

Executive Summary

2013 was marked by the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the Country Programme (CP), a consultative process, culminating in a national conference in October. The MTR confirmed that the focus of the CP will continue to be on reaching the most vulnerable by supporting the reform of Serbia's social sector, prioritizing equity. Emphasis was placed on making the legal and regulatory frameworks operational through modelling, strengthening governmental and independent monitoring systems and accountability. UNICEF continued to play a convening role in establishing and strengthening relevant coordination mechanisms, be they related to policy and planning at the national level or to demonstrate effective cooperation at the local level. With this, UNICEF played a constructive role in helping the Government establish an effective national coordinating body for child rights and helped to define the next phase of child rights-focused strategic planning.

A three-year collaboration between UNICEF, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy (MoLESP) and the European Union came to a close, with significant results achieved in advancing the legal and regulatory framework for social welfare and modelling new community-based services for families of children with disabilities (CwD). In addition to a final evaluation, which found the project successful, two major research studies were commissioned on the impact of community-based services and on children in residential care, both of which provided clear evidence to the Government for the direction of future reform. The first revealed the impact that community-based services have on improving the quality of life of families of children with disabilities, including reducing parental stress. The second provided qualitative analysis of the range of determinants that influence family separation, including parental capacity, poverty, disability and ethnicity and the lack of adequate response mechanisms.

While UNICEF continued its collaboration with civil society partners – building capacity for evidence-based advocacy and supporting direct work with parents – progress toward supporting civil society to effectively mobilize demand for and access to entitlements and influence behavioural change was patchy. A study completed in 2013 on the efficiency and effectiveness of child-related cash benefits will inform planned work on increasing the awareness of rights holders of their social welfare entitlements.

Strategic partnerships continued to be critical to the achievement of planned results. In 2013, new partnerships with the Novak Djokovic Foundation on modelling new outreach services for the prevention of family separation, and with sister UN agencies under the umbrella of the UN Trust Fund on Violence Against Women contributed significantly to advancing efforts to protect children from violence (including gender-based violence) and neglect. The partnership with the Association of Banks of Serbia was formalised through an MOU and constitutes a major break-through that enables more conducive conditions for the expansion of pledge income. A new partnership with the Republican Broadcasting Agency was initiated to help protect children from harmful media content through the development of child rights informed criteria for a TV programming content rating system.

Country Situation as Affecting Children & Women

The coalition Government formed in mid-2012 ensured continuity in the reform of the social sector and the European Union integration process. Significant progress was seen towards normalization of relations with Kosovo through the active engagement of Brussels. Government restructuring dominated the third quarter of the year, and resulted in one coalition partner being dropped and changes in leadership of 11 ministries. This period of transition slowed down progress in some sectors – notably education.

In 2012, the economy shrunk by 1.7 per cent, with GDP per capita dropping from 4,336 Euros (2011) to 4,158. The unemployment rate hit a high of 24.6 per cent in 2012, but decreased to 20.1 per cent in October 2013. According to results of the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) conducted in 2013, Serbia's relative poverty rate is 24.6 per cent, higher than that of any EU member state. Data shows that children (30.0 per cent) and families with dependent children (27.2 per cent) are the most affected. Families with three or more dependent children (44.4 per cent), and single parents (36.2 per cent) are at highest risk of poverty.

Achieving the full social inclusion of the most vulnerable children and families continued to be constrained by bottlenecks in the enabling environment, notably in the development and implementation of the regulatory framework, inter-sectoral cooperation, and unequal access to services and entitlements. The inefficiency of the social benefits system has inhibited progress towards poverty reduction. Building on a 2012 Study on the Child Allowance benefit, UNICEF conducted a comprehensive review and analysis of all child-related benefits. The study looked at coverage and adequacy of benefits and concluded that although their amounts are adequate as a share of average income, coverage of some benefits is still low and they are not sufficient to cover basic needs. An increase in benefits for children with disabilities and older children is particularly justified. Legislative revisions planned by MoLESP in 2014 should also target administrative procedures as study findings indicate that these need to be simplified and harmonized.

Serbia has strong anti-discrimination legislation, and inclusion principles are embedded in social sector reforms. The perceptions of both the public and professionals have begun to change when it comes to minority and other disadvantaged groups. Nevertheless, discriminatory attitudes and prejudice continue to present obstacles and barriers to children's enjoyment of their rights.

In particular, discrimination persists toward migrants seeking asylum. Over the past three years the number of registered asylum seekers has increased dramatically, from less than 100 cases in 2008 to over 4,000 in 2013, according to various sources. The profile of asylum seekers has also changed, with the recent arrival of more families with small children and an increase in the number of minors seeking asylum - currently 25 per cent of the total. Until 2011, Serbia's capacity for providing accommodation and basic living conditions for asylum seekers was sufficient, but the increased numbers have put tremendous pressure on existing institutions and have sparked community unrest.

In the area of child protection, 2013 saw the adoption of landmark legislation removing the statute of limitations for sexual offences against children - making Serbia only the second country in Europe to do so. There continues to be progress in expanding foster care as an alternative to institutionalization. In 2012, the ratio of children with disability in institutional versus foster care improved, however, children with disabilities still represent 60 per cent of all children in institutions and only 9 per cent of those in foster care (MoLESP). The number and difficult situation of disabled children in large-scale institutions remains concerning. There are still approximately 60 children aged 0-3 in institutional care, and that number should be reduced further, in line with the ban. Research showing the range of determinants that influence family separation, including parental capacity, poverty, disability and ethnicity, as well as the lack of adequate response mechanisms, was finalised in 2013 and will inform the future direction of reforms.

In 2012, Centres for Social Work reported over 4500 victims of domestic violence, 50 per cent of which were children and youth. Analysis of data from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia reveals that in over 50 per cent of cases, criminal procedures for juveniles took longer than one year - contrary to prescribed legal provisions. Diversionary measures are still applied only in a very small number of cases (less than 3 per cent), and the draft by-law regulating this area still awaits adoption.

Education reform continued to advance, albeit at a slow pace. New legislation for primary and secondary education was adopted, and the Law on the Foundations of the Education System (LFES) amended. While the legal frame provides a foundation for inclusive education and non-segregated participation of children in education, bottlenecks remain in its implementation, including teachers' capacities, monitoring mechanisms, and parental attitudes. The state authorities have shown increased interest in the development of preschool education. Official data show a steady rise in preschool coverage including in municipalities with the lowest coverage, however, the pace of increase is still not sufficient to meet Serbia's strategic goals.

Total public expenditures for education amounted to 4.5 per cent of GDP, while the corresponding OECD average is 5.4 per cent. Although the Education Strategy envisions an increase to 6 per cent by 2020, this is unlikely due to the serious budget deficit. The structure of education expenditures represents an additional constraint, as the majority of funds are used for operating expenses and salaries.

Bottlenecks in access to health for the most vulnerable - primarily Roma - have been reduced thanks to the interventions by the Roma health mediators. Nevertheless, continuous efforts are needed to decrease the

equity gap between the health status of Roma population and that of the general population. There are significant regional disparities in perinatal mortality, indicating inadequate and uneven quality of health care across Serbia. Early recognition and support for developmental difficulties remains a key area that requires further strengthening and support.

Country Programme Analytical Overview

The 2013 Mid-Term Review of the Country Programme (CP) confirmed that focus will continue to be on reaching the most vulnerable by supporting reform of Serbia's social sector, prioritizing equity. Emphasis was placed on making the legal and regulatory frameworks operational through modelling, strengthening governmental and independent monitoring systems and accountability. UNICEF continued to play a convening role in establishing and strengthening relevant coordination mechanisms, be they related to policy and planning at the national level or to demonstrate effective cooperation at the local level. With this, UNICEF played a constructive role in helping the Government establish an effective national coordinating body for child rights and helped to define the next phase of child rights-focused strategic planning.

Priority continued to be given to supporting on-going reforms in the following areas: child care and social welfare system; inclusive education; inclusive health; and justice for children. Special attention was placed on early childhood development - a key determinant of a child's future path in life - of the most vulnerable. It included multi-sectoral support for early childhood development, targeting the most vulnerable families. For example, data from a study conducted by UNICEF and Belgrade University in 2012 revealing that many children are separated from their parents due to violence, abuse and neglect showed that greater coherence is needed between child care reform and work to prevent child abuse and neglect in the home. Support also continued for the most vulnerable adolescents, especially in preventing school drop-out and violence and responding to juvenile offenders with supportive and rehabilitative community-services.

Efforts resulted in increased demand for inclusive services and support and promoted positive behaviour among parents, adolescents and children. This was carried out through partnerships with civil society organizations and further integrated within system reform, in order to enhance synergy and impact. Partnerships with independent bodies were advanced to improve awareness and monitoring of rights. Cooperation to further advance professional and responsible media reporting on child rights continued, as did the development of high impact partnerships with the private sector. Promotion of corporate social responsibility was an important entry point for engaging a wide range of private partners and associations.

The results defined in the CPAP will remain the same. Adjustments are only envisaged at the level of indicators and targets. Adjustments have been made in cases where data cannot be collected through administrative or survey means. Some indicators have been fine-tuned to better capture progress towards the relevant result and some targets have been revised, as they are already met.

Effective Advocacy

Mostly met benchmarks

Advocacy was emphasized throughout the year and focused on ensuring child-rights focused revisions to the legal framework, particularly in the areas of education and health.

UNICEF technical assistance and advocacy in the area of inclusive education resulted in the adoption of new legal solutions related to inclusive education under the umbrella education law and laws on primary and secondary education. These included legally required measures for drop-out prevention, individualized education plans and violence prevention.

Advocacy was instrumental in the adoption of the Law on Patients' Rights. The draft law, which contained a 2005 provision for adolescents' (over 15) consent to medical intervention, sparked fierce debate. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health (MoH) in its defence of the draft law, was called upon to present its views to

three Parliamentary Committees and provided individual guidance at the request of selected parliamentarians. As a result, the adolescent consent provision was not amended.

In response to the lack of health system data on violence against children, UNICEF advocated for and supported the Institute of Public Health in defining key indicators and data collection instruments and developing and piloting software to enable the collection and analysis of data on Children, Abuse and Neglect (CAN) from relevant health institutions in Serbia.

Visits by the bureau of the UNICEF Executive Board, the Deputy Regional Director and the arrival of the new Representative presented opportunities for high-level advocacy with the Government, donors and Parliament for reforms advancing social inclusion of the most vulnerable children. The Executive Board visit was also a unique opportunity to advocate on the strategic role UNICEF plays in small middle-income countries, with very limited resources. The Executive Board members' report back to the Executive Board's annual session demonstrated their enhanced appreciation and support for UNICEF's work in middle-income countries.

Capacity Development

Mostly met benchmarks

In 2013, efforts focused strongly on capacity building for the development and running of community-based services for families of children with disabilities. In partnership with an EU grants scheme, UNICEF supported the establishment of 52 new services (day-care, home help, respite care, supported living) in 41 municipalities, in-line with national standards for community services. Ten capacity building packages covering three main aspects of training support to direct service providers and stakeholders in local self-governments were developed and accredited. These are: 1) establishment and management of child care services; 2) identification and support to families of children with disabilities; and 3) capacity building of Centres for Social Work professionals in case management and referral. National trainers were certified and seven manuals and guidebooks were developed and will be used for further capacity development efforts throughout the country.

Capacity building for inclusive pre- and primary education was supported through cooperation with the Network for Support of Inclusive Education, established by the Ministry of Education. The 120 members of this innovative mechanism work with children, teachers and parents, including through mentoring, to develop good inclusive education practices. As a part of the network, model schools for inclusive education were established in 14 locations, showcasing implementation of inclusive practices. The network also promoted horizontal learning through in-country "study visits" to model schools in order to share their best practices and lessons learned. In the last two years, teachers from approximately 10 per cent of all schools in Serbia have had the opportunity to learn from model schools. The network has been identified as a potential model of good practice by the RO, which is sharing its experience with other countries in the region.

Communication for Development

Partially met benchmarks

Communication for development approaches are integrated throughout the country programme. Priority this year was given to the issues of digital violence and early childhood development.

Following a 2012 study on digital violence and together with corporate partner Telenor, a multi-faceted campaign on social media called "Choose Words, Prevent Hate" was launched using youth-led blogs and a Facebook page. The campaign used humorous advertisements and real life-stories on these platforms to raise public awareness of and evoke discussions on digital violence and safety. The campaign reached more than 11,000 people and actively engaged more than 1,200, 60 per cent of whom were below 24 years of age. UNICEF National Ambassadors joined the campaign by blogging, tweeting, and sharing posts, and by participating in selected events. A live stream discussion with youth reached a large number of schools and youth. A specially defined school-based programme on prevention of digital violence, including awareness-

raising sessions with teachers and parents and peer education workshops started in 10 schools in Serbia.

Understanding the links between stimulation and nutrition for early childhood growth and development UNICEF, the retail supermarket chain Delhaize Group and relevant health institutions, developed communication materials for parents of young children on breastfeeding, introduction to complementary feeding and responsive feeding. The communication materials, used in trainings of visiting nurses and paediatricians from 39 regional primary health centres, aimed at increasing understanding on three key messages. These are: 1) that early childhood stimulation and positive attachment are maximised through breastfeeding; 2) that responsive and interactive feeding can have positive influence on psychosocial, cognitive, language development of the child; and 3) that eating habits are developed early and are largely influenced by behaviours of adults. In addition to distribution of materials through all 156 primary health care services, the messages were conveyed through Delhaize retail stores across the country in the form of posters and leaflets for customers.

Strategic Partnerships

Mostly met benchmarks

UNICEF Serbia continued to strengthen its strategic partnerships with government, development partners, and the private sector.

Particularly effective was the partnership developed for expansion of coverage and improvement of the quality of pre-school education. UNICEF collaborated with the EU- funded "Improvement of Preschool Education in Serbia" (IMPRES) project, which aims to broaden access to preschool education through support in optimisation of the preschool network, improvement of the legal framework, increased access for the most vulnerable children and improved preschool quality in 15 municipalities. This collaboration enabled excellent synergy through, a uniform methodology, jointly planned and realized trainings for pre-school teachers, expert associates and local authorities, and jointly developed materials for dissemination of good practices. The partnership leveraged cooperation with 25 pre-school institutions (10 covered by UNICEF and 15 by IMPRES), representing a good foundation for further expansion of pre-school programmes, increasing coverage of children from vulnerable groups and further improvement of quality.

Strategic partnership was also key to advances in private sector fundraising. UNICEF set up a new partnership with the Association of Serbian Banks (ASB) to facilitate banking conditions for its pledge programme. Thanks to effective advocacy with ASB leadership, their technical expertise and commitment were secured to develop a model agreement that complies with the national banking regulations and is adequate for UNICEF's pledge needs. Through direct negotiations with ASB, the CO secured the engagement of all leading banks, saving time that would have otherwise been spent on bi-lateral negotiations. As part of this process, UNICEF signed an MOU with the ASB that includes promotion of child-focused CSR within the banking industry.

Strategic alliances with corporate partners continued, with new partnerships initiated with the Novak Djokovic Foundation and the Hemofarm Foundation, and strong continued collaboration with IKEA Foundation, Telenor Foundation, and the Delhaize Group.

Knowledge Management

Mostly met benchmarks

Knowledge generation and use continued to be a primary focus of the UNICEF programme in 2013. UNICEF partnered with Belgrade University to complete a study on children in institutional care, which showed that Roma children, children with disabilities and children living in extreme poverty are at higher risk of entering care. It found insufficient permanency planning, with children more likely to exit care as adults, rather than return to their families or adoption. Official statistics show the total number of children in care has risen by 30 per cent in just over a decade, despite the decreasing trends in the number of children in institutions. The

knowledge was used by policy makers to recognize the need for intensive support services targeting families at-risk of separation. In response, MoLESP and UNICEF started modelling a family outreach service in four cities, which will reach 400 families with over 1,000 children in the coming two-years and is expected to be integrated into the system. This service should contribute to preventing removal of children from families and help facilitate returns – by addressing the challenges of poverty, disability, mental health, substance abuse or neglect.

Building on a 2012 pre-school costing study, the recommended model of half-day pre-school programmes was developed and piloted in 10 municipalities in partnership with the Ministry of Education Science and Technological Development (MoESTD), as well as parents and local institutions. Its design aimed to respond to the developmental needs of children, particularly in rural and less developed municipalities and tested expansion of physical capacities through small-scale adaptation of existing premises allocated by local governments. An external evaluation of the first year after implementation showed that the model contributed to increased pre-school coverage of children aged 3-5.5 years, especially in rural areas. Furthermore, parents and educators assessed the new programme as having a very positive impact on children's development.

Human Rights Based Approach to Cooperation

Mostly met benchmarks

The country programme worked to build capacities and empower both duty bearers and rights holders, with particular focus on advancing the realisation of the rights of the most vulnerable groups. In five deprived municipalities of South Serbia, UNICEF, through a joint UN Programme, supported primary health care centres in organising community meetings that aimed to identify the most vulnerable populations and the ways to reach and refer them to services. This process brought together PHCs and centres for social work, red cross and other relevant organisations in the community. Based on the lists prepared, mobile teams of visiting nurses, health mediators from neighbouring municipalities, and paediatricians and gynaecologists when required, reached out to 169 extremely vulnerable families, providing them direct health care, guidance and referral.

Enhanced monitoring and reporting helped with the promotion and realisation of the rights of children from vulnerable groups (notably Roma and children with disabilities). UNICEF cooperated with independent institutions (Ombudsman and Commissioner for Equality) to strengthen their capacity to identify and report on discrimination against children and cases of inequality. In parallel, the capacity of CSOs to network and advocate for child rights at local level, while holding the LSGs accountable, was strengthened. This made a positive contribution to strengthening the capacity of a wide range of Serbian duty-bearers to protect and fulfil child rights. It also informed parents, as rights-holders, about available services, better governance and, to a certain extent, enhanced their skills to take care of their own children.

A strong focus on equity was ensured by directing EU grants for community-based services for children with disabilities and domestic investment to the most under-developed municipalities in the country as well as by focusing intervention on the most vulnerable children with disabilities and their families.

Gender Equality

Partially met benchmarks

The focus on gender mainstreaming continued in UNICEF's work on preventing violence in the education system. Analysis of research conducted through the MoESTD/UNICEF School without Violence programme (SwV), revealed gender differences in violence-related behaviour. The data clearly indicated a need to learn more about the gender dimension of violence, gender awareness among students, and gender-based, including sexual, violence. Such knowledge was identified as essential to mainstreaming gender into the education system's response to violence, notably through capacity building and communication components of the SwV programme.

In response to these findings, UNICEF secured funding through a UN joint programme on violence against women in Serbia implemented by UNDP, UN Women and UNICEF. Partnership was established with key research institutions, including those focused on gender to design new research instruments for schools that integrate the gender dimensions of violence, assess gender stereotypes of students and teachers, and explore relationships between boys and girls, including prevalence of sexual and gender based violence. The first results of the research in 50 schools (primary and secondary) will be ready in early 2014. The research findings will define school-based responses and programming and improve the quality of the SwV programme itself.

The whole school approach, one of the core SwV concepts, has ensured wide awareness-raising on gender-based violence of all teachers and students in the selected schools. To do this, UNICEF has brought together new partners, both those active in the feminist movement and those working particularly with boys on changing their views of masculinity. These NGOs supported the first gender-based training of 40 mentors that will be leading processes in schools. The process of gender mainstreaming in the SwV training packages was also initiated.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation

In June 2013, UNICEF Serbia hosted a study visit for a high-level Moldovan delegation, consisting of government officials, social welfare professionals and NGO partners. The main focus was to learn from Serbia's experience in child care reform, specifically family-based alternatives to institutional care and community-based services. Furthermore, government representatives from Serbia shared their experience in this area at two regional conferences in Tajikistan and Georgia. In addition, UNICEF Serbia regularly shared tools and documentation on its work in child care reform with requesting country offices in the region.

In 2013, Serbia's visiting nurses service was identified by the RO as good practice in the CEE/CIS region. The service was promoted and Serbian professionals have been engaged in supporting similar services in other countries. Serbia's good practice example has been a key resource in the development of draft regional standards for visiting nurse services; a video prepared on Serbia has been shared and used regionally and professionals from Serbia have been invited to present at various conferences and join technical missions organised by the RO.

Narrative Analysis by Programme Component Results and Intermediate Results

Serbia – 8970

PC 1 - Systems strengthening for social inclusion

 On-track

PCR 8970/A0/05/001 By the end of 2015, more excluded children and families benefit from education, social welfare, and justice services, in line with new legislation.

Progress: This programme component aims to support the Government in its reform of the social sector, notably to align its regulatory frameworks, model implementation of new legislation, and generate knowledge and evidence, with a strong focus on inter-sectoral approaches. Ensuring equity and that reforms benefit the most vulnerable is a primary focus. The MTR confirmed that the CP will continue to support Serbia's social sector reform, prioritizing equity. Emphasis on making the legal and regulatory frameworks operational through modelling, strengthening of governmental and independent monitoring systems and accountability continued to be essential.

Despite recent legal reforms, some aspects of the regulatory framework remain a key bottleneck to the inclusion of marginalized children and families across several sectors. In 2013, UNICEF policy advocacy focused primarily on the development of laws on primary and secondary education and laws on patients' rights and the rights of people with mental disabilities. Efforts included facilitating public consultations, direct advocacy with ministries, and participating in Parliamentary hearings and discussions. Advocacy also continued for the adoption of all by-laws for the 2011 Law on Social Welfare.

The provision of quality social services without discrimination is an ongoing bottleneck in all sectors. UNICEF supported the modelling of innovative preschool programmes to improve access to quality early learning in under-served areas and enhancing the professional capacity on early childhood development of Roma health outreach workers. Attention was also placed on ensuring a the right of a child, including one with disabilities, to live in a family environment, with technical support provided for the development and standardization of new community services enabling family-based care. UNICEF provided tailor-made support and coaching to model the application of national standards in 41 municipalities receiving EU grants for such services. Reducing the percentage of out-of-school children through drop-out prevention measures and increasing the percentage of children in conflict with the law placed in diversion schemes will continue to be priorities in 2014.

While reforms are largely on-track within social sectors, collaboration and cooperation across sectors remains a challenge to the effective realization of inclusion. Efforts in 2013 continued to centre on making local Inter-Sectoral Commissions (ISC) for inclusive education operational by revising the by-law guiding ISC's work to be adopted by the Ministries of Education, Health and Social Policy.

A mid-year Government restructuring brought changes in the leadership of key social sector ministries, notably Education, and Youth and Sport, which may have affected the speed of reforms in the second half of the year.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/001/001 By end of 2015, the education system and municipal institutions ensure that pre-school is inclusive; and that statutory mechanisms and services are resourced and functioning.

Progress: UNICEF continued its technical support for the implementation of quality standards for pre-school education and expanding coverage of preschool programmes. With UNICEF support, the Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation developed materials for conducting quality external evaluations of preschools (instruments, manual and training package) and subsequently trained external evaluators.

Interventions to increase vulnerable groups' access to preschool education were implemented by UNICEF in three ways: 1) modelling of 4-hour preschool programmes for children not covered by the preschool network, 2) advocating for universal coverage by the 4-hour preschool programmes (especially for children of poor families and children from rural areas), and 3) increasing parental awareness of the benefits of preschool education for the development of their children.

In 10 municipalities with the lowest preschool attendance rates, UNICEF supported a model expansion of preschool capacities which consisted of adapting existing state-owned premises for new preschool programmes. Enrolment priority was given to children from rural areas and those who had never attended preschool before. In order to respond to the needs of both parents and children, half-day programmes for children aged 3-5.5 years were developed in collaboration with parents. Preschool teachers were trained to identify the needs of children, parents and the local community and to create programmes to meet them.

This initiative resulted in the enrolment of 713 children who had never attended kindergarten before, and an additional 2,500 children have benefiting from the enhanced capacities of their teachers. The process of developing new preschool programs was documented and is ready for dissemination in the Manual for Diversification of Programs for Preschool Education and Compendium of Good Practices, developed in close cooperation with the EU funded project IMPRES.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/001/002 By end of 2015, the education system and municipal institutions ensure that primary school is inclusive; and that statutory mechanisms and services are resourced, functioning and able to identify risk and prevent school drop-out.

Progress: The institutional and professional capacities for inclusive education were improved through support to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD), the Network for Inclusive Education and training of school professionals. 2013 saw the adoption of new laws on primary and secondary education, containing provisions on inclusiveness, in line with UNICEF's advocacy. As of the end of this reporting period, the MoESTD had not yet made the planned per-capita funding formula for school financing a priority, which may constrain its introduction in line with legislation.

Technical assistance to the MoESTD for the revision of the by-law regulating the work of local Inter-Sectoral Commissions (ISCs) supported inter-sectoral cooperation for inclusive education. Adoption of the by-law, however, is still pending. The National Joint Body for guiding the ISCs' work was re-established, thanks to persistent advocacy by UNICEF.

A study on pro-poor education measures was completed and a framework for monitoring inclusive education at school, community and national levels developed in partnership with the Institute for Psychology and the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit (SIPRU). Research on determinants of school drop-out and capacity building of stakeholders through a study visit to the Netherlands contributed to on-going design of a core package for drop-out prevention. At the same time, UNICEF-supported Roma-led community centres and Youth Offices in implementing initiatives for drop-out prevention in poor municipalities in South Serbia.

Collaboration with MoESTD continued to advance the "School without Violence" initiative. MoESTD's Violence Prevention Unit and Institute for Psychology continued to generate and transfer knowledge on school safety, digital violence, and gender based violence and has finalised measurement tools. UNICEF support enabled the Unit to expand the reach and scope of the initiative, including through a social media campaign for children and a new website. In addition, technical assistance strengthened the role of schools in addressing child abuse and neglect.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/001/003 By the end of 2015, the social welfare system applies a case management approach to its child clients (with a focus on child victims of violence) and ensures the availability of specialised community-based services, with particular emphasis on children with disabilities and adolescents off-track.

Progress: In early 2013, the social welfare by-laws, developed with technical support from UNICEF, were subject to further review and subsequently adopted, with the exception of the by-laws concerning data-management and ear-marked transfers to municipalities for community based services.

UNICEF continued to support the reform process by providing technical assistance for the development of the legal and regulatory framework, defining standards for and modelling of new types of small group care and community services, improving knowledge generation, and strengthening capacities of service providers and municipal authorities. New evidence on children placed in institutional care formed the basis for UNICEF - MoLESP cooperation on the design and pilot of an innovative family-outreach-based service preventing unnecessary family separation.

The application of the case management approach by Centres for Social Work (CSW) advanced slowly. UNICEF continued supporting CSWs with training on community-based services for children with disabilities, case management and the use assessment tools to measure the extent of support to community and residential care. In addition, specialized capacity building to improve the case management of cases involving violence against children took place the four largest cities which have also been supported in setting up child protection teams and developing local cross-sectoral memorandums to protect children from violence.

Access to justice for children - especially the availability of diversion measures for juvenile offenders, uniform application of procedures protecting victims and children's participation in civic cases as well as access to free legal aid - remains a challenge. Knowledge generation on children in the justice system (criminal, civil and administrative) is ongoing and will inform the planned justice/social welfare sector IPA due to begin in 2014.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/001/004 By the end of 2015, the health system ensures that new-born and early childhood services are available and used by excluded groups, with a particular emphasis on children with disabilities and Roma.

Progress: UNICEF successfully advocated with the Ministry of Health (MoH) to establish a special working group on Early Childhood Development (ECD) in 2013, with participation of key health professionals and institutions. The working group developed a National ECD Programme for the health system. UNICEF supported the working group to enhance its capacity for mainstreaming behavioural and developmental paediatrics within the Serbian health care system.

To address high regional differences in perinatal mortality, UNICEF supported the MoH working group on perinatal care in assessing the organization and capacities of maternity and intensive neonatal care units and developing national standards. With support from UNICEF, new capacity building programmes for health workers (primarily paediatricians and visiting nurses) on early stimulation (including responsive feeding) and early recognition of developmental risks among young children were initiated. Communication and education

materials for health professionals and parents were developed and widely distributed. Serbia's system of visiting nurses was presented as good practice in the region.

UNICEF and MoH continued to address key bottlenecks to the health of Roma mothers and young children. Health mediators in deprived municipalities in southern Serbia reached more than 23,000 Roma, focusing on pre and post natal care, health documentation, etc. The UNICEF-Telenor supported database on Roma health should enable improved analysis and reporting. However, its development is currently delayed by internal obstacles in the ministry.

The health care system has taken significant steps to address violence and implement the Special Protocol on Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN). These include forming expert teams in approximately 85 per cent of relevant health care institutions, increasing capacities of health professionals, strengthening inter-sectoral collaboration at local level and increasing parental awareness. In response to the lack of health system data on CAN, the Institute for Public Health, with UNICEF support, introduced a data collection and reporting system.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/001/005 By the end of 2015, national authorities use a reliable sex-disaggregated data system for planning, budgeting and monitoring to address child poverty and exclusion.

Progress: UNICEF continued its close cooperation with the Republican Statistical Office (SORS) to enhance child rights monitoring through capacity building on the use of the municipal DevInfo database. The largest association of Serbian towns and municipalities integrated capacity building on the use DevInfo into the support it gives to municipalities. The use of DevInfo will continue to be promoted among civil society, the Government and the media.

Efforts to strengthen government monitoring and data management continued, with joint UNICEF-SIPRU support to the development of a monitoring framework for inclusive education. The framework, the first of its kind, defines specific indicators, mechanisms for data collection, and parameters for analysis. National data systems in the area of education were further supported through the revision of data collection instruments for primary and preschools, allowing for better monitoring of education inclusion policies.

In response to the continuing deterioration of living standards, especially among poor families with children, UNICEF with partners undertook two studies, one on child-related social benefits and another on education of vulnerable children. These studies, which identified bottlenecks and barriers in the access to and effectiveness of social benefits and education for poor children, provide strong evidence for a holistic approach to reforms, and enhancement of the effectiveness and efficiency of investments. The studies, which recommend concrete policy measures, are companion pieces to the 2012 analysis of the Child Allowance means-tested benefit undertaken by UNICEF.

UNICEF continued its push for evidence-based policy making in all sectors. MICS is still the main source of data on the situation of Roma children and other particularly vulnerable children such as children living in rural areas and those living in poverty. In 2013, MICS4 was used to inform the EU Progress Report, an EU Seminar on Roma Inclusion and the development of the EU Country Strategy for 2014-2017. Preparations for MICS5 fieldwork, scheduled for February 2014, are underway.

PC 2 - Social accountability for child rights

 On-track

PCR 8970/A0/05/002 By the end of 2015, Serbia's child rights infrastructure are strengthened and civic and private engagement enhanced to realise children's rights.

Progress: This programme component aims to reinforce and complement system reforms by strengthening independent monitoring of the impact of the reforms on the most vulnerable, enhancing awareness and voices of rights holders – particularly disadvantaged groups, and promoting positive behaviours and fostering inclusion. The MTR confirmed that the UNICEF CP should continue to focus on increasing demand for inclusive services and support; to promote positive behaviours among parents, adolescents and children; and to strengthen independent monitoring of rights. This will be carried out through partnerships with civil society organizations and independent bodies and will be further integrated within system reform efforts, in order to enhance synergy and impact.

In 2013, UNICEF continued its cooperation with the Ombudsman's Office, the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and the Parliamentary Committee on Child Rights to advance their capacity to actively monitor children's rights and advocate for the rights of the most vulnerable.

In parallel, UNICEF efforts to address social norms and demand-side bottlenecks were channelled through partnerships with civil society organizations and independent institutions, focusing on changing the attitudes of health, education and social sector professionals as well as the general public on equity, the rights of children with disabilities, early childhood education, inclusive education and violence against children. Particular focus was on working with parents and other stakeholders to help them better understand the value of early childhood learning. This included face-to-face counselling and skills-building through newly established parenting support centres and parental involvement in the development of alternative preschool programmes. While these initiatives are showing promising results, the key challenge for the future will be to better target efforts towards more disadvantaged families, without a segregated approach.

The lack of participation and articulated demand for rights by the most vulnerable groups continues to be a barrier to the full realisation of rights for all children. In 2013, efforts focused on the Roma community, through the outreach of health mediators who connected

families with needed services and entitlements. In addition, local organisations were supported in mobilising and demanding services for families with children with disabilities, and adolescents in the most deprived areas were given opportunities for activism and inter-ethnic collaboration. The MTR found that this area of work will require further development in the second half of the country programme, particularly with regard to understanding the obstacles marginalised groups face in accessing services and entitlements.

 Constrained

IR 8970/A0/05/002/001 By the end of 2015, civil society organizations, including self-representational groups, effectively mobilise demand for and access to entitlements, influence behavioural change and participate in local decision-making bodies to facilitate social inclusion.

Progress: UNICEF partnerships with civil society (CSOs) focused on mobilising demand, participation and increasing knowledge of rights.

To increase parental skills and awareness of the importance of the early years, particularly among vulnerable groups, UNICEF continued to work with the parents association "Roditelj" in modelling parenting support centres in Belgrade and Nis. The centres offer new parents peer and professional counselling and programmes to build parenting skills. This model was assessed in 2013, and proved to be effective in raising competencies in parenting. The model attracted the interest and support of municipal authorities, which enabled the opening of an additional centre in Belgrade.

UNICEF continued its partnership with the network for children of Serbia (MODS). With UNICEF support in 2013, MODS continued targeted advocacy on child and youth participation, violence prevention, inclusive education and financial support to families with children. MODS identified inclusive education and protection of children from violence as their priority advocacy areas for 2014. The network continues to be recognised as a representative voice of children's organisations.

At the local level, UNICEF worked with seven community centres located in poor, largely Roma neighbourhoods in southern Serbia to develop sustainable programmes for early learning, drop-out prevention and youth empowerment. In eight municipalities in southern Serbia, UNICEF, with the Ministry of Youth and Sport (MoYS), CSOs and Youth Offices, completed modelling new inclusive programmes for youth, engaging more than 2,000 young people and reaching out to more than 6,000. The new youth clubs and voluntary services increased interest in voluntarism and improved inter-ethnic dialogue in the concerned communities. MoYS intends to scale-up the models developed, nationwide.

In order to better understand demand side determinants and obstacles to the up-take of cash benefits, a nationally specific module was developed and introduced into MICS5. Findings will inform advocacy for policy revision and awareness-raising efforts.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/002/002 By the end of 2015, engagement with the media and the private sector result in the application of child-rights oriented standards and an increase in financial and non-financial contributions to efforts aimed at preventing social inclusion.

Progress: Efforts continued to expand engagement in the area of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and child rights using new tools developed by UNICEF, including the Workbook "Children are Everyone's Business".

In 2013, UNICEF developed partnerships with major business associations engaged in the promotion of CSR. A consultation meeting with business association partners was held in September and resulted in the commitment of all organizations to prioritise the promotion of child-focused CSR.

Partnership with the Serbian Association of Journalists continued, revolving around upgrading ethical reporting and accountability of the media on child rights. To this end, mid-career journalists were trained on interviewing children. The UNICEF-developed university course for journalism students on child rights was further promoted and the uptake among students increased. UNICEF's expertise was sought by the Republican Broadcasting Agency in the development of child-rights informed criteria for TV content rating which will be officially adopted in 2014. In addition, journalists' self-regulatory bodies continued to react publicly to breaches of the Journalists' Code of Conduct related to child rights.

The core objective for resource mobilization in 2013 was growth of income through the pledge programme and expansion of corporate sector fundraising. The Office achieved a doubling of RR income from pledge donations in 2013. Through consistent advocacy, it managed to secure favourable banking conditions for pledge income through standing orders, in agreement with the Association of Banks of Serbia.

Corporate income increased by 200 per cent in 2013. The Office also secured three long term, high impact and high value corporate partnerships: with the Hemofarm Foundation, the Novak Djokovic Foundation and the Delhaize Group.

National Ambassadors Ana Ivanovic, Sasa Djordjevic and Novak Djokovic were effective advocates for the global violence prevention campaign, as well as the national campaign on preventing digital violence among school children.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/002/003 Private Sector Fundraising

Progress: UNICEF continued the sales of cards and gifts in 2013, focusing on the most profitable sales channels, including direct mailing to the corporate sector, retail and e-commerce. Despite the prolonged economic crisis in Serbia, UNICEF cards remained the most in-demand cards for the holiday season. UNICEF paid careful attention to increasing its profitability by reducing the costs of logistics, production of promotional material and reducing the costs of activities that did not deliver planned results in the previous campaign.

One of the objectives for this year was to identify licensing opportunities for cards and gifts in Serbia, as part of the discontinuation of the sales business by UNICEF. This activity, coordinated by PFP, however, did not lead to the identification of a potential licensee for Serbia in 2013. Expected income for 2013 sales is US\$ 238,000 gross.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/002/004 By the end of 2015, independent oversight and monitoring bodies, including CSOs, monitor the impact of relevant education, health and social welfare policies on the most disadvantaged children and use relevant findings to advocate for policy changes.

Progress: UNICEF continued its cooperation with the Parliamentary Committee on Child Rights, focusing on supporting technical review of draft legislation on education and patients' rights. UNICEF further supported capacities for monitoring and oversight of implementation of child-related laws through the Committee's working groups. A second monitoring report on implementation of inclusive education was produced by the education working group. In partnership with UNICEF, public hearings were held on the importance of investing in early childhood education, poverty in children and single parents, and discrimination against children.

Partnership with the Commissioner for Protection of Equality continued to strengthen staff capacity for analytical reporting and development of evidence-based policy recommendations on child rights. The Commissioner's first report on discrimination against children, presented in Parliament, raised documented cases of discrimination against children and called for immediate action. The Commissioner's Youth Group, also supported by UNICEF, ensured that the voices of children were represented in the report by assessing the inclusiveness of schools.

Partnership with the Deputy Ombudsman for Children on positive parenting and advocacy for a legal ban on corporal punishment raised significant interest in the general public and media. Through this cooperation, educational materials on positive parenting techniques were developed and distributed widely through schools and primary health centres and served as a reference for workshops with professionals and parents.

To enhance CSO monitoring of child rights, UNICEF collaborated with three networks to produce studies on hidden aspects of violence against children. This included the linkages between violence against women and their children, and violence against children with intellectual disabilities. The findings were widely disseminated, and used to advance implementation of Protocols on Child Abuse and Neglect. Furthermore, the knowledge generated on domestic violence served as a basis for the development of a training package for the judicial system.

 On-track

IR 8970/P0/05/002/003 PSFR (P0)

Progress: The core objective for resource mobilization in 2013 was growth of income through the pledge programme and expansion of corporate sector fundraising. Pledge income increased by 59.5 per cent compared to 2012 results. Through consistent advocacy, the Office managed to secure favourable banking conditions for pledge income through standing orders, in agreement with the Association of Banks of Serbia.

Corporate income increased to US \$433,500 and the Office secured three long term, high impact and high value corporate partnerships: with the Hemofarm Foundation, the Novak Djokovic Foundation and the Delhaize Group.

National Ambassadors Ana Ivanovic, Sasa Djordjevic and Novak Djokovic were effective advocates for the global violence prevention campaign, as well as the national campaign on prevention of digital violence among school children.

PC 3 - Cross-sectoral

 On-track

PCR 8970/A0/05/003 Cross-sectoral

Progress: The major achievement under this PCR is the correct and timely processing and implementation of activities enabling a smooth functioning of the Country Office

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/003/001 Effective and Efficient Support to Programme Implementation

Progress: With the funds utilized for this component, UNICEF provided human resource, administrative, and travel support towards the achievement of IRs across the country programme of cooperation. These costs also included the maintenance of office space and vehicles, IT equipment, the provision of office supplies and other administrative costs.

 On-track

PCR 8970/A0/05/800 Effective and Efficient Programme Management and Operations Support

Progress: The Office ensured effective and efficient programme management and operations support throughout the year. The 4 October, 2013 OIAI report 2013/40 confirmed that overall the controls over and processes of the Office were generally well-established and functioned well. However, the report underlined six recommendations, for which action plans were prepared. As of end of November 2013, appropriate action was taken on all recommendations.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/800/001 Governance and Systems

Progress: The Annual Management Plan (AMP) was completed in a timely manner, and followed up on in the mid-year, and end-year reviews.

The IB submission was prepared and shared with RO on time, and quality of all supporting documentation was ensured. The CPMP was completed in a timely manner for the PBR review, and the PBR Committee commended the Office for the quality of its CPMP and annexes, which were considered as a good practice by the RO.

The Office carried out its MTR in 2013, culminating in an MTR Conference held on October 22, 2013. The MTR found that progress was being made towards achieving planned CP results, and that the second half of the CP should continue along the same lines, with only minor adjustments, as reflected in the MTR documentation. As part of the MTR process, the Office reviewed and revised the existing RCSA library and adjusted its risk management strategy.

The EWEA was updated in July 2013 with the participation of all staff.

The CMT met regularly during 2013 and reviewed programme and operational targets and priorities, office performance indicators and management of resources, the CPMP submission and subsequent PBR decisions, the staff learning and development plan, staff welfare, safety and security matters, and other programme and operational issues.

The Business Continuity Plan was updated in April, and then fully tested in November 2013, with final revisions made afterwards.

Ensuring staff well-being and maintaining good staff morale continued to be priorities of the senior management and the local Joint Consultative Committee (JCC). The JCC met twice in 2013, and discussed follow up to the Global Staff Survey, including issues of work-life balance, as well as the extension of fixed term contracts for a two year period, contingent on availability of funding, programme needs and staff performance.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/800/002 Effective and Efficient Management and Stewardship of Financial Resources

Progress: All operational targets and indicators defined in AMP for 2013 were on track at the mid-year review (June 2013). The CMT monitored programme implementation and DCT management through a set of regular management reports. The utilization rate was 100 per cent for RR, 100 per cent for SB, 98.9 per cent for OR and 100 per cent for thematic grants. At the end of 2013, the Office had no DCT outstanding more than 6 months. During the year, only two DCT were outstanding for more than 9 months, but were liquidated. Utilization and expenditure rates over the course of the year were within defined quarterly targets.

Bank optimization and cash forecasting tools were used for efficient utilization and planning of financial resources. Deadlines for bank reconciliations and reporting were met, as were the deadlines for mid-year, and end year closure reporting.

The programme assurance plan was updated in line with audit recommendations, and HACT field trip and spot check visits were monitored. HACT assessments of four new partners were completed and 15 NGO and 22 Governmental partner institutions were visited.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/800/003 Human Capacity

Progress: 2012 PAS were finalized for all staff by mid-March. 2013 PAS work plan outputs for all staff were agreed upon by the end of April, and mid-year progress review discussions between staff and supervisors were conducted to assess performance and to monitor the progress of the individual work plans. Staff worked with their supervisors, and took into consideration the competencies related to their job profile and developed their staff development plan.

The Office organisational structure was reviewed and aligned in order to ensure that core roles were covered with core resources. The new structure was presented as an integral part of the CPMP submission, and approved at the February and June PBRs. Five posts were abolished (Knowledge Management Officer, Partnership Specialist, Social Policy Specialist, Admin Assistant, and Driver), and one new post created (Child Rights Monitoring Specialist). Furthermore, two posts were reduced to part time (ICT Assistant, and Admin Assistant), while the Senior Finance Assistant post (GS7) was downgraded to Finance Assistant (GS6).

In connection with the planned office restructuring, training on results-based management was conducted in June, facilitated by the RO HR team, which strengthened staff management and coaching skills.

 On-track

IR 8970/A0/05/800/005 Sales (A0) Serbia

Progress: The PSFR function contributed to a growth of income through the pledge programme which increased its income by 59.5 per cent in 2013. The Office managed to secure further expansion of pledge income through brokering cooperation with the Association of Banks of Serbia (ABS). The ABS approved and recommended to all banks operating in Serbia favourable banking procedures for direct debit pledge contributions to UNICEF. Also, a new service for pledge recruitment through SMS was developed.

R&D investment funds were allocated to CO to expand the pledge programme (e.g. through direct mailing and SMS pledge) in order to secure growth of regular income in light of the anticipated loss of income from sales activities which will stop at the end of 2014.

Corporate fundraising recorded a significant income increase, with the Office securing a small number of long term, high value, and high-impact partnerships. Total corporate income for 2013 was US\$ 433,500. Despite the economic crisis and the difficult economic situation in the country, the Office managed to position UNICEF as the CSR partner- of-choice within the business sector.

 On-track

IR 8970/P0/05/800/004 Sales (P0) Geneva

Progress: UNICEF continued sales of cards and gifts in 2013, focusing on the most profitable sales channels, including direct mailing to the corporate sector, retail and e-commerce. Despite the prolonged economic crisis in Serbia, UNICEF cards remained the most in-demand cards for holiday season. UNICEF paid careful attention to increasing its profitability rate by reducing the costs of logistics, production of promotional material and reduction of costs for activities that did not deliver planned results in the previous campaign.

One of the objectives for this year was to identify licensing opportunities for cards and gifts in Serbia, as part of the discontinuation of the sales business by UNICEF. This activity, coordinated by PFP, however, did not lead to the identification of a potential licensee for Serbia in 2013. Expected income for 2013 sales is US\$ 238,000 gross.

Effective Governance Structure

Key annual results (seven programme and four management) were defined through a participatory process and described in the 2013 AMP. Progress towards the AMP results was reviewed mid-year and during the annual review, while specific issues were discussed at regular CMT and programme meetings. Furthermore, PAS work plan outputs were prepared by each staff member with their supervisors and closely linked to annual programme and management priorities and results. Day-to-day office priorities were shared and discussed at weekly stand-up meetings.

The CMT met regularly during 2013 (seven meetings in total) and took significant steps to improve operations and programme management by: 1) improving the defined procedure on reallocation of funds; 2) institutionalizing practice on PSFR income allocation, in line with global PSFR guidance; 3) improving HACT assessment planning and monitoring; 4) regularly monitoring the main indicators through the Monthly Management Report; and 5) strengthening delegation of roles in VISION.

Ensuring staff well-being and maintaining high staff morale continued to be priorities of the senior management and the local Joint Consultative Committee (JCC). The JCC met twice in 2013 and discussed follow-up to the Global Staff Survey, including issues of work-life balance and extension of fixed term contracts for a two year period, contingent on availability of funding, programme needs, and staff performance.

The Internal Audit, conducted in August and September 2013 concluded that governance systems and processes were well-established and functioning. By the end of November 2013, action had been taken on all recommendations presented in the audit.

The PCA Review Committee reviewed a total of eight cases in 2013, which were passed to the Representative for approval. One case was reviewed by the CRC.

Strategic Risk Management

UNICEF Serbia's Risk and Control Library was updated in June 2013, through a participatory process involving all staff. Out of six key risks identified three were assessed as low, two as medium, and one risk related to potential shortfalls in funding was assessed as high. For this risk, mitigation measures were put in place (the action plan) to secure IPA funding (for which the prospects were high); to increase pledge income in 2014; and to secure set aside funds to help compensate for the reduced RR available. To support these measures, an agreement was signed with the Association of Banks of Serbia to set up mechanisms needed to boost the outcomes of the pledge programme in 2014 and 2015, and set-aside funds were secured for 2013-2014.

The Emergency Risk Assessment part of the Early Warning/Early Action (EWEA) website was updated in June. The CO risk profile and preparedness pages of the EWEA including key actions were updated and uploaded. A special meeting was held with all relevant staff to review the EWEA portal and respective staff responsibilities.

The Business Continuity Plan was updated in April, and fully tested in November 2013, with final revisions made thereafter.

The security plan, emergency lists, contact points for EWEA, and the Warden System Tree lists were updated regularly. Warden exercises were tested successfully in June 2013, and office fire drill exercises were conducted.

Evaluation

Through the process of MTR and the audit, the Office carried out a thorough review and revision of its five-year and multi-year IMEP. In line with audit recommendations, information on study and evaluation start and completion dates were added to the multi-year IMEP. In 2013, the Office conducted and finalized two project

evaluations carried out by competent international evaluators. Both evaluation TORs and draft reports were assessed by the CEE/CIS Regional M&E Facility as being highly satisfactory. The recommendations of these evaluations were translated into the management response and are being followed-up. In-office capacity for evaluation was enhanced through active mentoring by the M&E focal point who benefited from evaluation training.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

In order to support the achievement of CP results, the continued availability of ICT resources and efficient user support were ensured in 2013, through effective technical maintenance of ICT infrastructure and in accordance with Information Technology System and Services (ITSS) objectives and standards.

The new UNICEF standard for backup of virtual servers (VEEAM 6.5) was successfully implemented, which significantly improved the Business Continuity and ICT disaster recovery and backup plan. Risk of disruption of ICT services was minimised through options for easy failover/failback and full automatic synchronization of the core servers' infrastructure to an off-site location. Back-up procedures were performed regularly on four high speed external hard drives and one NAS storage.

The Office continues to host IT resources for the Croatia Office and to manage related IT services, system administration, IT disaster recovery and backups.

In cooperation with UNDP, a new in-house database solution was created for e-banking. It provides a fully automated and efficient conversion of payment data from UNICEF ERP software (VISION/SAP) to local banks' software in a secure and timely manner.

The Donor Perfect database was fully reorganized and cleaned to more effectively manage data on donors and fundraising activities. All orphan data and duplicate entries were removed, better enabling advanced reporting and segmentation system features.

As a part of the global UNICEF ITSS general releases, all office core servers were patched with the latest Windows Server 2008 R2 Service Pack 1, providing a more secure and stable ICT environment, while all office workstations were migrated to the new Windows Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) server, which ensures laptops mobility and improved network management. The Local Area Network was expanded, providing an additional pool of IP addresses for new ICT services and increasing the number of hosts connecting to the internal network

In order to increase the availability of ICT services, two cost-effective contracts were reviewed and renewed – with a mobile service provider and an ISP vendor. Obsolete but usable ICT equipment (4 laptops with docking stations and LCD monitors) that were written-off were donated to implementing partners, while out-of-order equipment and toners were disposed of in an environmentally secure manner or were recycled.

Fund-raising and Donor Relations

The Office actively pursued the fundraising strategy and action plan adopted by the Fundraising Committee in 2012. Relations with bilateral donors continued to be strengthened, resulting in two new multi-year grants being secured (Swiss and Austrian donors) and additional EU funding committed for 2014. Funding for two developed joint programme proposals was delayed, pending Government review and approval of joint programme proposals. A new fundraising strategy and plan will be developed in 2014, taking into consideration funding requirements for the new Country Programme. The Office submitted a total of 10 donors' reports on-time in 2013, and made timely contributions to two regionally managed progress reports.

The PSFR function contributed to a growth of income through the pledge programme, ensuring a 59.5 per cent increase in pledge income. The Office secured further expansion of pledge income through its cooperation with the Association of Banks of Serbia (ABS) which approved and recommended that all banks operating in Serbia offer favourable banking procedures for direct debit pledge contributions to UNICEF. Also,

a new service for pledge recruitment through SMS was developed.

R&D investment funds were allocated to CO to expand the pledge programme (e.g. through direct mailing and SMS pledge) in order to secure growth of regular income in light of the anticipated loss of income from sales activities which will end at the end of 2014.

Corporate fundraising recorded a significant income increase, with the Office securing a small number of long term, high value, and high-impact partnerships. Total corporate income for 2013 was US\$ 433,500. Despite the economic crisis and the difficult economic situation in the country, the Office managed to position UNICEF as the CSR partner- of-choice within the business sector.

Management of Financial and Other Assets

All operational targets and indicators defined in AMP for 2013 were fully met. The CO has successfully safeguarded the financial and other assets of the organization and ensured efficient, timely and cost effective utilization.

The Office effectively used SAP/VISION for transaction processing. The VISION super-user team continued to work effectively to support the processing of all transactions in a smooth and timely manner and to use the system for reporting purposes. Problems experienced in the first year of SAP implementation were largely eliminated.

The CMT monitored programme implementation and DCT management through a set of regular monthly management reports and ad hoc analysis. The utilization rate was 100 per cent for RR, 100 per cent for SB, 98.9 per cent for OR and 100 per cent for thematic grants. At the end of 2013, the Office had no DCT outstanding more than 6 months. During the year only two DCT were outstanding for more than 9 months, but were liquidated. Utilization and expenditure rates over the course of the year were within defined quarterly targets.

Accounts clearance was done on a monthly basis. Bank reconciliation and month-end closures were done and submitted accurately and in a timely manner. The Office also introduced an eBanking system with Komercijalna Bank. This enabled automated, secure and efficient payment processing and automated, real-time monitoring of changes in the bank account.

The posting and payment system was tested within the business continuity exercise, and all processes were found to run smoothly.

The programme assurance plan was updated in line with the audit recommendations and HACT field trips and spot check visits were monitored. HACT training for new partners was provided during the year and assessment of five new partners was completed.

The Office also strengthened its implementation of the harmonized approach to cash transfers. More specifically: i) action was taken to ensure that FACE forms are completely and correctly filled in by implementing partners before being accepted for payment or liquidation, with special attention given to the certification portion of the form; ii) the assurance plan was systematically linked to the risk rating of the partner and the amount of cash transfer involved so that field/programme visits and spot checks are cost-effective, and iii) spot check procedures were clearly defined and Guidance for Conducting Spot Checks was issued. Special attention was given in the Guidance to verifying the supporting documents in the account books of the implementing partner, and defining of the sample size of transactions to be reviewed.

Supply Management

The total value of procurement in 2013 amounted to US \$1,082,353.15. The Office completed market research for 30 cases of procurement and conducted two ITBs and ten RFP processes for local procurement. Of the 123 purchase orders completed, 52 were institutional procurement of supplies and services in the

amount of US \$470,428.64 and 71 were for individual contractors and consultants in the amount of US \$611,924.51.

Total value of procurement break-down	Amount (USD)
Individual contractors and consultants (71 POs)	611,924.51
Institutional procurement of supplies (17 POs)	130,693.45
Institutional procurement of services (35 POs)	339,735.19
TOTAL	1,082,353.15

Institutional procurement of supplies and services break-down	Amount (USD)
Programme supplies and services	386,946.45
Operational supplies and services	44,608.61
Construction (building maintenance and energy efficiency investments)	38,873.58

Supplies consisted largely of printing of programme publications for various projects, including MICS, and promotional materials for fundraising and sales campaigns, consisting mainly of brochures, posters, newsletters, direct marketing material, and pay slips.

IT equipment for office use was procured as were hygiene, office and miscellaneous supplies. Building maintenance was extensive in 2013. The Office carried out reconstruction on the heating system and replacement of eight windows on the premises.

Institutional service contracts were issued for translation services, press clipping, communications material, designer services, travel, conference organization, equipment, security services, internet connectivity and other services. Solicitation processes were organized for all service contracts.

A physical inventory of operations and programme supplies was completed in the fourth quarter of 2013, as part of year-end closure activities. The total value of programme supplies in the CO warehouse (warehouse number 229) as of 3 December 2013 was US \$4,162.67.

Good collaboration with other UN agencies in the country was demonstrated through the establishment of new UNLTAs for hygiene supplies and photocopy paper and the use of existing UNLTAs for travel services, mail services, mobile provider's services, and toners.

Human Resources

The Office did not conduct any recruitment processes in 2013. The CRB is established at area level to review cases for Croatia office. In 2013, three CRB cases were completed for the UNICEF Croatia Office.

Two staff members (Knowledge Management Officer, Partnership Specialist), whose posts were to be abolished as of January 2014, left the organization in 2013. Another two staff members on abolished posts (Administrative Assistant, Driver) were separated on 31 December 2013. HR in 2013 provided assistance and support to the staff in abolished posts.

In 2013, HR provided guidance, assistance and support for the selection of external consultants and individual contractors.

Performance planning using PAS was completed and mid-year progress review discussions taking place for all staff. PAS performance planning focused on measuring results through effective output setting linked to MYWPs, as well as effective competency assessment.

The Local Staff Development Committee played a key role in identifying competency gaps and supporting staff training. Individual and group training was organised to respond to requirements of the CP and developmental plans were outlined in the PASs. A workshop for supervisors and supervisees on Managing Performance for Results was conducted by the Chief of Human Resource and the Human Resource Specialist

from the Regional Office. A Career Development Workshop run by the Human Resource Specialist from Regional Office provided additional group training for all interested staff.

The Staff Association (SA) actively contributed to promoting flexible work arrangements and work life balance. Staff members were encouraged to use the flexible working hours option as needed, to take active part in the regional talent mapping exercise and to complete their profiles on the e-recruitment portal.

The SA was also closely involved in the MTR process, particularly in the management review and development of the revised CPMP. Staff members affected by the MTR structural changes were informed on-time about expected changes. The SA played an active role in diverse team building activities and social events and the SA Secretary took part in the regional SA meeting in Istanbul.

Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

In order to secure savings, the Office continued to use common services and contracts (travel agent services and conference organization, procurement of stationary, cleaning supplies, courier and hotel services) at the UN level

Following the savings achieved in 2012 and previous years, the operations section stayed within current allotments for the support budget, and cross-sectoral RR, which was reduced from US \$120,000 to US \$80,000, thereby making resources available for programme related activities. The Office received US \$26,000 from Regional Contingency Fund (RCF) for the reconstruction of the heating system and windows replacement which will result in energy cost savings.

Changes in AMP & CPMP

The CO carried out its mid-term programme and management review and reflected strategic management and office structure changes in the revised CPMP. These changes took into account a number of new parameters including: the principle of funding core roles with core resources; the Knowledge and Leadership Areas (KLAs); affordability in light of a drop in available Other Resources (OR); and a further drive for efficiency.

In this context, the Office analysed its capacity to carry out core roles. This analysis in turn, informed the consolidation towards a more efficient and effective structure. The Office proposed and PBR approved a new organizational structure which included the abolishment of three NO programme posts, creation of one new NO post, and the abolishment of one administrative assistant post and one driver. In addition, two operations posts were reduced to half-time positions.

This streamlined structure, due to be fully implemented as of January 2014, requires review and adjustments to the functions and responsibilities of the remaining staff, in order to ensure the smooth functioning of the Office. This is currently on-going and will continue into the first quarter of 2014.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

AMP	Annual Management Plan
CAN	Child Abuse and Neglect
CEE/CIS	Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States
CMT	Country Management Team
CO	Country Office
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPMP	Country Programme Management Plan
CRB	Central Review Board
CRC	Contract Review Committee
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organization

DCT	Direct Cash Transfer
DFAM	Division of Financial & Administrative Management
EC	European Commission
ECD	Early Childhood Development
E-PAS	Electronic Performance Appraisal System
ERM	Enterprise Risk Management
EU	European Union
HACT	Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer
HM	Health Mediator
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IMEP	Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
ISC	Inter-Sectoral Commission
ITB	Invitation-to-Bid
ITSS	Information Technology System and Services
JCC	Joint Consultative Committee
LSDC	Local Staff Development Committee
MICS	Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey
MODS	Network of CSOs for Children of Serbia
MoESTD	Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoLESP	Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy
MoYS	Ministry of Youth and Sport
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MYWP	Multi-Year Work Plan
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OR	Other Resources
PAS	Performance Assessment System
PBA	Programme Budget Allotment
PCA	Programme Cooperation Agreement
PSB	Property Survey Board
RR	Regular Resources
SA	Staff Association
SA EC	Staff Association Executive Committee
SB	Support Budget
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNLTA	United Nations Long Term Agreement
VISION	Virtual Integrated System of Information

Document Centre

Evaluation

	Title	Sequence Number	Type of Report
1	Serbia IMEP 2013-14	2012/008	IMEP
2	Serbia IMEP 2013-2014 Final	2013/001	IMEP
3	Financing of Social Protection in the Republic of Serbia on the Local Self-Government Level	2013/003	Study
4	FINAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT "SUPPORT TO THE DE-INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF CHILDREN, IN PARTICULAR THOSE WITH DISABILITIES, IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA: STRENGTHENING THE CONTINUUM OF SERVICES AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL"	2013/004	Study
5	Outcomes for children with disability and their parents from accessing community-based services	2013/005	Study
6	Research of Inclusive Social Development	2013/006	Study
7	Final Evaluation Report" Developing community based services for children with disabilities and their families" (April 2010 –December 2013)	2013/010	Evaluation
8	Family/children cash benefits in Serbia: The analysis and policy recommendations	2013/012	Study
9	Pro-Poor Education Study	2013/009	Study
10	Expanding Early Learning Opportunities	2013/011	Evaluation
11	Utilisation of Digital Technologies, Risks and Incidence of Digital Violence among Students in Serbia	2013/002	Study
12	Study on Dropout from Primary and Secondary Education	2013/008	Study
13	Monitoring the causes, decision-making processes and outcomes for children in care	2013/007	Study

Lessons Learned

	Title	Document Type/Category
1	Knowledge Generation Through Child Care System Reform	Lesson Learned