UNICEF in the Europe and Central Asia region recognises the centrality of social welfare to the overarching child protection systems building approach. UNICEF strives to improve the access and quality of social work services for children in statutory service provision and community-based services.  This includes policy research and development, piloting social work services in rural and poverty affected areas, and capacity building for professionals and para-professionals.  This work aligns with UNICEF's global Strategic Plan 2018-2021 which states that UNICEF will support governments to strengthen and expand their social services infrastructure and case management systems, and will work with communities to increase their capacity to protect children.

As well as building the skills of professionals, such as teachers and social workers who work with children to identify and address violence, UNICEF also help families and communities prevent violence in the first place. This area of work that acknowledges the close relationship between social welfare and social protection and requires a cross-sectoral approach. The most vulnerable children are those in poverty, those with disabilities, those living in large families and those in remote areas. Roma children also suffer disproportionately from poverty and remain one of the poorest and most vulnerable groups in the region. UNICEF advocates with governments to invest long-term in children and in child-sensitive social protection to prevent, manage and overcome the poverty that threatens their well-being.

Throughout the region, UNICEF is investing in developing a skilled and efficient social work workforce that enhances the capacity of national and sub-national government to enact and implement gender-sensitive child protection and welfare related laws and policies, provide coordinated child protection and welfare services to all children, and to establish broad coverage of community-based child protection and welfare services for the most disadvantaged.