Executive Summary

The new 2016-2020 UNICEF Belarus Country Programme is strongly focused on the most vulnerable and marginalized children and adolescents. The programme is being implemented through Biannual Rolling Work Plans signed with the Ministries of Education, Health, Internal Affairs and Emergency Situations.

Assistance provided by UNICEF, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to the Government contributed to the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) (EMTCT) and congenital syphilis. In June 2016, the Republic of Belarus became the fourth country in the world to receive WHO validation as having eliminated congenital syphilis and mother-to-child transmission of the HIV. UNICEF Belarus paid special attention to securing the quality and sustainability of EMTCT services, which are fundamental for ensuring a generation free of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Together with other United Nations (UN) agencies, UNICEF Belarus advocated for the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which took place in October 2016. UNICEF Belarus then participated in the development of the National Action Plan on the Implementation of the Provisions of the CRPD, and helped to ensure that the rights of children with disabilities are explicitly addressed. An explanatory note on General Comment #4 of Article 24 of the CRPD was delivered to the Government, and UNICEF also recommended the Code on Education be amended to provide for inclusive education.

UNICEF gave new momentum to the human rights systems that are relevant for children. Following the second recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review, UNICEF Belarus provided expertise for the development of the National Human Rights Action Plan 2016-2019. The plan now includes many references to children’s rights and will serve as a road map for addressing human and child rights issues in the forthcoming period.

As a member of the UN Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group, UNICEF Belarus took part in a joint initiative of the Government and the international community to ensure legal protection, legal awareness, legal aid and counsel, adjudication, and law enforcement, as well as the development of civil society. Justice for children was introduced in the concept papers. It will become a part of the Belarus Rule of Law and Access to Justice (RoL&AJ) Programme that will be developed in 2017. International development donors under the leadership of the European Union (EU) expressed their interest in providing funding for the Programme.

Building on the intensified dialogue between the EU and the Republic of Belarus, UNICEF Belarus participated in the preparation of the 2016 EU-Belarus human rights dialogue and ensured that children’s rights, such as the rights to be protected from violence and abuse and live in a caring family environment, and the right to be heard and participate, prominently featured on the agenda. The discussions resulted in the decision of the EU Delegation to launch a major UN-managed technical assistance programme on good governance.
practices to build the capacity of civil society and governmental institutions and promote a constructive dialogue between them.

UNICEF Belarus facilitated a new stage of the dialogue on children’s rights between the Government and civil society. A working group consisting of the most prominent non-profit organizations involved in child rights protection was established to coordinate their actions and develop their joint advocacy agenda.

UNICEF Belarus promoted the concept of public-private partnerships and advocated for an increased role for the private sector in protecting children’s rights through a workshop for the representatives of major domestic and international companies and banks. UNICEF introduced them to its global approach to corporate social responsibility (CSR) for the benefit of children and adolescents. UNICEF will follow it up with events tailored to the specific needs of various industries.

To support the UNICEF programme on early detection of child disability and promoting social inclusion of children with disability, US$2.4 million was secured from the Government of the Russian Federation. The programme will run from 2017 to 2020.

**Humanitarian Assistance**

Not Applicable

**Emerging Areas of Importance**

**Migrant and refugee children.** Belarus hosts the second largest number of Ukrainian asylum-seekers and Ukrainians with other forms of legal stay (after the Russian Federation). Over 160,000 Ukrainians have arrived in Belarus since the beginning of the conflict in the Ukraine in 2014. Among them are thousands of families with children. UNICEF Belarus, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) submitted a funding proposal to strengthen domestic capacity to address the needs of these Ukrainians, bolstering their coping mechanisms and encouraging their inclusion in Belarusian society.

UNICEF Belarus continued its regular briefings of Government, civil society organizations (CSOs), and resident and non-resident donors to engage them on emerging children’s issues such as children from incomplete families, those with disabilities and refugee children. In keeping with UNICEF’s Strategic Plan and building on the regional theory of change and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) general comments, UNICEF Belarus promoted greater attention to the second decade of life and adolescents as agents of change.

**Urbanization, climate change and children.** The urbanization and consequences of climate change were highlighted within the National Child-Friendly City (CFC) conference. Adolescent engagement in urban development and the monitoring of the impact of climate change were reflected in the conference resolution, which also requested further UNICEF expertise for the incorporation of these issues in the CFC agenda.

**The second decade.** UNICEF Belarus and the Ministry of Economy agreed to conduct a study of public spending on children. The study aims to identify vulnerable adolescents and explore possibilities to adjust public spending to more equitably benefit children in their second decade of life.
UNICEF received US$ 300,000 for supporting the reform of a system that currently places children in conflict with the law and unaccompanied refugee and migrant children into a transit centre. Planned measures include the liberalization of the legal framework, introducing child-friendly procedures and strengthening the capacity of professionals. This will be a part of the 2015-2019 Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT) initiative by the EU and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which is also implemented by the IOM and UNICEF.

Integration of early childhood development (ECD). Following UNICEF advocacy, the Ministry of Education (MoE) committed to promoting responsible parenting among future and young parents. UNICEF helped to conceptualize the integration of early childhood development (ECD) services, and the creation of an environment that supports families in providing adequate care. The concept is expected to be submitted by national experts for consideration by the government in 2017.

UNICEF established a working group of CSOs involved in the protection of children’s rights to help them speak with one voice, exchange their views and provide consolidated inputs to emerging national policies.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<td>Belstat</td>
<td>National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus</td>
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<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
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<td>CFC</td>
<td>Child-Friendly City</td>
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<td>CFCI</td>
<td>Child Friendly City Initiative</td>
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<td>CMT</td>
<td>Country Management Team</td>
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<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<td>CRPD</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<td>CSR</td>
<td>Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
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<td>DCT</td>
<td>Direct Cash Transfers</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
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<td>ECI</td>
<td>Early Childhood Interventions</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>GLO ACT</td>
<td>Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants</td>
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<td>GSSC</td>
<td>Global Shared Services Centre</td>
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<td>HACT</td>
<td>Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<td>HQ</td>
<td>Headquarters</td>
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<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>LSA</td>
<td>Local Staff Association</td>
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<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<td>MIA</td>
<td>Ministry of Internal Affairs</td>
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<td>MICS</td>
<td>Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey</td>
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<td>MLSP</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Social Protection</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MoES</td>
<td>Ministry for Emergency Situations</td>
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<td>MoH</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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Capacity Development

Fourteen national specialists of the Ministry of Health (MoH) and MoE became acquainted with the Austrian systems of early childhood disability prevention and early intervention and the per capita financing system of preschool education in Lithuania and Russia.

To improve methodological assistance to teachers to shift from an integrated to an inclusive model of teaching, UNICEF Belarus initiated the founding of the National Resource Centre of Inclusion Education at the Belarusian State Pedagogical University.

The capacity of eight health care managers on adolescents’ sexual and reproductive health and rights was increased through participation in the Global WHO/UNICEF/UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Consultation on Adolescents’ Sexual and Reproductive Health in Switzerland and the Third All-Ukrainian conference on youth-friendly services provision. Highly qualified experts from Russia prepared 17 master trainers from medical universities on adolescents’ counselling and incorporation of this issue in the curricula of the pre- and post-diploma medical education.

Leaders from MoH, MoE, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and the Ministry for Emergency Situations (MoES) received an orientation on the effective coordination of child injury prevention measures. Police inspectors and law enforcement professionals dealing with minors were trained on international standards of justice for children and protection of children from sexual violence. One hundred judges increased their knowledge and skills in the application of relevant international standards in juvenile cases.

To help adolescents and young people to speak up for their rights, UNICEF Belarus held four regional seminars for 67 Children’s and Youth Councils and Parliaments on social inclusion.

Senior officials from the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus (Belstat) received new knowledge on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators monitoring, and increased their skills in multi-indicator cluster survey (MICS) evidence generation on child rights.

UNICEF Belarus introduced corporate social responsibility principles for the rights of children into the agenda of the private sector. Through the CSR workshop, fundraising dinner and other public events, UNICEF sensitized members of the national private sector to the basic
concepts of corporate social responsibility and how to apply them within private sector operations for the welfare of vulnerable children

Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

UNICEF Belarus helped to align the agendas of CSOs involved in children’s right protection and to enable them to speak with one voice before the Government. In December, UNICEF Belarus facilitated the establishment of a working group that is designed to be an effective tool of joint advocacy and involvement in policymaking and building commitment for child-centred policies and services improvement.

The Deputy Prime-Minister and Parliamentarians were informed about the recommendations related to inclusive education of the Committee on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. UNICEF Belarus made explanatory statements to the Standing Commission of the Parliament on the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) General Comment 4 and also provided information on The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) General Comment 19 on public budgeting. UNICEF’s position was made clear that in the planning, reporting and executing of the budget, the State party should provide detailed consideration to the situation of different groups of children, especially those in vulnerable situations.

The focus of public budgeting on equity and effectiveness is especially important given that UNICEF Belarus’ rolling socio-economic situation analysis showed that the share of the most vulnerable households with children in social assistance budget had decreased. UNICEF Belarus’ policy dialogue resulted in the successful mobilization of resources needed to launch a study on investing in children and adolescents jointly with the Ministry of Economy.

Availability of data was improved through the update of the Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity (TransMonEE) database and an agreement to conduct MICS 6 in 2017-2018. Child-related data will be a part of a data-portal, to be launched jointly with Belstat.

UNICEF Belarus and UNFPA advocated for and prepared a large-scale longitudinal survey with 10,000 respondents coordinated by the international programme ‘Generations and Gender’ jointly with the Population Unit of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. The research will inform UNICEF’s programme modification with vital insights into family formation, parental breakup and childcare responsibilities, including informal kinship care.

Partnerships

UNICEF Belarus continued to advocate with bilateral and international donors to engage in addressing urgent needs and gaps in children’s rights in Belarus. The advocacy efforts resulted in Russia (US$2.4 million) and Poland (US$32,500) agreeing to financially support UNICEF actions. Proposals are in the pipeline with the UK Embassy, the EU and the UN Human Security Fund.

UNICEF Belarus forged partnerships with the private sector concentrating on the promotion of the culture of corporate social responsibility among private companies with the inclusion of disadvantaged and disabled children as the key message. The highlights of the year included signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Renaissance Hotel Minsk and a UNICEF@70 Fundraising Gala Dinner in December 2016 hosted by Renaissance and attended by representatives of leading private companies.
UNICEF also engaged Belarus sports organizations such as the National Olympic Committee and the Belarusian Football Federation, which opened their sporting events for UNICEF participation with public speeches, visibility items and distribution of publications. Participation in these events resulted in UNICEF reaching out to family audiences with messages of inclusion and responsible parenting.

Other partnerships included attracting support of local authorities for the development of the network of child-friendly cities and running of the HIV-testing campaign.

UNICEF also established an Innovation and Partnership Centre at the premises of the Zubrenok National Educational Centre to support creative initiatives of children and adolescents and their entrepreneurial thinking.

**External Communication and Public Advocacy**

To bring public attention to the results achieved for children by UNICEF globally and in Belarus, the office amplified UNICEF@70th messages through over 60 joint child rights-themed public events with the government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), diplomatic missions and private companies.

UNICEF expert positions were cited in the mainstream media over 130 times. Negotiations on partnerships to strategically amplify key UNICEF advocacy messages in top broadcast and online media started with Belarusian Private News Agency (BelaPan) and BelTeleRadio Company, to be signed in early 2017.

The UNICEF Belarus Facebook page doubled its followers, reaching over 2,000. Weekly posts reached an averaged 8,500 views, and engagement (clicks, likes, comments, shares) peaked at 13,500 for a single post. New accounts in social networks popular locally (VK.com, Instagram) helped expand UNICEF’s reach.

In partnership with UNAIDS and the MoH, UNICEF Belarus conducted a wide-scale public awareness campaign on promoting HIV testing and popularizing the work of youth-friendly health centres (YFHC). The campaign spanned 12 major cities, reaching over 6,000 young people with TV programmes, flash-mobs, concerts, games and discussions.

UNICEF Belarus participated in the UN-wide ‘Inclusive Belarus: Leaving No One Behind’ campaign in all six regions spreading awareness of the needs of children and adolescents with disabilities, stigma and discrimination towards vulnerable children and risky behaviours among adolescents through exhibitions, interactive activities, and online engagement.

In 2016, UNICEF Belarus was also able to engage a world-renowned tennis star, to promote safe behaviour among teenagers.

UNICEF@70 celebrations culminated in an anniversary stamp launch with BelPost, a UNICEF History Exhibition at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and, a first in Belarus, an Advocacy and Fundraising Gala Dinner, hosted by partner Renaissance Minsk Hotel, attracting around 200 guests from the diplomatic and business communities.

UNICEF communication activities engaged over 10,000 and reached around 3,000,000 people, including children, youth, parents, decision makers, journalists, and the international community.
South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

UNICEF Belarus supported a delegation from Abkhazia to become acquainted with the Belarusian system of iodine deficiency disorders (IDD) prevention. The officials learned how Belarus goes about eliminating IDD through public health measures and regulation of the salt industry. Abkhazia authorities were given advice and examples on how to develop their own IDD policy and practice.

The Belarusian experience of the Child-Friendly City Initiative (CFCI) implementation and implementation of socially oriented initiatives by Children and Youth Parliaments (Councils) was presented by the Belarus MoE representative and the leader of the Minsk City Youth Parliament at the National Conference of Child-Friendly Cities in Kazakhstan. As a follow up, young people from the Youth Innovative and Partnership Centre in Zubrenok took part in a teleconference with youth from the Kazakhstan Youth Association Gyldyz to discuss innovative forms and methods of youth participation, engagement in the implementation of the SDGs, and building government commitments to support youth initiatives.

A distance training course on HIV prevention work and social care and support was introduced by the Regional Knowledge Hub on HIV prevention among most-at-risk adolescents by the NGO Belarusian Association of UNESCO Clubs. Professionals from Belarus, Eastern Europe and Central Asia became acquainted with methods of reaching hard-to-reach adolescents and those practising risky behaviour, engaging them in prevention programmes and motivating them to consider HIV testing. New countries joined EDU-HUB activities and six country profiles were drafted for Armenia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Identification and Promotion of Innovation

UNICEF Belarus and the MoE opened the UNICEF Innovation and Partnership Centre in Zubrenok, the largest children and youth camp in the country, which has since served as a hub for youth-led innovation on solving key issues faced by children and adolescents. The centre hosted workshops, meetings with inspiring speakers, training activities and a contest for innovative ideas on achieving the SDGs, which motivated participants to become active in their local communities.

In partnership with EPAM, the leading information technology (IT) company in Belarus, UNICEF piloted a human-centred design approach to make YFHCs more attractive to young people. UNICEF mapped out customer journeys, co-designed solutions together with the target group, and introduced prototyping to test new approaches. As a result, a recognisable and unique style for this UNICEF initiative was created and tested in two YFHCs, and will be further distributed among all YFHCs in 2017.

To grow the influence of UNICEF Belarus’ social media presence, advocacy infographics were developed, both adapting global messages to the local context and creating in-house image advocacy posts that speak to the local audience. Paid Facebook ads were piloted, which promoted key advocacy messages beyond the usual audience. As a result, the UNICEF Belarus Facebook page became the fastest growing UN social media channel in Belarus.

To provide more in-depth information to the website audience in an interactive way, UNICEF Belarus developed a universal landing page template for the website, which has custom-designed modules and can be adapted to any subject or event. It was used widely both for events and larger programme activities, such as partnership-building and allowed for financial savings and a larger website audience.
Support to Integration and Cross-Sectoral Linkages

UNICEF Belarus supported the development of cross-sectoral road maps within the National Human Rights Action Plan and the Rule of Law and Access to Justice Programme. The national study on violence against children was successfully conducted as UNICEF Belarus worked simultaneously with four line ministries, local authorities and the administration of children’s institutions within policy dialogue meetings and expert group discussions.

The cross-sectoral collaboration of the MoH, MoE, MIA and MoES resulted in the development of technical specifications for producing a series of ten video-lessons on the basics of safe living for pupils of the fifth form of secondary schools, as well as the identification of schools, where open-air playgrounds to study traffic rules will be founded.

The concerted advocacy efforts of UNICEF Belarus resulted in the deepening of cooperation between NGOs and state agencies in the improvement of state youth policy that was stated in the resolution of the National Round Table.

The collaboration of NGOs and state institutions was central to reaching hard-to-reach adolescents, motivating them to undergo HIV testing and accompanying them to youth-friendly health centers. The importance of the cross-sectoral collaboration for the quality services provision to HIV-positive children and adolescents was highlighted at the training ‘Strengthening care and support services for adolescents living with HIV’ conducted by experts from the Children Living with HIV Association.

The scaling up of the child-friendly cities initiative contributed to the enhancement of the cross-sectoral linkages in addressing the issues of the most vulnerable children and adolescents at the local level.

Cross-sectoral interaction was the topic of discussion at the national round table on the child’s right to live in a caring family environment. The meeting led to an agreement between public agencies and CSOs to improve the regulatory basis and develop an inter-agency action plan to strengthen the system that establishes barriers to the separation of the child and his/her further institutionalization (gate-keeping mechanisms).

Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

An intensive public debate on the implementation of the recommendations of Universal Periodic Review involved all strata of society including public agencies, UN agencies and international development partners. The Government took two major decisions: it approved the National Human Rights Action Plan, the first interagency plan on human rights in Belarus history, and agreed to conduct systemic research of the value added of the national human rights institution, a nationwide monitoring and reporting mechanism focusing on children.

The human rights-based approach was applied in cooperation with national partners to achieve progress in the realization of child rights. This was operationalised through support to revision of the regulations on support to children in social danger.

Another challenge was ensuring that child rights are included in the agenda of the EU-Belarus dialogue on human rights.

UNICEF Belarus reviewed legislation in relation to the rights of children with disabilities and made recommendations on inclusive education, anti-stigma language in legislation, and further inclusion of people with disabilities into society in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP) and NGOs. These recommendations were included
into the draft National Action Plan for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

UNICEF Belarus together with other UN agencies participated in the development of the Road Map for the Rule of Law and Access to Justice Programme that was introduced at a high-level meeting on July 11. Within the Rule of Law Initiative, UNICEF advocated for the establishment of justice systems that foster reintegration of children in their communities and apply restorative approaches and child-friendly procedures.

UNICEF Belarus paid increasing attention to fighting domestic violence against children and reinforcing zero tolerance. In collaboration with UNFPA and national partners, UNICEF Belarus actively engaged in developing a comprehensive law on domestic violence to be drafted and subject to public debates in 2017.

UNICEF Belarus engaged in cooperation with the National Law Making Centre to promote the child rights agenda in law-making activities of the Government, highlighting inclusive education, youth policy, irregular migration and justice for children as main areas of cooperation.

**Gender Equality**

UNICEF Belarus supported the strengthening of the capacity development of its gender focal point, who is in close contact with the regional gender adviser and participated in the development of the regional action plan for 2017-2018.

UNICEF Belarus chaired the UN Country Team (UNCT) Gender Group and represented the UNCT at the National Council on Gender Policy under the Council of Ministers. UNICEF assembled the UNCT inputs to the 5th National Plan on Achieving Gender Equality for 2016-2020, which were fully incorporated into the plan. The plan was submitted to the MLSP and is under consideration by the Council of Ministers for adoption.

UNICEF Belarus participated in the preparation of the independent UNCT report and confidential submission to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Committee, ahead of the submission by the government of its report on implementation of the concluding observations of the CEDAW Committee.

UNICEF Belarus ensured that the state programme Health of Population and Demographic Security adopted by the Council of Ministers in March contains measures to realize the intent of the gender policy. UNICEF successfully advocated for the introduction of obligatory parental leave for men, and counselling prior to abortion. Responsible parenting and adolescent health are among the priorities of gender programming.

Ratification of the CRPD was initiated. UNICEF emphasized the multiple discriminations of women and girls with disabilities, and strongly recommended including interventions for the elimination of discrimination towards girls with disabilities into the National Plan of Action.

**Environmental Sustainability**

UNICEF Belarus created an appropriate access to the office premises for visitors and consultants with disabilities. Part of the funds was used to renovate the office and to create a better working environment for staff and visitors. The office also made wider use of digital products both within and outside UNICEF to save on printing. The office closely monitored its electricity and water consumption and replaced all lamps with energy-saving LED lamps.
Effective Leadership

In 2016, UNICEF Belarus developed its rolling annual management plan, which clearly defined the role and responsibilities of the results managers and pillar coordinators for the successful launch of the new programme cycle. The composition of the statutory and advisory committees was enhanced through the participation of the general service staff to increase independent judgement and advice in relation to important management decisions, including for policy directions, procurement and personnel.

UNICEF Belarus applied the best global practice of having the local staff association (LSA) chairperson and general service staff member on the country management team (CMT). The country management team promoted participatory and transparent discussions, decision-making and consideration of staff opinion in office management issues. The team met five times, and its minutes were shared with all staff members for follow up.

UNICEF Belarus reviewed the LSA Constitution and held LSA elections. The LSA interacted with management to represent staff interests and concerns. The joint consultative committee (JCC) meetings were conducted twice.

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) position was upgraded to the national officer C (NOC) level to enable UNICEF Belarus to better position itself and engage in strengthening national systems and CSOs to progressively monitor child rights, including CRC reporting.

To improve programme planning in the difficult Belarus context, and to provide substantive policy advocacy built on best international practices and cross-country fertilization, the programme and budget review (PBR) approved the international level for the policy and planning specialist post (P4) at the end of 2016. The ECD post was also upgraded to the NOC level to reflect the increased complexity of tasks and responsibilities connected with the committed US$ 2.4 million from the Russian Federation.

The business continuity plan was updated. To prepare staff members for an emergency, a fire drill was conducted. Staff members were trained on how to behave in critical situations and how to operate the fire extinguishers.

Financial Resources Management

In February 2016, the annual management plan was finalized. It is the basis for annual programme work plans, management priorities and office governance systems. The annual management plan emphasized important rules and regulations, guidelines and guidance issued by UNICEF Headquarters (HQ) and the UNICEF Regional Office, and specified office practices. It laid down office priorities, management expectations, management systems, functions of staff members and memberships in committees. The annual management plan serves as a handbook and desktop reference for all staff members.

The governance committees met regularly to discuss the major office objectives, plans, priorities and challenges. Through the country management team, management constantly monitored budget utilization to allow for smooth programme implementation, delivery and expenditure rates close to 100 per cent.

In June 2016, in accordance with the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT) guidelines, the UNCT finalized the inter-agency macro-assessment of the public finances of the country. The UNICEF HACT focal point shepherded the process from the tender stage to the delivery of the final report. To ensure compliance with the HACT framework, UNICEF Belarus monitored and updated its HACT status on InSight. All staff members passed the
online training on the use and practical implications of the Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditure (FACE) Form.

UNICEF Belarus regularly monitored the direct cash transfer (DCT) implementation, providing timely and necessary assistance and advice to implementing partners. There were no outstanding DCTs over nine months. In cooperation with the Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC), UNICEF Belarus established clear work flows to allow for a smooth bank reconciliation process. All deadlines were met.

In April 2016, UNICEF Belarus received US$3,000 from the Greening & Accessibility Fund. The funds were used for the construction of a ramp to allow access for visitors and consultants with disabilities.

**Fundraising and Donor Relations**

UNICEF Belarus continued its fundraising efforts based on the resource mobilization strategy including: advocacy; technical cooperation; and financial contribution/engagement. The UNICEF Representative continued building systemic rapport and crafting close bilateral ties with resident and non-resident donors through multiple channels, including regular briefings, luncheons, joint advocacy events, press conferences and site visits.

The country EU Delegation emerged as a key potential donor and announced major prospective funding opportunities in the areas of local economic development, rule of law, good governance and youth policy. UNICEF Belarus prepared concept notes to apply in coordination with other UN agencies for these opportunities with total possible funding of up to several million Euros.

At the same time, UNICEF Belarus achieved a breakthrough in its fund-raising campaign, receiving funds from the Government of the Russian Federation to support a four-year programme addressing the needs of children with disabilities project worth US$ 2.4 million. Other successes included receiving a US$300,000 grant from GLO ACT, and US$32,500 from the Government of Poland to support the empowerment of young people with disabilities.

The allocated thematic funding of US$150,000 on HIV/AIDS and children will contribute to sharpening the focus on meaningful participation of adolescents practising risky behaviour, reducing stigma and discrimination towards most-at-risk adolescents and adolescents living with HIV, and empowering vulnerable groups of adolescents and building their resilience to risk factors.

Finally, UNICEF began accessing the resources of the private sector with a UNICEF@70 fundraising Gala Dinner in December 2016 hosted by Renaissance and attended by representatives of leading private companies, which resulted in raising US$12,500. This was an initial attempt to engage the private sector in such a format and is expected to become a regular event.

**Evaluation and Research**

At the beginning of 2016, UNICEF Belarus prioritized and finalized the plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation (PRIME). During the year, all activities were tracked regularly and necessary adjustments were made in a timely fashion. In 2016, UNICEF Belarus completed two studies and uploaded the reports to the UNICEF Global Evaluation and Research Database and PRIME sites.
To improve overall performance of the evaluation function, two new tools were developed: the prioritization matrix tool to be used during PRIME preparation, and the research, studies and evaluations planner for more effective management of the PRIME activities. To boost the performance of the evaluation function, an M&E specialist (NOC) was hired and trained in results-based management.

No evaluations were planned in 2016, but international consultants were engaged in implementing two assessments and one major study. The findings of the child-friendly cities initiative assessment contributed to the development of the initiative’s road map, emphasizing research skills development and greater involvement of children and adolescents in child rights monitoring, and providing evidence to local authorities to assist them in making informed decisions affecting their life and development.

The documentation of ECD best practices was presented to the MoE, and it provided a solid base for policy and strategy development, and national legislation improvement in support to the most vulnerable children and adolescents.

UNICEF Belarus together with the MoE coordinated a study on violence against children covering over 8,000 respondents in urban and rural areas. The study results are intended to support major policy advocacy, and the study is part of regional knowledge generation efforts in line with Strategic Plan 2018-2021 result area. The study report is under preparation to be disseminated in early 2017.

Consultations with the Regional Office and the Evaluation Office led to the consideration of a new formative evaluation to be carried out with the new funding made available to UNICEF Belarus from the Russian Federation for the early childhood disability project.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

To enhance the quality of business operations, lower operational costs, and improve management control, UNICEF Belarus actively participated in the development and implementation of the business operation strategy. The operations management team (OMT) was the driving force in assessing the needs and reviewing the existing services/practices. For that purpose, the OMT created a Yammer platform for OMT members for exchanging documents, sharing opinions and experiences, bringing new ideas for common discussion and finalizing the documents for the UNCT review and approval.

The LIGHT project proved its sustainability and effectiveness in improving the quality and economy of technology. There were no major breakdowns in the systems’ operations. The quality, safety and speed of internet traffic were monitored constantly and proved to be in line with the agreed contract’s terms. The ‘server-free’ project allowed UNICEF Belarus to manage its operations without a dedicated IT position, saving approximately US$ 20,000 annually on salary and related non-staff costs. The operations manager served as the information and communication technology (ICT) focal point to assist end users. Expert IT-related services were outsourced on a six-hours-per-month basis to an external IT specialist.

UNICEF Belarus engaged in improvements to its planning and task management capacity using the Outlook shared calendar and SharePoint Team Site functionalities. Skype for Business and regular Skype continued to be widely used, as was the Polycom software for all international calls, conferences and trainings events.

UNICEF Belarus continued to employ the services of the GSSC, which progressed significantly in terms of quality and quantity of its operations. GSSC operations helped to streamline work processes, concentrating most of the technical VISION-related work in the operations section and allowing programme staff more time to focus on programme delivery.
Supply Management

All procurement procedures were carried out in a timely manner and according to UNICEF rules and procedures. All procurement was supported by preliminary market research and/or formal commercial offers from different suppliers. Most of it was conducted for programme purposes. In 2016, UNICEF Belarus had a relatively significant supply component within two projects: (1) Preventing non-communicable diseases, promoting healthy lifestyle and support to modernization of the health system in Belarus; and (2) Child-Injury Prevention. UNICEF Belarus procured medical equipment, furniture and computer equipment for YFHCs and furniture for the training centres for parents. There were also tenders for the procurement of fire annunciators, alarm simulators and life vests. The transfer of equipment to implementing partners was processed in a timely manner and duly documented.

In 2016, there were cases of offshore procurement: UNICEF visibility items from Holland and Supply Division in Copenhagen, as well as IT and computer equipment. All cases were justified by lower costs.

In 2016, the office went through renovation that required a number of local supply processes.

The total value of supplies received, split by programme and operational supplies, is provided in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CO BELARUS 2016</th>
<th>Value of all supply input (goods &amp; services)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme supplies</td>
<td>US$102 436.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational supplies</td>
<td>US$ 42 273.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>S$ 217 797.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Security for Staff and Premises

Belarus continues to be a safe country. There were no major security considerations that adversely affected the implementation of the country programme. Criminal statistics remained at a low level. Political stability came into focus during September 2016 parliamentary elections. The inter-agency Country Security Associate regularly monitored the situation and briefed UNICEF Belarus management and staff.

In September 2016, the new United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) Regional Security Adviser met with staff to update them on general security awareness. This included a fire drill and training for all staff on how to use the fire extinguishers. During the drill, staff members practised operating the fire extinguishers in a real-life fire situation. Staff members also discussed their personal experiences and what they learned. Subsequently, the local administration installed new fire alarm detection equipment in the premises.

UNICEF Belarus continued its practice of building staff skills on first aid. In May 2016, first aid medical training was held at UNICEF premises. The training was originally designed for the UN drivers only. However, because a majority of the staff drive their own cars, the training was recommended as an option for all staff members. The highly experienced certified medical instructor (who worked in the Belarus Post-Graduate Medical Academy) conducted the theoretical and practical elements of the class. Attention was paid to assistance in the first minutes after an accident and trauma management, including how to stop the bleeding of an injured person. The training was considered effective and useful by staff members who recommended that similar training continue going forward.
Human Resources

The priorities of the new 2016-2020 Country Programme required adjustments to the office structure, with a view to enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of programme operations and better respond to the identified opportunities and risks. In line with the PBR 2015 decisions, an M&E specialist (NO3), a communication specialist (NO3), and a partnerships officer (NO2) were all recruited. Despite re-advertising the vacant position, a suitable candidate for the policy and planning specialist post (NO4) was not identified. Further recruitment action was put on hold, pending review by the PBR. The review took place in October 2016, at which time it was agreed to change the post to an international position. Another change was an upgrade of the ECD officer to the NOC level.

Realizing the need to promote the level and efficiency of its partnership efforts with key stakeholders, especially with the donor communities, UNICEF Belarus organized two office outings in March (in Minsk) and June (in Logisk). All staff actively discussed the office resource mobilization strategy and communication plan.

Teamwork was a priority for office management. During a four-day retreat, a teambuilding exercise was combined with the annual programme review. An international consultant facilitated the two-day teambuilding activities. In addition to the trainer’s intense and resourceful agenda, staff members had the opportunity to discuss their self-development with the consultant. Another two days covered programmes, communication, partnerships and operations. The Operations team presented HR reforms and new tools and trained staff on how to use My Case HR.

Transition to the electronic performance management system Achieve enhanced performance management in the office.

To enhance the team spirit of staff working in the UN agencies and on projects, a UN Sports Day was organised in July 2016.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

UNICEF Belarus moved to the use of cloud technology in the beginning of 2016. The shift required a much faster, safer and more reliable internet, and it was decided to have a fibre optic installed. The locally contracted ISP was not able to offer fibre optic internet and with the assistance of the UNICEF Regional Office, UNICEF Belarus contracted another local ISP at a very competitive price. There were no major interruptions or breakdowns during the year.

Cloud technology enhanced the use of Office 365 and provided much better data security. Staff were able to access, edit and share documents anytime, from anywhere, and update information in real time. For example, the OneDrive was widely used in HR for sharing the selection process documents. Staff used OneDrive to plan, input, edit and update leave balances. Contract review committee process documents were stored on the OneDrive as well. SharePoint was mainly used to work with documents and processes created at HQ. UNICEF Belarus continued to widely use Skype for Business and Polycom for all international communications.

The need to improve internal planning processes and monitoring of deadlines became an action point during the last office retreat. For that purpose, it was decided to use the functionalities available in Outlook and SharePoint to keep track of all office plans, major programme events, high-level UNICEF staff and consultants’ visits, conferences, round tables, or meetings with key ministries.
Another ‘Office To-do-list’ tool would help to monitor major office deadlines, such as CMT and programme meetings’ follow up action points, and donor reports.

Programme Components from RAM

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 Special Purpose Outcome

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The OMT was the driving force in assessing needs and reviewing the existing services/practices. For that purpose, the OMT created a Yammer platform for OMT members for exchanging documents, sharing opinions and experiences, bringing new ideas for common discussion and finalizing the documents for UNCT review and approval.

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OUTPUT 1 Premises and Security

Analytical Statement of Progress:
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stop the bleeding of an injured person. The training was considered to be very effective and useful. Staff members recommended that similar training continue going forward.

In 2016, the office went through renovation.

OUTCOME 2 Management Outcome

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The composition of the statutory and advisory committees was enhanced through participation of the general service staff to increase independent judgement and advice in relation to important management decisions, including for policy directions, procurement and personnel.

UNICEF Belarus applied the best global practice of having the LSA chairperson and general service staff member on the CMT. The CMT promoted participatory and transparent discussions, decision-making and consideration of staff opinion in office management issues. The CMT met five times, and its minutes were shared with all staff members for follow up.

UNICEF Belarus reviewed the LSA Constitution and held LSA elections. The LSA interacted with management to represent staff interests and concerns. Joint Consultative Committee meetings were conducted twice.

All procurement procedures were carried out in a timely manner and according to UNICEF rules and procedures. All procurement was supported by preliminary market research and/or by formal commercial offers from different suppliers. In 2016, there were cases of offshore procurement: UNICEF visibility items from Holland and Supply Division in Copenhagen, as well as IT and computer equipment. All cases were justified by lower costs.

OUTPUT 1 Governance and Systems

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The annual management plan emphasized important rules and regulations, guidelines and guidance issued by HQ and the Regional Office, and specified office practices. It lay down office priorities, management expectations, management systems, functions of staff members and memberships in committees. The annual management plan serves as a handbook and desktop reference for all staff members.

The governance committees met regularly to discuss major office objectives, plans, priorities and challenges. Through the CMT, management constantly monitored budget utilization to allow for smooth programme implementation, delivery, and expenditure rates close to 100 per cent.

OUTPUT 2 Financial Resources and Stewardship

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In June 2016, in accordance with the HACT guidelines, the UNCT finalized the inter-agency macro-assessment of the public finances of the country. The UNICEF HACT Focal Point shepherded the process from the tender stage to the delivery of the final report. To ensure compliance with the HACT framework, UNICEF Belarus monitored and updated its HACT status on InSight. All staff members passed the online training on the use and practical implications of the Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditure (FACE) Form.
UNICEF Belarus regularly monitored the DCT implementation, providing timely and necessary assistance and advice to implementing partners. There were no outstanding DCTs over nine months. In cooperation with the GSSC, UNICEF Belarus established clear work flows to allow for a smooth bank reconciliation process. All deadlines were met.

In April 2016, UNICEF Belarus received US$ 3,000 from the Greening & Accessibility Fund. The funds were used for the construction of a ramp to allow access for visitors and consultants with disabilities.

OUTPUT 3 Human Resources Management

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The priorities of the new 2016-2020 Country Programme required adjustments to the office structure, with a view to enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of programme operations and better respond to the identified opportunities and risks. In line with the PBR 2015 decisions, an M&E Specialist (NO3), a Communication Specialist (NO3), and a Partnerships Officer (NO2) were all recruited. Despite re-advertising the vacant position, a suitable candidate for the policy and planning specialist post (NO4) was not identified. Further recruitment action was put on hold, pending review by the PBR. The review took place in October 2016, at which time it was agreed to change the post to an international position. Another change was an upgrade of the ECD officer to the NOC level.

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Transition to the electronic performance management system Achieve enhanced performance management in the office.

To enhance the team spirit of staff working in the UN agencies and on projects, a UN Sports Day was organised in July 2016.

OUTCOME 3 By 2020 families’ resilience and coping mechanisms are strengthened and parents know about the importance of the early years

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Child separation remains the most practised measure used by local authorities to protect a child from neglect and some parents’ irresponsible behaviour. UNICEF advocated for the introduction of new approaches to decision-making regarding children and families in social danger, aiming to reduce child separation and strengthen inter-agency collaboration in supporting dysfunctional families. UNICEF and the MoE agreed to revise regulations on how government agencies interact when identifying and supporting children in social danger. Standardized algorithms for the work of childcare specialists on social investigation and rehabilitation of families in crisis will be developed. A new regulation will introduce a revised set of criteria and indicators to assess the situation of the child within the family and evaluate
risk factors for the child to stay with his or her biological parents. Taken together, this will help to take more objective decisions in the best interests of the child.

Under a joint initiative of UNICEF and the MoE, a roundtable discussing inter-agency collaboration to realise the right of a child to a caring family environment involved national and local government and CSO stakeholders. Participants identified areas that need to be addressed to achieve improvements in the childcare system, such as revision of legislation, strengthening of data collection and raising awareness to change social norms accepting the child separation. The partnership of the Government and civil society was central to the discussion.

With the National Commission on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF initiated a nationwide study to disclose the prevalence and causes of violence against children, identify gaps in policies and practices on prevention and response to violence against children, and recommend measures to be taken. The initiative was conducted in cooperation with the MoE, MoH, MLSP and MIA. UNICEF provided the international expertise to develop the conceptual and methodological framework of the study, conducted an ethical review and supported primary and secondary data collection. More than 8,000 children, parents and specialists took part in self-administered surveys. The study report will include findings and recommendations on how to strengthen preventive and response measures to violence against children, and will be followed by an inter-agency Action Plan to ensure a comprehensive response.

UNICEF and UNFPA advocacy efforts resulted in the creation of an inter-agency working group tasked with the drafting of a comprehensive law on domestic violence that will be subject to public debate in 2017. The group is composed of line ministries, the Supreme Court, the Prosecutor General’s Office, CSOs and two UN agencies. UNICEF aims to ensure that the law has provisions on families with children, stipulating protection and assistance measures to child victims and witnesses, enforcement of legal and judicial procedures in a child-friendly manner, and remedies available to children whose rights have been violated. The momentum created for the drafting the law is also an opportunity to promote Belarus’ accession to the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence of the Council of Europe (Istanbul Convention). The Justice for Children principles and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comments are the basis for UNICEF positions in this activity.

**OUTPUT 1** Programme implementation and strengthening

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Programme planning with national counterparts was strengthened by the development and signing of biannual rolling work plans with the MoE, MoH and MIA. A mid-year review of the plans’ implementation ensured better coordination with partners and ownership of the results achieved by national counterparts.

Coordination of the preparation for the study and the development of the concept paper and methodological instruments with the Regional Office and the Innocenti Research Centre ensured the study papers and implementation process complied with UNICEF guidelines and recent developments on ethical review procedures and reporting. The international consultant for the national violence against children study was conducted in close interaction with the Regional Country Programme Advisor.

Participation in the webinars organized by the Regional Office on justice for children and child-friendly procedures for children victims of violence and sexual abuse contributed to raising the Programme staff’s knowledge and competences to better understand programme issues and learn new ideas about their implementation. A regional TransMonEE meeting on
alternative care raised the understanding of national statistics high level participants of how to improve national data collection in the relevant sectors for better positioning of Belarus in the regional comparative indicators system in light of SDG monitoring.

OUTPUT 2 By 2020 National ECD Strategy and Action Plan operational

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Belarus initiated a study to measure the average knowledge among parents in Belarus related to ECD, and identify interventions that especially benefit vulnerable children under six years of age. The study will be conducted in 2017. It will determine perceptions and practices in relation to early physical, psychological and cognitive development of children. It will also assess attitudes and changes in traditional behaviour and social norms related to parental behaviour that has important implications for health promotion and prevention of disability, morbidity and mortality of young children. Cultural and socio-economic factors influencing parental behaviours and the identification of accepted sources of information on ECD will also be studied.

UNICEF gained the commitment of the MoE to develop a cross-sectorial National ECD Strategy that fully embraces the concept of early learning and school readiness. UNICEF will assist the MoE to develop a set of recommendations on accelerating an effective cross-sectoral approach to family-focused and quality ECD services, especially those that reach the most vulnerable children. Recommendations will also be made on the development of sound and evidence-based strategies and sector-specific interventions for behaviour change in parents.

UNICEF helped the MoE transition to per capita funding of the preschool education system. To this effect, UNICEF arranged for a study visit of the two Deputy Education Ministers and other officials to acquaint themselves with the preschool financing system of Lithuania and Russia. To follow up, UNICEF will second experts to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the per capita financing of the Belarusian preschool system and pilot it in the city of Mogilev.

OUTPUT 3 By 2020 normative framework of home visiting system improved

Analytical Statement of Progress:
To help families provide better care for their children, UNICEF supported the MoH to improve the quality of home visiting through strengthening the system of postgraduate education of medical nurses and paediatricians. The course was included in the curriculum of the Belarusian Medical Academy of Postgraduate Education. Home visiting is considered the best way to reach out to young children at risk and assess their vulnerability to delays in development, malnutrition, violence, abuse and neglect. With UNICEF technical assistance, the MoH has been developing an in-service training on home visiting for paediatricians and nurses, which will come into force in September 2017.

OUTPUT 4 By 2020 gate-keeping mechanism in place to prevent children, particularly U3, from institutionalization

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF and the MoE held a roundtable on inter-agency collaboration for ensuring the right of the child to live in a family environment. Fifty participants from national and regional education, health, social protection, and interior systems, the Prosecutor General’s Office, regional commissions dealing with minors, and NGOs discussed good practices on prevention of family separation. The participants proposed ways to strengthen collaboration to more effectively identify dysfunctional families and children in social danger. Provision of timely and good quality services aimed at preventing child separation and further
institutionalisation, and improvement of the substitute family placement schemes were proposed.

The roundtable resolution identified several measures, including: improvement of the legal framework, development of an inter-agency action plan on de-institutionalisation, a data bank on children deprived of parental care, standardised protocols and working algorithms for childcare specialists, and services for pregnant women and mothers with children in crisis situations and those caring for children with disabilities. The roundtable underscored the importance of family-centred capacity development of professionals and substitute (primarily foster) parents.

Continuous UNICEF advocacy resulted in an agreement with MoE on the establishment of an expert group to revise the regulations on how government agencies interact for the identification and assistance to children in social danger. When finalized, the regulations will have the status of a Council of Ministers Resolution. The working group will also develop algorithms and a set of methodological guidelines for childcare specialists by the end of the first quarter of 2017. The documents will form the basis for a much-anticipated normative act that will legalise good practices on social investigation. It will stipulate the roles and responsibilities of government agencies in the identification of families with children in crisis, and the procedures for assessing the situation of a child in the family against a revised set of indicators, criteria and risk factors. Standardised algorithms will guide specialists when determining whether a child is in social danger, and whether he or she needs state protection. The guidelines clarify separation of the child as the measure of last resort. This will be complemented by the inter-agency individual family support action plan that will define a mandatory set of measures that specialists will undertake to keep the child in the family.

**OUTPUT 5** By 2020 local support mechanism exists to provide child-friendly services to survivors or witnesses of violence

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The prevalence of violence against children at home, community, schools, residential care and penitentiary system, its causes and current counteracting measures were assessed in a national study of violence against children that was conducted by UNICEF and the Government.

The character and scale of the study required intensive work of international and national experts, UNICEF Belarus, the UNICEF Regional Office and the Innocenti Research Centre, and four line ministries. The set of methodological tools and instruments passed the ethical review by a specially created Ethical Review Group in accordance with the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis. More than 5,000 children aged 10-17 years from randomly selected secondary schools, vocational schools, residential care institutions, closed educational institutions and one correctional colony took part in the self-administrative surveys. More than 1,400 parents and 1,600 professionals from the fields of childcare, education, social protection and local police were involved in the primary data collection activity. Ten focus groups were conducted. The survey covered registration, reporting, established referral mechanisms and assistance to victims of violence against children.

Because of the subject sensitivity, field work was preceded by lengthy and challenging consultations to agree on the questions to be asked to children and adults, especially regarding sexual abuse. Several meetings with stakeholders and the national research community were needed to finalise the methodological instruments. The scope of the study increased and caused the timeframe to be extended until 2017 to complete the data analysis, finalise the report and achieve consensus with national counterparts. The report will include an analysis of the legal and normative framework, findings on the prevalence of
violence against children in different environments, and the knowledge, and attitudes and practices of parents and professionals related to physical abuse, corporal punishment and child disciplining, psychological and sexual abuse and child neglect. Recommendations will be made on policy, monitoring and reporting of child abuse cases, children’s awareness and behaviour patterns, parents’ knowledge and child-rearing practices, and professionals’ knowledge and practices on violence prevention and response.

Over the course of this study, UNICEF reinforced its partnership with government stakeholders. The surveys of the target groups were possible only due to the support of the National Commission on Child Rights, ministries, local authorities and the administrations of randomly selected children’s institutions. As a result, the findings of the study are much anticipated by all stakeholders.

OUTCOME 4 By 2020 all children with disabilities and special needs and their families receive adequate quality integrated services

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UN advocacy led to Belarus’ ratification of the CRPD on 18 October. This significant move compels governmental agencies to focus efforts on ensuring the rights of people with disabilities. UNICEF positioned itself as the leading agency in this area, and established the UN Disability Group. UNICEF is promoting a broad nationwide understanding of the social model of disability among national partners.


UNICEF assisted the MoH to prepare a new regulation on Development of the National system of Early Childhood Interventions (ECI) Centres, which will become binding legislation in 2017. The regulation requires cities with more than 10,000 children to establish ECI centres.

The regulation foresees the involvement of multidisciplinary teams that work with the family directly and ensures that services will not be limited to medical services, but will also include educational and social protection services. The decree will instruct health and education sectors to collaborate.

The existing national system of education is lacking principles and approaches for inclusiveness. UNICEF supported the establishment of the Institute of Inclusion in the Belarusian State Pedagogical University and the National Resource Centre of Inclusive Education, to provide advanced methodological support to enhance the professional capacities of regular teachers in practising inclusive approaches in education for children with disabilities and learning difficulties. The National Resource Centre will consist of a training centre for teachers and students, a centre for on-the-job training and a laboratory for innovation and science. UNICEF will also support the revision of curricula for teacher training, which will be followed by piloting the implementation of inclusive education in at least ten regular primary schools.

UNICEF Belarus continued to actively participate in the work of the National Coordination Council on child injury prevention. The Council has representatives of the MoE, MoH, MoInt, MoES, other line ministries and CSOs. It analyses progress and achievements and identifies measures to address the main bottlenecks for reducing child mortality and disability from external causes.
OUTPUT 1 Programme implementation and strengthening

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Programme officers developed a better understanding of programming in the area of inclusive education and child disability, prevention of child injuries and creation of safe living environment for children at home through regional advisors’ missions, network meetings and regular meetings with national counterparts. The Regional Office advisers provided expert support, substantial inputs and recommendations at all stages of the programme planning, implementation and monitoring.

For effective programme component implementation, regular section meetings were conducted with the participation of section chiefs, programme assistants and project managers and consultants. Programme component progress, achievements and bottlenecks were discussed at the mid-year and annual reviews with the national stakeholders and experts. Field visits were regularly conducted by programme staff to monitor programme implementation and meet counterparts to identify challenges and good practice to increase the effectiveness of interventions and UNICEF visibility.

OUTPUT 2 By 2020 national legislation is aligned with provisions of CRPD

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF together with CSOs successfully advocated for the inclusion of specific recommendations in the action plan related to provisions of CRPD Articles 5, 7, 23, 24, 25, 26, 31 and 33. The Council of Ministries will adopt the National Plan of Action in March 2017.

UNICEF Belarus advocated for including recommendations based on the CRPD Committee General comment 4 on inclusive education. The recommendations were: (1) include the terminology of “inclusion”, “universal design for learning”, and “inclusive education”; (2) introduce individual learning programme and individual education plans to be developed, followed up and monitored for every child; (3) strengthen the capacity of regular teachers and other educational specialists of all levels of the education system through the development of a resource system of centres; (4) make a transition towards the per capita funding of preschool education, which will facilitate the inclusion of all preschool children with disabilities into the regular preschool system; and (5) amend the educational standards for teacher training at all levels.

UNICEF and UNFPA also advocated for linking the periodic reporting on CEDAW and CRPD implementation planning, thereby helping to ensure attention to the multiple discrimination of girls with disabilities and the right of children born to mothers with a disability to be raised in a family environment.

UNICEF Belarus inputs into the national plan on CRPD implementation also included the integration of the term ‘abilitation’, which found support among other stakeholders and is included into the plan; as well as the introduction and piloting of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF).

OUTPUT 3 By 2020 national system of ECI services is enhanced

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF and MoH established a working group to guide the development of the national system of ECI centres. The ECI standards are being developed and will become a main reference for ECI centres to monitor quality. The standards will include quality criteria and progress indicators. There will also be a self-assessment tool for ECI centres.
A comprehensive assessment of the existing network of 37 ECI centres for children under four years of age was done. Twenty-five centres do not have a unified system of servicing a child and the family, and there are no set staffing requirements. Twelve centres are ECI departments in children’s policlinics with multidisciplinary teams of professionals. There is a significant shortage of speech therapists and psychologists. The majority of the ECI centres are poorly equipped and situated on small premises, as ECI work is not prioritised by the heads of children’s policlinics.

UNICEF initiated a knowledge, attitudes and practice survey, which was conducted among the specialists of the ECI centres. Findings pointed to the need for more guidance for the heads of children’s policlinics on the importance of ECI services. Three-quarters of managers mentioned the lack of guidance on the work, standards and service methods. Present regulatory restrictions do not allow for the carrying out of training courses for multidisciplinary teams. There is no single methodological basis for the diagnosis and management of clients. There is a lack of knowledge on how to conduct development screenings and the use of in-depth evaluations of ECD status. The absence of an approved cross-sectoral algorithm for the interaction of ECI specialists with other health, education and social protection institutions makes it difficult to attract children from risk groups to ECI centres.

UNICEF facilitated a study visit to Austria for MoH officials to acquaint themselves with the organisation of early childhood disability prevention. The Belarusian delegation was familiarised with the system of child disability identification, the cross-sectoral nature of the ECI system, and how to organise inclusive integrated services for young children. An important part of the visit focused on training for ECI specialists, both academic and practical. MoH representatives also took part in the Children’s Rights and Early Intervention Conference in Stockholm, where they learned about the latest developments and recent research relevant to ECI, neuroscience evidence, the importance of parents’ engagement, challenges faced by countries in developing ECI policies, and steps to support national ECI systems.

OUTPUT 4 By 2020 International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health integrated into health care system; multi-sectoral unified database on children with disabilities is set up

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The recommendation of UNICEF Belarus to implement the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) in Belarus was accepted and included into the national plan of action on the CRPD implementation for 2017-2025.

Given the limited national expertise on the ICF-Children and Youth, UNICEF Belarus is struggling to identify technical assistance to support the introduction of this concept in the health sector. The National Scientific Centre on Medical Expertise and Rehabilitation was identified as a main national body to promote the use of ICF in the country, which will be the entry point to reform the system and services for children with disabilities across sectors.

OUTPUT 5 By 2020 coverage of children with disabilities by inclusive education programmes at the preschool and secondary school levels is increased

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF supported the MoE in the development of a National Concept Paper on Inclusive Education that was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers. An expert hired by UNICEF guided the MoE in the implementation of the legislative frameworks, which resulted in a set of recommendations for a review process of the Code on Education.
UNICEF and the MoE facilitated an international conference on inclusive education on 27-28 October 2016, which was attended by more than 300 participants. UNICEF has been vocal on the changes that needed to be made in the education system in accordance with the CRPD. The resolutions of the conference will guide the MoE on the next steps towards realizing inclusion in the education system. The resolutions are as follows: develop interagency cooperation on education and social inclusion, and create the necessary educational environment, including life-long training; improve the system of training, retraining and advanced training of teachers at all levels of education; cooperate with NGOs on the provision of psycho-pedagogical support to families raising children with special needs; and involve CSOs in the promotion of inclusive principles in education.

UNICEF Belarus is training 100 regular teachers and education system managers to introduce new practices that ensure non-discriminatory participation and learning of children with disabilities in regular settings alongside their peers.

**OUTPUT 6** By 2020 parents' knowledge on creation of safe living environment enhanced

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Jointly with the MoH, UNICEF facilitated a Coordination Council meeting on child injury prevention in the Mogilev region. Thirteen participants from various sectors discussed emerging issues related to the prevention of child injuries and elaborated measures and mechanisms of effective cross-sectoral collaboration.

UNICEF and WHO made a significant contribution in strengthening capacity of leaders from MoH, MoE, MIA and MoES in strategizing for better prevention of child morbidity and mortality from external causes through a comprehensive TEACH-VIP train the trainer course. The course enabled participants to apply newly gained knowledge in the planning for child injury prevention and safety promotion at the national level and across sectors. The TEACH-VIP methodology was successfully implemented by the trained master-trainers for qualification upgrade of 36 medical specialists from the Gomel and Brest regions to ensure synergies and collaboration at the local levels on child injuries and violence prevention.

UNICEF facilitated the work of the expert group on the development of ten lessons on the basics of safe living for secondary school students. These lessons were accompanied by methodological guidelines for staff of Interior Affairs Departments that were also developed and published with UNICEF assistance. One open-air training ground for the practical study of road traffic rules and safe behaviour on the road was equipped and opened in Brest.

UNICEF supported the development of the design and equipment of modelling centres for parents with didactical and visual materials for raising knowledge and formation of practical skills of parents for the creation of safe living conditions for children at home. Eighty-three parents of newborns were trained by an expert hired by UNICEF. UNICEF also contributed to the development of the content of messages on adherence to the fire and road safety rules for TV and social networks, social advertising videos and interactive clips for children.

UNICEF supplied 10,500 secondary school children with light-reflecting jackets in all regions of Belarus. Seventy fire alarm sets were procured and installed in households with many children in Minsk region.

**OUTCOME 5** By 2020 adolescents and young people benefit from improved social policies and systems to reduce risks affecting their health and development, and are empowered for meaningful participation
Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF facilitated policy dialogue and provided expertise to the MoH in the development of the National Strategy on the Improvement of Children’s and Adolescents’ Health. The working group of the national experts drafted the National Strategy, which lays down the vision of what should be done and how, to ensure that children and adolescents are growing healthy and can realize their full potential.

UNICEF built the commitment of national stakeholders, familiarizing them with the best international practices and supporting the learning from other countries. The Chief Gynaecologist of the MoH participated in the Global Consultation on Adolescents’ Sexual and Reproductive Health in Switzerland. Seven regional health care managers and YFHC coordinators learned from the Ukrainian experience of youth-friendly health services for the most vulnerable children and adolescents by taking part in the Third All-Ukrainian conference on child-friendly medical and social services for children and adolescents.

UNICEF initiated a representative study on the prevalence of psychoactive substance use among adolescents and young people. The knowledge, attitudes and practices of 850 young people from all Belarusian regions were assessed to guide policy advocacy and the preparation of comprehensive psychosocial services for adolescents practising risky behaviour. The data collection, processing and analysis were completed in 2016.

In its cooperation with the MoE, UNICEF Belarus prioritized the improvement of the youth policy, to increase participation of adolescents and young people as the main agents of progress towards the SDGs.

UNICEF hired experts from the International NGO Youth Policy Lab who conducted a desk review of the Law of the Republic of Belarus On Fundamentals of Public Youth Policy. The main conclusions and recommendations were presented and discussed at the National Roundtable held with the participation of the representatives of the House of Representatives, MoE, Mogilev Oblast Executive Committee, activists of youth associations and members of Children’s and Youth Councils. The resolution approved by the participants highlighted the future strategic cooperation of state and non-state actors and UNICEF’s engagement in improving the efficiency of the state youth policy based on the principles formulated by the First Global Forum on Youth Policies held in Baku in 2014. It also noted the need for widening the active participation of young people in the achievement of the SDGs.

The Belarusian experience with the CFCL, including the realization of the socially oriented initiatives by Children and Youth Parliaments, were presented by the MoE representative and the leader of the Minsk City Youth Parliament at the National CFCL Conference in Kazakhstan. In the follow up to the conference, a teleconference between the Kazakhstan Youth Association Gyldyz and the Youth Innovative and Partnership Centre in Zubrenok was organized by UNICEF. The young people discussed innovative forms and methods of youth participation, engagement in SDG implementation, and building government commitments to support youth initiatives.

Persistent advocacy by UNICEF, other UN agencies and CSOs led the Government to commit to improving the justice system for children. UNICEF expedited the Government decision to ensure that the national justice system establishes regular training for judges and a specialization for those who have passed it. In December, the Supreme Court issued a special order on specialisation and appointment of judges who hear cases involving children. This is a practical step towards real specialisation of juvenile judges.

Justice for children became part of the concept paper on the Rule of Law and Access to Justice Initiative that was jointly developed and agreed by the Government, CSOs, UNICEF, UNDP and the international community. The following are reflected in the concept paper: improvement of restorative justice for children in conflict with the law; strengthening the
specialization within the justice system; introducing child-friendly procedures; monitoring of children’s rights and fulfilment of Belarus international obligations on child rights; and raising legal awareness. Three working groups of government and civil society, UN agencies and other international development partners will be formed in January 2017 to develop the Rule of Law and Access to Justice Development Programme.

OUTPUT 1 Programme implementation and strengthening

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Field visits were regularly conducted by programme staff to monitor programme implementation and meet counterparts to identify challenges and good practices to increase the effectiveness of interventions and UNICEF visibility. The projects’ Steering Committees, composed of representatives from relevant ministries and CSOs, had regular meetings to approve action plans, monitor progress and evaluate the results achieved.

The Programme specialists consistently increased their professional qualifications thorough self-learning and e-learning courses, and participation in HQ- and Regional Office-facilitated webinars, conference and network meetings. Realizing the need to effectively address emerging youth and adolescent development issues, youth participation and development, HIV/AIDS specialists participated in the global consultation on lessons learned from the first generation of scaled-up Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Programmers facilitated by WHO, the 5th Eastern Europe and Central Asia AIDS Conference, and the UNICEF Global Consultation on Urbanization and Climate Change.

The Regional Office advisers provided expert support, substantial inputs and recommendations at all stages of the programme component planning, monitoring and reporting. They facilitated the Skype call discussions and Regional Knowledge Leadership Area RKLA) 5/10, RKLA 2 thematic webinars and participated in the on-site training on Strengthening Care and Support Services for Adolescents Living With HIV, and national consultations with the representatives of NGOs, MoE, MoH and MIA on addressing the needs of adolescents using psychoactive substances. They were also engaged in the promotion of HIV testing and scaling up of youth-friendly health services for adolescents practising risky behaviour, justice for children benchmark indicators, all in collaboration with the UN agencies Joint Initiatives, international development partners and the Belarus Government on the Rule of Law and Access to Justice to ensure that child rights are reflected in the concept paper.

OUTPUT 2 By 2020, vulnerable groups and the population at large will have equal access to high-quality healthcare, education and social protection services that effectively address their needs (UNDAF)

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Significant progress was made in ensuring that existing youth-friendly health centres comply with WHO youth-friendly criteria and that preventive and curative services address the needs and demands of adolescents, including those practising risky behaviour. UNICEF facilitated the work of an expert group on drafting the regulation on YFHC certification, which was submitted to the MoH for approval.

UNICEF supplied five new YFHCs in Grodno, Gomel, Orsha, Kobrin and Mogilev with medical and office equipment and facilitated the training of 18 YFHC staff on the prevention of psychoactive substance use and crisis conditions, sexually transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancies, risk factors of non-communicable diseases. UNICEF also supported interagency cooperation.

UNICEF built the commitment of medical universities’ teachers to integrate youth-friendly health services into the curriculum of the pre- and post-diploma education of health care
providers. During a three-day train-the-trainers event by an international expert, 17 teachers of four Medical Universities and the Academy of Post-Diploma Medical Education were oriented on the management of youth-friendly health centres and the features distinguishing them from traditional medical care, and on the principles of adolescent counselling.

Together with CSOs and UNICEF goodwill ambassador Vladimir Pugach, UNICEF conducted awareness-raising events in ten YFHCs promoting and introducing HIV express-testing. This also helped to generate dialogue with adolescents practising risky behaviour and tailoring youth-friendly health services to their needs.

**OUTPUT 3**

By 2020, key populations will have universal access to integrated services for the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care of major communicable diseases (HIV, tuberculosis) UNDAF

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF, UNAIDS and the MoH conducted a large-scale public awareness campaign Involves Even Those not involved in line with the global objectives 90-90-90 and the initiative To Stop Adolescent AIDS. The campaign was conducted in 12 cities in all regions of Belarus. It focused on the first target, 90 per cent of population know their HIV status, promoting HIV express testing and the work of YFHCs. More than 6,000 young people were reached through the campaign.

The work of the Regional Knowledge Hub on HIV prevention among most-at-risk adolescents run by the Belarusian Association of UNESCO Clubs was further expanded. New countries joined training activities, and country profiles were drafted for Armenia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. A total of 273 participants from Belarus, Eastern Europe and Central Asia became acquainted with methods of reaching hard-to-reach adolescents practising risky behaviour, engaging them in preventive programmes and motivating them to get tested for HIV through two distance training courses. The training programme Blogger School Digest for Teenagers was designed and will be piloted next year.

The UNICEF Regional Office and experts from the Children Living with HIV Association conducted a three-day training course ‘Strengthening care and support services for adolescents living with HIV’. They presented child-centred practices in delivering services to adolescents living with HIV and their families. Forty-three participants from Russia and Belarus learned how to increase adherence to anti-retroviral medicines, prevent onward HIV transmission and equip adolescents living with HIV with knowledge to keep themselves and others safe. The participants were guided to plan support services for children, adolescents and families living with HIV. UNICEF helped the MoH to prepare the Belarus country report on elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. The Global Validation Committee recognized Belarus as the fourth country in the world to have eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis. The Committee also pointed out bottlenecks and provided recommendations for improving elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV services even further. UNICEF and WHO provided expertise to the MoH to address the Global Validation Committee recommendations, including the revision of the National Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission Protocol especially for drug-dependent pregnant women and newborns.

**OUTPUT 4**

2020 national and sub-national mechanisms established to promote adolescents’ civic participation

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF Belarus supported three regional seminars at which 67 members of Children’s and Youth Councils shared their experience and best practices of their work and learned about
social inclusion. Through role modelling, participants improved their understanding of being a person with disabilities, and the importance of their inclusion in Children’s and Youth Councils. They also discussed innovative mechanism to involve adolescents with special needs in influencing decisions affecting their rights and interests.

UNICEF Belarus presented the report of the independent assessment of the CFCI implementation. The assessment summed up the experience, identified the main shortfalls, lessons learned and best practices and made recommendations for further scaling up the initiative. The main success factors were the establishment of the National Coordination Council and the coordination role of the MoE, the network of the Children’s and Youth Councils/Parliaments, the integrated system of child rights monitoring and the index of child friendliness. At the same time the report underlined bottlenecks such as the lack of visibility, cumbersome monitoring system, the insignificant participation of CSOs in child rights monitoring, lack of research and analytical skills among adolescents, and insufficient engagement of vulnerable children. The road map for further developing the CFCI was developed, based on the finding and recommendations of the assessment.

Youth empowerment and participation were emphasized during the National CFC Conference of 120 specialists of the local executive committees, representatives of Children’s and Youth Councils/Parliaments and experts from all regions of Belarus. The conference allowed participants to share their experience, present best practices and discuss the main conclusions and recommendation of the CFCI assessment. The results of the discussion on further development of the Belarusian model of the CFC, innovative forms and methods of adolescents’ participation, including the most vulnerable ones, engagement of adolescents in the monitoring and evaluation of child rights realization, and intensified efforts and promising ideas in urban development in the best interests of children were stated in the conference resolution submitted for approval to the MoE.

OUTPUT 5 By 2020 juvenile justice-friendly procedures are in place

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF supported the government to train professionals involved in the administration of juvenile justice. The training was held at the Institute for Re-training and Upgrading Qualifications of Judges, Prosecutors and Legal Professionals of the Belarusian State University, following the decision of the Supreme Court in January 2016. The course was developed with UNICEF support. One hundred judges dealing with juvenile cases improved their ability to serve justice in cases involving children and adolescents as victims, survivors, witnesses or delinquents in line with justice for children international standards in 2016. Twenty-five became acquainted with good practices in the administration of juvenile justice in Georgia and how to consider the psychosocial aspects of juveniles in their judicial decisions. The training was the result of UNICEF advocacy on the realization of relevant international standards. In December, the Supreme Court issued a special order on specialisation and appointment of judges dealing with juvenile cases at district and regional courts, and at the Supreme Court. This was the most significant step since 2001 when the Supreme Court passed a resolution on the specialisation of judges that had not been translated into practice. Police inspectors were oriented on communication for development principles at the national seminar on Prevention of the Offences of Minors that was organized with the MIA. Two hundred and fifty police workers from juvenile units in all districts learned about international standards for justice for children and assessed the national juvenile justice system and their work against a set of “justice for children” criteria and indicators.

Because of the refugee crisis and Ukrainian migrant inflow, increased irregular migration and its accompanying challenges affecting unaccompanied children, UNICEF Belarus became a partner of the GLO ACT programme, a four-year joint EU and the UN Office on Drugs and
Crime (UNODC) initiative implemented in partnership with IOM and UNICEF. The focus in Belarus will be the reform of the system that places children into transit centres, and the introduction of child-friendly procedures.

**OUTCOME 6** By 2020, the national child rights monitoring system better serves knowledge and evidence generation, specifically on child vulnerabilities, for decision-making, and reporting and advocacy related to the CRC.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF Belarus prepared the first issue of the periodic socio-economic situation analysis alongside analytics covering child suicides and adolescent pregnancy issues. The analytics are intended to support line ministries to take evidence-based actions and to inform adjustments to the UNICEF programme and policy advice.

Resources were successfully mobilized to launch a study of investment in children and adolescents jointly with the Ministry of Economy. The study will focus on identifying vulnerable groups of adolescents to see if gains in advancing the first decade of life in Belarus translated into improvements in the second decade of life for young people.

UNICEF Belarus support to an analytical review of public spending on children and adolescents is timely given that in conditions of economic decline, the predominately categorical Belarus social assistance programmes have limitations in reaching the poor. Analysis of household data shows that the social assistance budget was redistributed from the most vulnerable households mainly to the most affluent; the poorest quintile lost 4.9 per cent of its benefits in 2015. The share of families with children among poor households was near 69 per cent in 2016 despite of the real growth of spending child allowances. The Belarusian welfare system has not been designed to function in conditions of economic contraction, which brings a risk of the public sector’s ability to finance social programmes and fulfil its responsibilities towards children. To better advocate for the elimination of these weaknesses of the social protection system, UNICEF Belarus plans to cooperate with the World Bank, which is also committed to strengthening social protection systems.

The National Statistical Office’s participation in international events was supported to allow horizontal exchange of practices to improve the scope and sources of data. The availability of data through the TransMonEE database was assured, and a dashboard on child-related indicators was developed. This is in preparation of the future launch, jointly with Belstat, of a publicly available data portal in line with international standards. UNICEF successfully advocated for a new MICS in 2017. UNICEF also intensified its dialogue with Parliamentarians to ensure an ongoing dialogue with civil society over child-related SDGs.

UNICEF Belarus led the assessments of the CFCI and ECD best practices, to ensure a solid base for strategic planning, and drafting policies and national legislation in support of the most vulnerable children.

To address the lack of expert researchers and research institutions in Belarus, UNICEF Belarus mapped non-government research think tanks and committed to strategically invest in them to cultivate reliable partners for independent research.

UNICEF seeks to go beyond the existing partnerships and effectively play a coordination role among different stakeholders to ensure synergy of their efforts to a cumulative effect for the benefit of children in Belarus. UNICEF supported the establishment of the Resource Centre for Inclusive Education on the basis of the Belarusian State Pedagogical University and an Innovation and Partnership Centre at the National Educational Centre Zubrenok. The Centre is designed to support the creative initiatives of children and adolescents and their entrepreneurial thinking.
UNICEF Belarus revitalized its cooperation with civil society with two town hall meetings that led to the formation of a working group on coordination among CSOs to better prepare for dialogue with the Government.

UNICEF Belarus began to pursue sustainable partnerships with the private sector through the promotion of a culture of CSR among private businesses. A CSR workshop and a UNICEF 70 Advocacy and Fundraising Gala Dinner lay the groundwork for further involvement of the private sector in child rights advancement.

UNICEF continued to raise funds in support of the 2016-2020 programme. UNICEF secured a commitment from the Government of the Russian Federation to support a four-year ECD project worth US$2.4 million. Other successes included a US$300,000 grant from GLO ACT.

**OUTPUT 1** Programme implementation and strengthening

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
A recent audit identified UNICEF Belarus monitoring capacity as high risk. The M&E post was upgraded from NOA to NOC level so that UNICEF Belarus would be better positioned to strengthen national systems to progressively monitor child rights realization, including CRC reporting. Continuous oversight provided by Regional M&E section helped to improve research and evaluation workflows and application of the standard operating procedures for Quality Assurance and Ethical Standards in UNICEF-supported Research, Studies and Evaluations. Two new tools were developed by UNICEF Belarus to improve overall performance of the evaluation function: the prioritization matrix tool to be used during PRIME preparation, and the research, studies and evaluations planner for more effective management of PRIME activities.

To address priorities in the development of advanced relations with the existing and potential donor community for effective fund-raising, build alliances with the CSOs and promote social corporate responsibility, provide effective advocacy work and implement targeted communication activities, UNICEF Belarus recruited a Communication Specialist (NO3) and a Partnerships Officer (NO2) in line with the PBR 2015 decisions.

For effective programme planning and resource mobilization, the professional qualification of the partnership officer was developed through the participation in the resource mobilization workshops and training in public-private partnerships.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2020 national capacity to reveal and monitor bottlenecks in realization of children's rights strengthened

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
To strengthen capacity in monitoring child rights, UNICEF Belarus launched a periodic situation analysis and invested in research and analytics covering CFCI development, ECD, violence against children, use of psychoactive substances by adolescents, child suicides and adolescent pregnancy. The dissemination of the rolling situation analysis aims to support CSOs, government and research institutions in monitoring bottlenecks in realization of child rights. Data on adolescents resulted in the successful mobilization of resources needed to launch a study of investment in children with the Ministry of Economy. The study will identify vulnerable groups of adolescents and analyse current budget allocations on children with a particular focus on equity.

UNICEF Belarus continued to improve the availability of data through the TransMonEE database update and the creation of a dashboard on child-related indicators, which will be covered in publicly available periodic situation analyses. This will aid the future launch, jointly with Belstat, of a data portal in line with international standards. UNICEF Belarus analysed
the availability of data and the relevance of SDG indicators for which UNICEF is a custodian, and successfully advocated for beginning of round six of the MICS in 2017.

Together with UNFPA, UNICEF Belarus supported the MLSP in incorporating new measures into their monitoring of the state programme Health of the Nation and Demographic Security. UNICEF intensified its dialogue with Parliamentarians aiming at hearings on child- and adolescent-focused SDG priorities to ensure ongoing dialogue with civil society over child-related policies, consensus around the benefits of investing more resources in children and recognition of UNICEF’s contribution.

The lack of expert national research partners is a major challenge. UNICEF Belarus mapped existing non-government research institutions and took initial steps to strategically invest in the capacity of select organizations to cultivate reliable partners for independent research.

The documentation of good practices and lessons learned in Belarus on CFCI development and ECD was supported for sharing beyond Belarus borders.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2020 child rights agenda is the subject of public discourse

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
To raise public attention to the results that have been achieved for children by UNICEF globally, UNICEF Belarus amplified UNICEF 70th anniversary messaging throughout the year. This culminated in three major events: the UNICEF 70th Anniversary Stamp launch, the UNICEF 70 Exhibition at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the first Belarus Advocacy and Fundraising Gala Dinner.

UNICEF expanded its use of video as post-event reports and as a tool to deliver advocacy messages in a more interactive manner. To capture new audiences, paid ads on Facebook were used to promote key advocacy posts, which have proven to more effectively attract new followers. As a result, the following of the UNICEF Facebook page has more than doubled, reaching over 2,000 followers. Reach and engagement have also been increasing. Weekly posts reached an averaged 8,500 views, and engagement (clicks, likes, comments, shares) peaked at 13,500 for a single post.

Joint events with Diplomatic missions and private companies around children with disabilities, adolescents in conflict with the law and teenage engagement allowed UNICEF Belarus to put child rights on the agenda of the international community. Field visits to UNICEF-supported facilities allowed partners to see UNICEF work first-hand, meeting the challenges of the fund-raising environment.

The UNICEF Belarus website was redesigned. Landing pages for main events and a unique partnerships page were developed, attracting additional attention. In April-December, a joint UNICEF-UNAIDS awareness-raising campaign on HIV testing focused on adolescents and young people. Wide coverage on traditional and social media, engagement of volunteers and celebrities locally, and support of Goodwill Ambassadors allowed the campaign to reach over 6,000 people and attracted attention to youth-friendly health centres throughout Belarus.

A well-known Belarusian rock star was reappointed as UNICEF National Goodwill Ambassador. Thanks to cooperation with the HQ Goodwill Ambassador department, UNICEF Belarus was able to engage a world-renowned tennis star, who took part in events to promote safe behaviours for teenagers and services of youth-friendly health centres. This cooperation is set to continue in the coming year.
OUTPUT 4 By 2020 existing and new partnerships, especially in technologies and social media, contribute to progressive realization of children’s rights

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Belarus developed existing partnerships and established new ones to advance the realization of children’s rights. UNICEF Belarus used its mandate to align the agendas of stakeholders from all segments of society and coordinate their actions. Along with a traditionally productive cooperation with government agencies in knowledge generation, policy support and capacity building, UNICEF revitalized its collaboration with CSOs within both regular activities and a large-scale dialogue. In July, a broad working meeting was convened with CSOs involved in child rights protection. The meeting became a launch pad for a general convention of child rights CSOs that took place in December 2016. A working group was formed that coordinates efforts between CSOs and their representative voice for the dialogue with the government under the aegis of UNICEF. The partnership between UNICEF and CSOs will soon be formalized with an MoU.

UNICEF Belarus began to pursue sustainable partnerships with the private sector through the promotion of a culture of CSR among private businesses. UNICEF signed an MoU with the Renaissance Hotel Minsk, a national champion in providing employment opportunities for young people with disabilities. The partnership helped UNICEF hold a number of high-profile visibility events, culminating in a UNICEF 70 Advocacy and Fundraising Gala Dinner.

Other highlights of the year included the involvement of EPAM, an international IT company, in developing service design for YFHCs, and a CSR workshop for the major Belarusian private companies in November 2016. The latter laid the groundwork for further involvement of the private sector in child rights advancement.

UNICEF Belarus also maintained its work on developing innovative solutions for children and youth. A UNICEF Innovation and Partnership Centre was opened at the premises of the National Educational Centre Zubrenok, providing top-performing children from all over Belarus with an opportunity to use their creative potential to the fullest and excel at generating and implementing creative ideas.

### Document Centre

#### Evaluation and research

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<td>2016/112</td>
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<tr>
<td>The assessment of Child Friendly City Initiative (CFCI) development</td>
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<td>On forms and methods of work of IAD staff in educational institutions on prevention of child road-traffic injuries</td>
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