period" to avoid confusion with children in risk situation.
I15. Number and percentage of foster carers APP (professional parental assistants)	Delete the disaggregations, "Type of placement approved for the professional parental assistant (emergency, short term, long term, respiro)" and "Age group of the child for whom the professional parental assistant was approved (0–3, 4–15, 16–17)" because the gatekeeping commission is not providing such details in its decision and TSAS do not have the possibility of recording such data.
I16. Number and percentage of parents-educators in CCTF (family-type children's homes)	Delete the disaggregations, "Type of placement approved for the parent-educator (emergency, long term)" and "Age group of the child for whom the parent-educator was approved (0–3, 4–15, 16–17)" because the gatekeeping commission is not providing such details in its decision and TSAS do not have the possibility of recording such data.

As a result of the feedback received during the training, D4I adjusted some of the electronic tools and prepared the final versions for the pilot test.

After the training, each TSAS in the pilot regions appointed a person responsible for coordinating the pilot test. In Cahul rayon and Chişinău municipality, the coordinator was the head of the Community Social Assistance Service. In Hâncești rayon, the coordinator was the principal specialist in issues of families with children at risk. In Fălești rayon, the head of the Child and Family Protection Department was appointed as coordinator.

Pilot Test

Pilot Test Process

On September 15, 2020, the TSAS from the pilot regions received the electronic tools for pilot testing and the actual work began on September 16, 2020.

It was agreed with the TSAS that reporting would be monthly: the CSAs would send them monthly community reports, and the TSAS would compile these reports to obtain information on the aggregated situation at the rayon/municipal level. The aggregated data would then be sent to the two local consultants responsible for the pilot test to compile a data set for review of coherence and other data quality checks.

⁶Later on, the coordinator in Chişinău municipality was replaced by the specialist in the protection of families with children at risk, and afterwards, by the manager of the family reintegration and adoption service. In the last month of the pilot test, the top management of the GDCRP changed and a new person was appointed as pilot coordinator. Nevertheless, the final reporting at the end of pilot was handled by the people who had been involved from the beginning and knew the process.

It was also agreed that the TSAS in the pilot regions would record only new cases occurring after September 16, 2020. For this reason, there were no cases in the records at the beginning of the reporting period in the electronic tools in the first month of the pilot test. Moreover, even if there were meetings of the rayon/municipal Commissions for the Protection of the Child in Difficulty (CPCD), which approved the extension of placements in planned placement services, these cases were not recorded in the electronic tools because they were registered before the launch of the pilot test.

In addition to the electronic tools, in November 2020, the pilot regions received the IRS that were revised following amendments to the legislation and the preliminary results (discussed in the next section).

According to the 407 records of support filled in by the local consultants in the monitoring sheets⁸ (available from D4I on request), 193 people (187 females and 6 males) from the pilot regions were supported throughout the six-month pilot test period to fill in the registries and handle the electronic tools as a whole. Fifty people were TSAS specialists and 143 were CSAs.

The local consultants conducted primarily individual or small group sessions to support personnel on the ground to use the tools because large group sessions were not effective given the uneven level of participants' understanding and skills. Moreover, some personnel were reluctant to ask questions and admit that not everything was clear to them.

I finally understood what I have to do! It's really much better when we work individually or in small groups, I can ask everything I don't know. (community social assistant)

It never happened to me to need help and be denied a timely and qualitative support. Initially, I felt embarrassed to call and ask something, because I didn't want my workmates to think badly of me, but I realized that I can do it whenever I need support. (supervising social assistant)

The communication and provision of support took various forms: by phone, e-mail, Viber, WhatsApp, Zoom, AnyDesk, or TeamViewer. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible for the two consultants to travel in the field, which caused some communication issues and difficulties in transferring practical skills of working with the electronic tools. The consultants provided assistance to the CSAs and TSAS specialists to address the following issues:

- Data entry in the electronic tools
- Transmission of community reports and relevant extracts from the community registries to the TSAS
- Transmission of relevant extracts from rayon/municipal registries to the CSAs
- Aggregation of community reports into rayon/municipal reports by the TSAS specialists

The consultants did not have direct access to child data and only guided the TSAS specialists and CSAs on the use of various functionalities of the tools, as indicated above.

The most frequently asked questions by personnel involved in the pilot test concerned the right tools for registering specific cases; the concept of "prevention of separation" captured by one of the tools; how to change the format of cells in some tools; and transmission of extracts with child data from the community to the TSAS. In addition to questions about filling in and using the tools, the local consultants were asked questions that

⁷ This is the name of the gatekeeping commission in the Republic of Moldova.

⁸ Records of support: Chişinău municipality – 112; Fălești rayon – 113; Hâncești rayon – 67; Cahul rayon – 115.

showed a lack of understanding among the CSAs of legal provisions, such as the definition and applicability of primary family support.

During the pilot test, it was found that the tools with the most data were a tool related to children assisted by the primary family support service and a tool related to children separated from their family and children in placement services. In relation to the former, this is explained by the fact that most beneficiaries come to the CSAs with requests for assistance/advice, which involves one-off or multiple interventions while keeping the child in the family. In relation to the latter, the reason is that a large number of parents migrate abroad in search of work opportunities, leaving their children in the care ("custody") of relatives or third persons ("custodians"). The tools with the least amount of data were those related to adoption (adoptive parents, adoptable and adopted children), reintegrated children, and foster carers APP and CCTF. The reasons were the very small number of adoptions and family reintegrations, and the limited number of applicants for the position of foster carers. The only tool with no data was the one on cases examined by the CPCD, serving indicator I3 on prevention of separation. This was because the tool captured only the situations when the case manager proposed child separation and the CPCD rejected the proposal. Such cases were not recorded during the six months of the pilot test. It means that the TSAS specialists did not have the opportunity to use that tool and to test it.

During the pilot test, the local consultants collected feedback from the CSAs, TSAS specialists, coordinators, and TSAS heads on the pilot test process, the indicators, and the electronic tools. The consultants also formulated recommendations for improving the IRS and the electronic tools with a view to integrating them in an information system. In the first three months of the pilot test, the entire D4I team (including the D4I Resident Advisor and two information technology (IT) experts) contributed to the adjustment/revision of the electronic tools based on recommendations made by the local consultants and TSAS employees, namely: correction of several formulas (in three tools); adding tabs to make it possible to report data on a monthly basis (in four tools); and reformatting several cells (in two tools). Following the revisions, the tools were tested by the local consultants and sent to the pilot regions with an explanation of the changes made. As the tools were increasingly used, the TSAS in the pilot regions identified other elements that could be optimized and made several suggestions, which are presented in the next section of this report.

Findings

This section of the report presents several general findings and specific findings organized by the three areas of the pilot test's purpose. It also presents suggestions made by the TSAS in the pilot regions on the utility of some indicators for decision making.

General Findings

Both TSAS management and staff (specialists, CSAs) in all pilot regions welcomed the development of the alternative childcare indicators and the introduction of electronic data collection, confirming that this would facilitate their work. To a large extent, personnel showed interest in the pilot test of the alternative care indicators, mentioning that a well-developed data collection system would improve their work and provide them with constantly updated data.

It is a very good initiative. It is difficult at first, but over time, I'm sure, this will become a habit. We have learned how to use the information system on social aid, so we will do the same with the social services information system. Moreover, social services for the elderly and for persons with disabilities should be also covered. We, as a Directorate, must have in sight all the beneficiaries. (TSAS head)

If the procedure of recording, collecting, and keeping statistical data as per the electronic tools is accepted, we will have a clear picture and accurate statistical data. (specialist in the protection of families with children at risk)

The idea with electronic data keeping is very good. If you ask me when things are going to be put right, I would say towards the end of 2021. We need to be all on the same page, to have a habit—at the end of the month everyone sends the data to the Municipal Directorate for Child Rights Protection, without having to remind them of that. Similar to the deadline for responding to a complaint, there should be a deadline for reporting on cases that enter the records. (service manager)

At the same time, there was no practice of collecting data in Excel, which created obstacles for testing indicator-related tools. Because the pilot test involved the use of computers and Microsoft Excel, it was very important for everyone who filled in the electronic tools to have access to these technologies and to know how to use them. The D4I team was assured that the TSAS personnel and the CSAs had access to computers with Microsoft Excel installed and to the Internet and had basic knowledge in the use of this software (see the section above on Preparations for the Pilot Test). However, gaps were detected both in terms of information technologies and staff skills, as follows:

- Most CSAs used computers that they had received from the MOHLSP in 2008–2010. These computers
 were obsolete and had a low performance. This made the pilot test process difficult because opening
 Excel took time, the software closed automatically in some cases, and information was lost or at risk of
 being lost.
- On some computers (3% of the total number of those operated by the electronic tools users), the LibreOffice package (the free version of Microsoft Office) was installed. It has certain limits compared with Excel.
- The formatting of cells in Microsoft Excel differed from one computer to another, and some CSAs had difficulties entering the identification number of a person (IDNP) and dates (birth date, entry/exit date from records, date of decision of the guardianship authority, etc.) in the tools, the latter requiring a specific format for the respective cells.
- Only two of the four TSAS in the pilot regions (Fălești and Chişinău) employed IT specialists who ensured the maintenance of computers and the installation of software.
- Most CSAs did not use Microsoft Excel in their daily work. They did not have sufficient skills in performing basic operations in this software (e.g., copying and pasting tabs or cells/columns, transmitting the extract from electronic tools, creating new files, formatting cells). This was why they requested training in this area:

It is imperative to hold training on accessing Excel tools. (community social assistant)

It is very important to organize additional training before the next reporting period. (supervising social assistant)

It should be noted that the electronic tools that were tested required only basic knowledge of Microsoft Excel. Because training in Microsoft Excel was not part of the scope of the D4I project, the TSAS employees and CSAs were advised, both during the training and during the pilot test, to take an Excel online course that was available on YouTube, made available free of charge by an educational institution in Romania. The exact number of personnel who took this course is not known; nevertheless, given the numerous requests for clarification and support received by the local consultants, it can be concluded that many CSAs did not take the course.

Collecting data for the indicators was not difficult because much of these data were routinely collected before the pilot test. The difficulties arose when entering data in the electronic tools for the reasons mentioned above. Moreover, all those involved in the pilot test agreed that Microsoft Excel might not be the most appropriate software to collect, report, visualize, and analyze data on the alternative childcare indicators, reinforcing the conviction of the TSAS specialists and CSAs on the pressing need to have access to an automated information system.⁹

Transmitting information from the community to TSAS and from TSAS to the community is still difficult. An information system would solve these difficulties, people would be able to see all the information at once, without having to wait for the report from the community or from the TSAS, would know the child's itinerary in the system. (TSAS specialist)

The pilot test has demonstrated again the need to create an automated information system. It is rather difficult to keep accurate records using these electronic tools. To have a real picture, I must register the child in several registries. If there was an information system, I would enter the child's identification number only once and the system would show me the whole picture, the child's itinerary, what the child received and receives at the moment, etc. (service manager)

Other obstacles that arose during the pilot test were caused by staff turnover, sick leave of CSAs due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the fact that about 12 percent of those involved in the pilot test did not receive the pilot test training for various reasons (leave, recently employed, etc.). Although people were informed about the possibility of listening to the recorded training program, they preferred to ask for direct support from the local consultants. The types of support ranged from periodic explanations to ongoing guidance and individual work with some people. Apart from the challenges strictly related to the prerequisites for the pilot test (existence of information technologies, Excel skills, training, tools), the pilot test process was hampered by the following issues:

- There were communication and coordination problems among the suburbs of Chişinău municipality, the sector Directorates, and the head office of the GDCRP resulting from the special status of Chişinău municipality and the specific structure of its social assistance system, among other issues, as explained in footnote 4 above. As a result, in the first month of the pilot test, the key effort was establishing the responsibilities of each stakeholder (the GDCRP supervisor, CSAs) in terms of data entry and reporting. In most cases (70%), the GDCRP supervisor or the D4I consultant had to call to request the monthly reports for each tool or to make sure that everything was clear and that there were no data entry problems.
- The timeframe of the pilot study coincided with the cold season when the CSAs were overloaded with heating allowance applications. As a result, most CSAs claimed the lack of time to fill in the electronic tools, and all the more because the MOHLSP requested the completion of both the traditional, hard copy registries and the electronic registries tested. This requirement doubled the workload of employees. Despite the lack of time, the CSAs in the pilot regions managed to fill in the electronic tools, but with some delays.
- The CSAs and several specialists had different approaches to service provision, and different levels of understanding of the principles of organization and operation of children's services, including the

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⁹ This need was also identified during the assessment of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity of the Directorate Policies for the Protection of the Rights of the Child and Families with Children (MOHLSP), of the National Social Assistance Agency, and of TSAS, and during the collection of requirements for capturing longitudinal data on a child's itinerary in the care system, carried out by D4I in 2020.

- principles underlying the indicators that were tested. Therefore, additional time was needed to reach the same level of understanding and approach to indicator-related data and where to record the data.
- In the pilot regions, there were several large communities where more than one CSA was working and who was responsible for cases in the assigned sector. Each CSA reported data on his/her specific cases to the TSAS specialist, who had to make additional time available to compile and input the data for the respective communities in the rayon/municipal tool.

Checking the Accuracy of Primary Data Sources

The primary data sources mentioned in the draft IRS were found to be accurate, with only a few additions being made, as follows:

- 1. The child's file was added in the IRS of indicators **I4.1.** "Number and percentage of children whose parents/only parent are/is temporarily in another locality," **I5.** "Number of children in placement services," **I5.2.** "Number and percentage of children placed in foster care service APP (professional parental assistance)," **I5.3.** "Number and percentage of children placed in foster care CCTF (family-type children's homes)," and **I5.4.** "Number and percentage of children placed in residential-type placement services."
- 2. The decision of the CPCD was added in the IRS of indicator **I18.** "Number and percentage of children reintegrated in the biological family."

Given the amendments made to the legal framework during the pilot test timeframe (Family Code of 2000, Civil Code of 2002, Law no. 99/2010 on the legal regime of adoption, Law no. 140/2013 on the special protection of children at risk and children separated from their parents), the References in several IRS were revised, including their links for download.

The IRS will be finalized after the findings of the pilot test and amendments to the indicators presented below are discussed and approved by the MOHLSP.

Testing the Feasibility of Data Collection by Disaggregation Elements

During the pilot test, it was found that data for the indicators by disaggregation elements could be collected and, with one exception, were accessible to both the CSAs and TSAS specialists.

The exception was the disability sub-disaggregation, "Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other)." Collecting such data was rather difficult given its confidential nature. The disability certificate indicates the degree of disability, but the section "Dominant functional deficiency" is left blank or filled in with a code whose meaning is known only to health workers. The TSAS specialists can learn about a child's deficiency only if the parents request that their child is entered in the TSAS records to receive the entitled cash compensations or social services. However, for various reasons, not all parents inform the TSAS that their child has a disability and what is the main functional deficiency. Even if they do so, the TSAS specialists are not allowed to communicate this information to the CSAs. The latter can learn which disability a child has by asking the family. As a result, the quality of data entered in the registries from the electronic tools by the TSAS specialists and CSAs on the dominant functional deficiency was either incomplete or inaccurate. It seems that

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¹⁰ See Law no. 112/2020 for the amendment of various laws.

this information is available only in the "NCDWAA"¹¹ module of the Social Assistance Automated Information System.

The TSAS specialists and CSAs also identified some difficulties in entering data for the disaggregation, "Causes of separation" in indicators **I4.** "Number and percentage of children separated from their parents" and **I20.** "Number and percentage of children reseparated after reintegration." This disaggregation had the following options:

- Both parents/only parent left temporarily for another locality
- Children temporarily left without parental care
- Children left without parental care
- Children taken from their parents due to an imminent danger to their life or health

The difficulties were caused by the fact that the second and third options were too similar to the child's status after separation. The TSAS specialists and CSAs mentioned that the options of the respective disaggregation should have referred to the causes applicable at the time of the child's physical separation and not to the child's status after separation; for example: both parents/only parent left temporarily for another location; imminent danger to their life and health; death of parents; and parents abandoned the child.

Utility of Indicators for Decision Making

The TSAS in the pilot regions considered the indicators very useful for decision making; however, there were four indicators for which they had some reservations. The reservations and the suggestions for amending or eliminating indicators follow.

- Indicator I3. "Number and percentage of children whose separation from parents was prevented." The TSAS suggested amending the definition to cover all cases when the CPCD contributed to the prevention of child separation, (i.e., the approval of cash support as part of family support), and not only the situations when the case manager suggested separation, but the CPCD rejected it. They mentioned that if indicator I3 was not amended to broaden its definition, its utility for decision making would be limited. The electronic tool for this indicator was not filled with any data because there were no cases during the six months of the pilot test when the CPCD had different opinion from that of the case manager.
- Indicator I7. "Number and percentage of children in planned placement services who have an individual assistance plan." This indicator was considered useless by the TSAS because all children have such a plan. The exception was planned placement in kinship care, for which a plan was not required by the legislation. Nevertheless, all children placed in kinship care as of 2015 had case files and individual assistance plans, whereas for those placed before 2015, plans should have also been developed. For these reasons, the pilot regions suggested removing this indicator.
- Indicator **I8.** "Number and percentage of children in planned placement services whose development was assessed by the psycho-pedagogical assistance service (SAPP)." This indicator was also considered useless by all pilot regions and its elimination was suggested because the children in planned placement

¹¹ The meaning of this abbreviation is National Council for Disability and Work Ability Assessment.

attend educational institutions, which refer them to SAPP if they are suspected of having special education needs.

• Indicator I19. "Number and percentage of reintegrated children who were visited for monitoring according to the individual assistance plan." Two pilot regions felt that the indicator could be excluded because all reintegrated children were monitored and the CSAs must present monitoring reports to the TSAS. The other two pilot regions thought that the indicator should be kept because post-reintegration monitoring of the child impacts the success of reintegration and the strengthening of parents' competence to provide for the child's well-being in the family.

Testing the Frequency of Data Collection and Reporting

Data collection has been an ongoing process. The CSAs and TSAS specialists had permanent access to up-to-date and aggregated data through the self-generated reports in the electronic tools, based on the set reporting period. During the pilot test period, reporting by the CSAs to the TSAS was done on a monthly basis without any specific problems. Both the CSAs and TSAS specialists were able to see and use the data, as needed.

Data on Indicators and Their Use

Throughout the pilot test period (September 16, 2020–March 16, 2021), data sets for the 26 indicators tested were collected in the form of a matrix supported by the information contained in the electronic tools: name of indicators, disaggregations, sub-disaggregations, values at the beginning of the reporting period, values at the end of the reporting period, and cumulative values for the whole reporting period (Appendix 5). The data sets were analyzed by D4I and transposed in basic visualizations with the aim of informing the data review meetings planned for May-June 2021 with the MOHLSP, National Social Assistance Agency, and the pilot regions.

The initial data submitted by the pilot regions did not align well, revealing several cases where indicators did not corroborate correctly among themselves, for example:

- Number of children separated from their parents (I.4) as a total of the Number of children whose parents/only parent are/is temporarily in another locality (I4.1) and the Number of children in placement services (I5).
- Number of children placed in kinship care (I5.1), which should always be equal to or higher than the Number of kinship carers (I14).
- Number of children in placement services (I5) (both emergency and planned), which should correlate with the Number of children who left planned placement services (I9) and the Number of children reintegrated in the biological family (I18).

The D4I team worked with the pilot regions to identify the reasons for data misalignment, which included some delays in entering data in several tools due to work overload at the end of the year (month November 16—December 14, 2020); errors filling in some registries, which affected the automatic calculation of indicators in the reports; and misreporting some data to the D4I team even if they were correct in the reports of the electronic tools (e.g., reporting of children in emergency placement for indicator I5 rather than children in both emergency and planned placement services). After several meetings with the TSAS and three to four rounds of data review for each pilot region, the TSAS fixed the errors and provided the final data on the indicators. The local consultants confirmed that these data were consistent with those recorded in the electronic tools.

This was a very useful exercise, both for the TSAS and the local consultants because they learned how the indicators should corroborate with each other, how the data should align, how to "read" the correlation between the indicators, and why the review of the entire data set was important for assuring reliable data for

decision making. The lack of data review practices at the local/rayon level was likewise a finding of a recent D4I assessment of TSAS monitoring and evaluation capacity, conducted by D4I in 2020. Because many of these data on the indicators tested were collected by TSAS through form CER 103 and were aggregated by the MOHLSP at the national level, it is likely that the quality of the national data was also affected by the lack of data review practices at the TSAS level.

As far as data use is concerned, there was little evidence that the TSAS in the pilot regions used the data they collected through the electronic tools during the pilot test. The very few positive examples were Fălesti rayon, which reported the use of data to inform some actions in the 2021 activity plan (without providing any specific details), and Chişinău municipality, which reported a commitment to developing the emergency foster care APP service in 2021 to reduce institutionalization. (According to the data sets, institutionalization is the predominant form of alternative care for children left without parental care in Chisinău municipality.)

At the same time, the TSAS had reservations about using the collected data for a full analysis of the situation because the tools did not capture the historical data on children entered in the books before the start of the pilot test period. For example, the tools captured data on children placed in foster care with foster carers approved before the pilot test, but did not show these foster carers because the tools were used to record data only for cases occurring as of September 16, 2020 (i.e., the start date of the pilot test).

Conclusions

- 1. Great progress was made during the pilot test period in the pilot regions raising TSAS specialists and CSAs' awareness about the importance and usefulness of an electronic system (database) for collecting data and keeping records on beneficiaries, ideally through an automated information system.
- 2. The pilot test encountered difficulties because of outdated information technologies and insufficient CSAs skills to use basic Microsoft Excel functions. Other challenges were caused by the uneven CSAs understanding of the legislation behind the indicators, overlapping of the pilot test period with the cold season when the CSAs were overloaded with processing heating allowance applications, staff turnover, and numerous cases of CSAs taking sick leave because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3. The scale-up and successful use of the electronic Excel tools at the national level require the fulfillment of certain prerequisites, namely: more performant computers with licensed Microsoft Excel installed and uniform regional settings; at least one IT specialist in each TSAS to ensure maintenance of the computer infrastructure, provision of basic advice to the CSAs on how to use Microsoft Excel, and troubleshooting; knowledge of the basic functions of Microsoft Excel by all CSAs; bilingual training (Romanian and Russian) of users, as needed; and consultancy services for at least the first three to four months on the use of the electronic tools. These prerequisites are difficult to meet because they are expensive and insufficiently sustainable. Moreover, the TSAS specialists and CSAs involved in the pilot test mentioned that Microsoft Excel was not the most appropriate software to track children in the social assistance system, and to analyze and report data.
- 4. The pilot test confirmed the need for an automated information system, such as the Case Management Information System, which is expected to be developed with D4I support. This system will be able to follow a child's journey, collect longitudinal data, analyze and visualize data, and generate reports on the alternative care indicators. All those involved in the pilot test stated that such an information system was absolutely necessary.
- 5. The pilot regions thought that 23 of the 26 indicators tested were useful for decision making and should be institutionalized as part of a common framework for the M&E of alternative childcare. In the case of

one indicator, (i.e., **I19.** "Number and percentage of reintegrated children who were visited for monitoring according to the individual assistance plan"), opinions are mixed. Moreover, there were two indicators, (i.e., **I7.** "Number and percentage of children in planned placement services who have an individual assistance plan" and **I8.** "Number and percentage of children in planned placement services whose development was assessed by the psycho-pedagogical assistance service (SAPP)"), which the TSAS specialists and CSAs in the pilot regions suggested removing because they did not have any clear utility in the decision-making process. Last, broadening the definition of indicator **I3.** "Number and percentage of children whose separation from parents was prevented" was thought to be more useful for making decisions.

- 6. The primary data sources given in the IRS were accurate and consistent with existing legal frameworks and practices. Data for the indicators tested by disaggregation elements can be collected on a regular basis and were accessible to both the CSAs and TSAS specialists, except the disability sub-disaggregation on dominant functional deficiency. Moreover, the disaggregation on the causes of separation for two indicators created some confusion for data collectors and required revision. Based on the electronic tools, the frequency of reporting of the data collected by the CSAs to the TSAS was monthly and was considered by those involved in the process to be appropriate and not difficult.
- 7. The structure of the electronic tools, with their dropdown menus, calculation formulas for the indicators, reporting templates, and dashboards are going to be very useful to inform the structuring of information in the forthcoming automated information system.
- 8. There are no data review practices in the pilot regions and the TSAS are not used to corroborating the various relevant data to check their consistency across a larger data set. This affected the quality of data at both local and national levels, and the ultimate goal of providing reliable data for decision making. With few exceptions, data collected through the electronic tools were not used during the pilot test period.

Recommendations for the MOHLSP and TSAS

- 1. The results of the pilot test confirmed the utility of most of the indicators for the M&E of alternative childcare and for decision making. It is therefore recommended that the Directorate Policies for the Protection of the Rights of the Child and Families with Children of the MOHLSP reviews the suggestions made by the pilot regions and finetunes the indicators, with the support from D4I, with a view to preparing them for institutionalization.
- 2. It is recommended that data for the indicators be collected, analyzed, reported, and visualized in the forthcoming automated case management information system (per Memorandum of Cooperation with the MOHLSP) because Microsoft Excel cannot provide all the necessary functions, such as real-time updating of data, prompt exchange of data between different specialists, ongoing recordkeeping of beneficiaries, etc. At the same time, it is important that the TSAS specialists and CSAs are provided with modern computers to be able to efficiently use an automated information system, and that each TSAS has at least one IT specialist in charge of the maintenance of computers (where such a specialist is not already employed). Another essential prerequisite for efficient and correct data entry in the system is the provision of regular training and supportive supervision to the CSAs for the uniform understanding and implementation of legislation, including the principles underlying the alternative care indicators.
- 3. To get data on the dominant functional deficiency of children with disabilities, the only possible solution seems to be linking the case management information system that is going to be developed

- with the support of D4I to the NCDWAA module in the Social Assistance Automated Information System to receive these data automatically. The interoperability of the two information systems should therefore be ensured.
- 4. To improve the quality and use of data for decision making, the TSAS should institutionalize the practice of the regular review of collected data in the form of monthly or quarterly meetings that involve management, the relevant specialists, and the CSAs. This exercise would help the TSAS better understand the actual situation and make necessary adjustments to the planning and delivery of services and the allocation of resources (staff, finance). D4I is committed to working with the MOHLSP and the National Social Assistance Agency to develop data quality assurance guidelines, data use guidelines, and data review supportive supervision guidelines to facilitate this process.

Appendixes

Appendix 1. Indicators for Monitoring Alternative Childcare

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
I1. Number of children in risk situation	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Reason for removing the child from registration (placement, maturity, leaving for another locality, death, dossier closed, other) Causes that put a child in a risk situation (violence; negligence; vagabondage, beggaring, prostitution; lack of care and supervision from parents due to their absence from home for unknown reasons; death of parents; living in the street, runaway or expelled from home; refusal of parent[s] to fulfill their parental obligations; abandonment by parents; establishment of judicial care measures concerning one of the parents)	No. of children in risk situation (according to Law 140/2013, art.8)	
12. Number of children assisted through family support social service for families with children	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period)	No. of children assisted through family support social service for families with children	

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
	Reason for removal from registration (the service has reached its purpose, the family left for another locality, other reason) Type of support (primary, secondary)		
I2.1 Percentage of children assisted through secondary family support social service for families with children	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Monetary support (yes/no)	No. of children benefitting from secondary family support social service for families with children	No. of children in risk situation
I3. Number and percentage of children whose separation from parents was prevented	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Beneficiaries of monetary secondary support within the family support social service for families with children (yes/no)	No. of children whose separation from parents was prevented	No. of children whose separation was proposed to the gatekeeping commission during the reporting period

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
I4. Number and percentage of children separated from their parents	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Causes of separation: - Both parents/only parent left temporarily for another locality - Children temporarily left without parental care - Children without parental care - Children taken from their parents due to an imminent danger to their life or health	No. of children separated from their parents	No. of child population
I4.1. Number and percentage of children whose parents/only parent are/is temporarily in another locality	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Form of protection (custody, without an established form of protection) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Locality where both parents/only parent left (from Moldova, from abroad)	No. of children whose parents/only parent are/is temporarily in another locality	No. of children separated from their parents

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
I5. Number of children in placement services	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Placed following a decision of the guardianship authority (yes/no) Type of placement (emergency, planned) Type of placement services (with family of relatives or of other people with whom the child established close relationships, kinship care, foster care APP, foster care CCTF, residential-type care) Child status (left without parental care, temporarily left without parental care, without established status)	No. of children in placement services (less children whose parents/only parent are/is temporarily in other locality)	
I5.1. Number and percentage of children placed in kinship care	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Child status (left without parental care, temporarily left without parental care, without established status)	No. of children placed in kinship care	No. of children in placement services (I5)

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
I5.2. Number and percentage of children placed in foster care service APP (professional parental assistance)	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Type of placement (emergency, short term, long term, respiro) Child status (left without parental care, temporarily left without parental care, without established status)	No. of children placed in foster care service APP (professional parental assistance)	No. of children in placement services (I5)
I5.3. Number and percentage of children placed in foster care CCTF (family-type children's homes)	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Type of placement (emergency, planned) Child status (left without parental care, temporarily left without parental care, without established status)	No. of children placed in foster care CCTF (family- type children's homes)	No. of children in placement services (I5)

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
I5.4. Number and percentage of children placed in residential-type placement services	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Placed following the decision of the guardianship authority (yes/no) Type of placement (emergency, planned) Type of residential institution (boarding gymnasium, boarding home for children with mental deficiencies, special institution for children with physical and sensory deficiencies, auxiliary boarding school, mother and child unit, temporary placement center for children ages 7–17 years, community home for children in risk situation) Form of ownership of residential institution (public, private), of which accredited (yes/no) Period of placement in residential-type placement services: - Emergency (<3 days, 3–45 days, >45 days) - Planned (<1.5 months, 1.5–3 months, 4–6 months, 7–12 months, >12 months) Child status (left without parental care, temporarily left without parental care, without established status)	No. of children placed in residential-type placement services	No. of children in placement services (I5)
15.5. Number and percentage of children hosted-placed in the assisted social housing service	Sex (male/female) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability (yes/no) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period)	No. of children hosted in the assisted social housing service	No. of children ages 16-17 years with a placement opinion from the gatekeeping commission

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
	Form of ownership of assisted social housing (public, private), of which accredited (yes/no) Period of hosting in assisted social housing (<12 months, 12–24 months, >24 months)		
I6. Ratio of children placed in residential versus family-type placement services	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Type of placement (emergency, planned)	No. of children placed in residential-type placement services	No. of children placed in family-type placement services
I7. Number and percentage of children in planned placement services who have an individual assistance plan	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Type of placement services (kinship care, foster care APP, foster care CCTF, residential-type care) With individual assistance plan revised according to applicable standards (yes/no) Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Child status (left without parental care, temporarily left without parental care, without established status)	No. of children in planned placement services who have an individual assistance plan	No. of children in planned placement services
18. Number and percentage of children in planned placement services whose development was assessed	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural)	No. of children in planned placement services whose development was assessed by the SAPP	No. of children in planned placement services

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
by the psycho-pedagogical assistance service (SAPP)*	Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Child status (left without parental care, temporarily left without parental care, without established status) Type of placement services (kinship care, foster care APP, foster care CCTF, residential-type care) With special education needs (yes/no); in case of special needs: - with individualized education plan (yes/no)		
19. Number and percentage of children who left planned placement services	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Child status (left without parental care, temporarily left without parental care, without established status) Type of planned placement services left by the child (kinship care, foster care APP, foster care CCTF, residential-type care) Reasons for leaving the planned placement services (maturity; [re]integration in biological family; adoption; enrollment in education; other reasons)	No. of children who left planned placement services during the reporting year	No. of children in planned placement services
I10. Number and percentage of children who left residential-type planned placement services	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level	No. of children who left residential-type placement services during the reporting year	No. of children in planned residential-type placement services

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
	Type of residential institution (boarding gymnasium, boarding home for children with mental deficiencies, special institution for children with physical and sensory deficiencies, auxiliary boarding school, mother and child unit, temporary placement center for children ages 0–6 years, temporary placement center for children ages 7–17 years, community home for children in risk situation) Reasons for leaving the residential-type placement services (maturity; [re]integration in biological family; adoption; placement in kinship care; placement in foster care APP; placement in foster care CCTF; placement in assisted social housing; enrollment in education; other reasons)		
II1. Number and percentage of adoptable children	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level With special needs (yes/no); if yes: - with disability (yes/no) - aged over 7 years old (yes/no) - with one or more siblings (yes/no) Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period)	No. of adoptable children	No. of children without parental care
I12. Number and percentage of adopted children	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level With special needs (yes/no); if yes: - with disability (yes/no) - aged over 7 years old (yes/no) - with one or more siblings (yes/no) Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Citizenship of adoptive parents (Moldovan, foreign, mixed) Adoption procedure (national, international)	No. of adopted children during the reporting year	No. of adoptable children

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
I13. Number and percentage of accredited placement services providers	Type of placement services (foster care APP, foster care CCTF, residential-type care, assisted social housing); in case of residential-type placement services: - boarding gymnasium - boarding home for children with mental deficiencies - auxiliary boarding school - temporary placement center for children ages 0–6 years - temporary placement center for children ages 7–17 years - community home for children in risk situation - mother and child unit Stage of accreditation (accredited, initially accredited, provisionally accredited, not accredited, with suspended accreditation, with withdrawn accreditation) Type of provider (public, private) Proposed for closure versus continue to function (relevant for residential institutions only) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level	No. of accredited placement services providers	No. of placement services providers
I14. Number of kinship carers	Sex (male/female) Age group (18–35, 36–50, 51–63, over 63) Place of residence (urban/rural) Physical disability (yes/no) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Education level (primary, secondary, post-secondary, higher) Employed (yes/no) Carers by number of children in care (one, two, three or more) Carers with children in the family, apart from those placed in kinship care (with no children, with one child, with two children, with three children, with four or more children)	No. of kinship carers	
I14.1. Number of carers of children whose parents/only parent are/is temporarily in another locality	Sex (male/female) Age group (18–35, 36–50, 51–63, over 63) Place of residence (urban/rural) Physical disability (yes/no) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level	No. of carers of children whose parents/only parent are/is temporarily in another locality	

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
	Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Type of carer (relative, third party) Education level (primary, secondary, post-secondary, higher) Employed (yes/no) Carers by number of children in care (one, two, three or more) Carers with children in the family, apart from those placed in care (with no children, with one child, with two children, with three children, with four or more children)		
I15. Number and percentage of foster carers APP (professional parental assistants)	Sex (male/female) Age group (18–35, 36–50, 51–63, over 63) Place of residence (urban/rural) Physical disability (yes/no) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Reasons for removal from registration (resignation, dismissal, other reason); in case of resignation (according to the declaration of the resigning person): - too low salary - illness, being unable to take care of the child - left abroad - other reason - undeclared reason Education level (secondary, post-secondary, higher) Experience as professional parental assistant (less than 1 year, 1 year or more) Reapproved as professional parental assistant by the gatekeeping commission (yes/no) Carers by number of children in the care of a professional parental assistant (none, one, two, three or more) Carers with children in the family, apart from those placed in foster care APP (with no children, with one child, with two children, with three children, with four or more children)	No. of approved foster carers APP	No. of applicants for the position of foster carer APP

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
I16. Number and percentage of parents-educators in CCTF (family-type children's homes)	Sex (male/female) Age group (18–35, 36–50, 51–63, over 63) Place of residence (urban/rural) Physical disability (yes/no) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Reasons for removal from registration (resignation, dismissal, other reason); in case of resignation (according to the declaration of the resigning person): - too low salary - illness, being unable to take care of the child - left abroad - other reason - undeclared reason Education level (secondary, post-secondary, higher) Experience as parent-educator (less than 1 year, 1 year or more) Reapproved as parent-educator by the gatekeeping commission (yes/no) Carers by number of children in the care of a parent-educator (three, four, five, six, seven) Carers with children in the family, apart from those placed in CCTF (with no children, with one child, with two children, with three children, with four or more children)	No. of approved parents-educators in CCTF	No. of applicants for the position of parents-educators in CCTF

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
I17. Number and percentage of prospective adoptive parents	Type of prospective adoptive parents (couple/one parent) Place of residence (urban/rural) (for prospective adoptive parents with domicile in the Republic of Moldova) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level (for prospective adoptive parents with domicile in the Republic of Moldova) Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Reasons for removal from registration: - expiry of certificate - illness, being unable to take care of the child - deterioration of material conditions - other reason - waiver without a declared reason Acceptance to adopt children with special needs (yes/no); if yes, with disability, over 7 years old, with one or more siblings (yes/no) Specific disaggregations applicable to sole prospective adoptive parent: Sex (male/female) Age group (18–35, 36–50, 51–63, over 63) Physical disability (yes/no) Citizenship (Moldovan, foreign, mixed) Specific disaggregations applicable to a couple of prospective adoptive parents: Age group of both members (18–35, 36–50, 51–63, over 63, different age groups) Physical disability (yes/no); if yes: - one member - both members Citizenship (Moldovan, foreign, mixed)	No. of prospective adoptive parents	No. of people who submitted the adoption application
I18. Number and percentage of children reintegrated in the biological family	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural)	No. of children reintegrated in the biological family	No. of children in placement services

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
	Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Registration timing (beginning of the reporting period, during the reporting period, taken out of evidence in the reporting period, at the end of the reporting period) Type of placement before reintegration (emergency, planned) Period elapsed since separation: - for children coming from emergency placement (≤3 days, 4–45 days, >45 days) - for children coming from planned placement (<3 months, 3–6 months, 6–12 months, >12 months)		
I19. Number and percentage of reintegrated children who were visited for monitoring according to the individual assistance plan	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Number of monitoring visits (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, > 4)	No. of reintegrated children who were visited for monitoring according to the individual assistance plan	No. of children reintegrated in the biological family
I20. Number and percentage of children reseparated after reintegration	Sex (male/female) Age group (0–2, 3–6, 7–15, 16–17) Place of residence (urban/rural) Disability status (yes/no); if with disability: - Disability severity level (medium, accentuated, severe) - Dominant functional deficiency (neuro-motor, mental, sensorial, other) Administrative-territorial unit of the 2nd level Causes of reseparation after reintegration: - Both parents/only parent left temporarily for another locality - Children temporarily without parental care - Children without parental care - Children taken from their parents due to an imminent danger to their life or health	No. of children reseparated after reintegration (who were reintegrated for a period of at least 6 months)	No. of children reintegrated in the biological family during the year for at least 6 months

Indicator	Disaggregations	Numerator	Denominator
	Period elapsed between reintegration and reseparation (<3 months, 3–6 months, 7–12 months, >12 months) Family benefitting from secondary support within the family support social service for families with children (yes/no)		

Appendix 2. Tools and Their Link to Alternative Care Indicators

Community tools	Rayon/Chişinău municipality tools	Served indicators
Children at risk assisted in secondary family support service_Community	 Children at risk assisted in secondary family support service_Rayon Children at risk assisted in secondary family support service_Mun 	I1. Number of children in risk situation
Children assisted in primary family support service_Community	Children assisted in primary family support service_Rayon Children assisted in primary family support service_Mun	I2. Number of children assisted through family support social service for families with children I2.1 Percentage of children assisted through secondary family support social service for families with children
	 Cases examined in the Commission for the protection of the child in difficulty_Rayon Cases examined in the Commission for the protection of the child in difficulty_Mun 	I3. Number and percentage of children whose separation from parents was prevented
Children separated and in placement services_Community	Children separated and in placement services_Rayon Children separated and in placement services_Mun	I4. Number and percentage of children separated from their parents I4.1. Number and percentage of children whose parents/only parent are/is temporarily in another locality I5. Number of children in placement services I5.1. Number and percentage of children placed in kinship care I5.2. Number and percentage of children placed in foster care service APP (professional parental assistance) I5.3. Number and percentage of children placed in foster care CCTF (family-type children's homes) I5.4. Number and percentage of children placed in residential-type placement services I6. Ratio of children placed in residential versus family-type placement services I7. Number and percentage of children in planned placement services who have an individual assistance plan I8. Number and percentage of children in planned placement services whose development was assessed by the psycho-

Community tools	Rayon/Chişinău municipality tools	Served indicators
	Adoptable and adopted	pedagogical assistance service (SAPP) 19. Number and percentage of children who left planned placement services 110. Number and percentage of children who left residential-type planned placement services 111. Number and percentage of
	children_Rayon • Adoptable and adopted children_Mun	adoptable children I12. Number and percentage of adopted children
• Children separated and in placement services_Community	 Children separated and in placement services_Rayon Children separated and in placement services_Mun 	I13. Number and percentage of accredited placement services providers
	Kinship carers_RayonKinship carers_Mun	I14. Number of kinship carers
Carers of children with parents in other locality_Community	 Carers of children with parents in other locality_Rayon Carers of children with parents in other locality_Mun 	I14.1. Number of carers of children whose parents/only parent are/is temporarily in another locality
	Foster carers APP_Rayon Foster carers APP_Mun	I15. Number and percentage of foster carers APP (professional parental assistants)
	Parents-educators CCTF_Rayon Parents-educators CCTF_Mun	I16. Number and percentage of parents-educators in CCTF (family-type children's homes)
	Adoptive parents_RayonAdoptive parents_Mun	I17. Number and percentage of prospective adoptive parents
Children reintegrated in biological family_Community	 Children reintegrated in biological family_Rayon Children reintegrated in biological family_Mun 	I18. Number and percentage of children reintegrated in the biological family I19. Number and percentage of reintegrated children who were visited for monitoring according to the individual assistance plan
Children separated and in placement services_Community	Children separated and in placement services_RayonChildren separated and in placement services_Mun	I20. Number and percentage of children reseparated after reintegration

Appendix 3. Structure of the Electronic Tools

Community tools		Rayo	on tools
Name	Structure	Name	Structure
Children at risk assisted in secondary family support service_Community	InstructionsRegistry_CommunityReport_CommunityDashboards	Children at risk assisted in secondary family support service_Rayon	NotesRegistry_RayonReport_RayonDashboards
Children assisted in primary family support service_Community	 Instructions Registry_Community Report_Community Aggregated report_Community_to Rayon Dashboards 	Children assisted in primary family support service_Rayon	InstructionsAggregated report_RayonDashboards
		Cases examined in the Commission for the protection of the child in difficulty_Rayon	InstructionsRegistry_RayonReport_RayonDashboards
Children separated and in placement services_Community	 Instructions Registry_Community Extract_Community_to_Rayon Report_Community Aggregated report_Community_to Rayon Dashboards 	Children separated and in placement services_Rayon	 Instructions Registry_Rayon Extract_Rayon_to_Community Report_Rayon Aggregated report_Rayon Dashboards
		Adoptable and adopted children_Rayon	InstructionsRegistry_RayonReport_RayonDashboards
		Kinship carers_Rayon	InstructionsRegistry_RayonReport_RayonDashboards

Carers of children with parents in other locality_Community	 Instructions Registry_Community Report_Community Aggregated report_Community_to rayon Dashboards 	Carers of children with parents in other locality_Rayon	InstructionsReport_RayonDashboards
		Foster carers APP_Rayon	InstructionsRegistry_RayonReport_RayonDashboards
		Parents-educators CCTF_Rayon	InstructionsRegistry_RayonReport_RayonDashboards
		Adoptive parents_Rayon	InstructionsRegistry_RayonReport_RayonDashboards
Children reintegrated in biological family_Community	 Instructions Registry_Community Extract_Community_to_Rayon Report_Community Aggregated report_Community_to Rayon Dashboards 	Children reintegrated in biological family_Rayon	InstructionsAggregated report_RayonDashboards

Community tools		Chişinău municipality tools		
Name	Structure	Name	Structure	
Children at risk assisted in secondary family support service_Community	InstructionsRegistry_CommunityReport_CommunityDashboards	Children at risk assisted in secondary family support service_Mun	InstructionsRegistry_MunReport_MunDashboards	
Children assisted in primary family support service_Community	 Instructions Registry_Community Report_Community Aggregated report_Community_to Rayon Dashboards 	Children assisted in primary family support service_Mun	InstructionsAggregated report_MunDashboards	
		Cases examined in the Commission for the protection of the child in difficulty_Mun	InstructionsRegistry_MunReport_MunDashboards	
Children separated and in placement services_Community	 Instructions Registry_Community Extract_Community_to_Mun Report_Community Aggregated report_Community_to Mun Dashboards 	Children separated and in placement services_Community_Mun	 Instructions Registry_Mun Extract_Mun_to_Community Report_Mun Aggregated report_Mun Dashboards 	
		Adoptable and adopted children_Mun	InstructionsRegistry_MunReport_MunDashboards	
		Kinship carers_Mun	InstructionsRegistry_MunReport_MunDashboards	
Carers of children with parents in other locality_Comunitate	InstructionsRegistry_CommunityReport_Community	Carers of children with parents in other locality_Mun	InstructionsReport_MunDashboards	

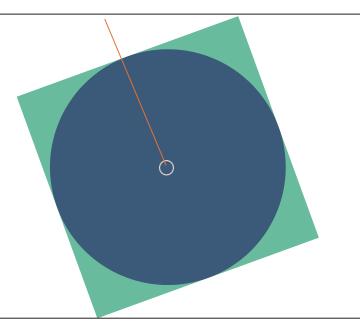
Community tools		Chişinău municipality tools		
Name Structure		Name	Structure	
	Aggregated report_Community_to Mun Dashboards			
		Foster carers APP_Mun	InstructionsRegistry_MunReport_MunDashboards	
		Parents-educators CCTF_Mun	InstructionsRegistry_MunReport_MunDashboards	
		Adoptive parents_Mun	InstructionsRegistry_MunReport_MunDashboards	
Children reintegrated in biological family_Community	 Instructions Registry_Community Extract_Community_to_Mun Report_Community Aggregated report_Community_to Mun Dashboards 	Children reintegrated in biological family_Mun	InstructionsAggregated report_MunDashboards	

Appendix 4. Monitoring Sheet Template

Date of provision of support	Community/ Directorate visited	Person assisted (name and function)	Tool checked	Support modality (by phone, online, e-mail, on site)	Findings/ Challenges identified	Measures taken to address challenges

Appendix 5. Data Sets

This appendix is in Excel and is available in a separate document available for download at https://www.data4impactproject.org/publications/pilot-test-of-alternative-childcare-indicators-in-moldova/.



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