

Belarus

Executive summary

UNICEF Belarus targeted the rights of the most vulnerable children, adolescents and their families in the country by supporting the Government to close equity gaps through system change. Children were positioned high on the political agenda through evidence generation that established grounds for informed policy and programming and strengthened the quality assurance of systems for children.

Striving to share high-quality evidence, UNICEF Belarus reinforced its in-house analytics, launching a series of briefs and an adolescent vulnerabilities analysis. With the state statistics agency, UNICEF Belarus critically invested in the country's data system through initiation of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 6 and a disability household survey, and development of a universal data portal on child-related statistics. UNICEF Belarus engaged the World Bank as a key monitoring partner for child rights, obtaining the Bank's commitment to co-finance MICS6.

Following UNICEF Belarus high-level advocacy using enhanced evidence, the Council of Ministers agreed to develop a strategy for adolescents that focuses on their unique intersectoral needs. Strong advocacy also ensured that children's unique justice needs were considered in the country's rule of law reform. Collected data supported the mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support (MAPS) mission to highlight the gaps facing children and adolescents specifically, with the team proposing that adolescents and young people be "accelerators" in Belarus' roadmap to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) commitments.

UNICEF Belarus partnered with Government and civil society organization (CSO) colleagues to strengthen system responses that enhance access to quality services for children, especially the most vulnerable. A regulation was established calling for unified early childhood intervention (ECI), guiding the scale-up of these services with the requirement that cities with more than 15,000 children must have an ECI centre. With the Ministry of Health (MoH), UNICEF Belarus created a youth-friendly health services (YFHS) certification process, ensuring more consistent responses across the country and establishing guidelines for scaling up this service for the most-at-risk adolescents. These services reached 1,269,517 adolescent boys and girls (70/30 percent) between 12 and 24 years of age. Child systems' resource capacities were also advanced through creation of a pre-service teacher training and Republican resource centre for inclusive education, and development of ten household trauma prevention centres for parents, located in all regions, to address child injury trauma, approximately 80 percent of which occurs at home.

Despite these advancements, challenges remained in enabling effective intersectoral coordination. Civil society's participation with the Government in policy development and service delivery continued to be weak. Applying its mandate, UNICEF Belarus brokered a child rights dialogue among these partners and rallied child rights civil society organizations to establish a common platform.

Building on earlier partnership progress with potential donors in the country, UNICEF Belarus leveraged greater resources for children that resulted in agreement for a joint United Nations (UN)-European Union (EU) good governance project and stronger bilateral resources through new partnerships with Canada, Poland and the United Kingdom. UNICEF Belarus consolidated partnerships with the private sector to mobilize resources and outreach to their customer base with specific messages and calls for action. A gala dinner showcased the success of UNICEF Belarus' private sector networking, raising US\$40,000. UNICEF Belarus has begun to test the mechanism for private sector resource engagement, which will be further consolidated in 2018.

Complementing these efforts, communications stimulated community engagement and brand awareness by expanding UNICEF Belarus' volunteer network and engagement with traditional and social media. Innovative outreach included online flash mobs, Facebook bot and opinion polls, increasing young people's and influencers' engagement in social media by 20 percent. A brand identity survey revealed that 68 percent of Belarusians had heard of UNICEF.

In 2016-2017, UNICEF Belarus capitalized on increased international attention, attracting considerable funding with the Other Resources ceiling doubling the initial planned level. Greater resources translated into larger programmes that required staff growth, bringing the office to 24 staff. Staff empowerment and development has always been critical for the office, with specific funds allocated for staff development needs. With the Global Staff Survey (GSS) results, UNICEF Belarus conducted a confidential staff survey to identify issues not addressed by the Survey, with the findings serving as a reference point for a mid-December office team-building retreat.

UNICEF Belarus also advanced opportunities, including coordinating with the UNICEF Global Innovations Director's trip for the Regional Management Team to initiate a dialogue with key information technology (IT) leaders in Belarus on advancing children's rights. Throughout the year and particularly at the Regional Management Team level, UNICEF Belarus collaborated closely with the UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECARO) regional advisers providing crucial strategic programming advice, including a gender review of the office's programme and support in the SDG MAPS mission. In this capacity, UNICEF Belarus is fine tuning its programme directions to better harmonize with UNICEF's global Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and Belarus' SDG implementation.

Equity in practice

UNICEF Belarus' equity lens enabled the office to better target its programming interventions, moving from broader system change work to honing in on those specific system responses where child groups were "falling through the cracks." For example, system changes were showing positive changes for children overall, yet children with disabilities were not benefiting.

While progress towards child health and survival has been significant, real equality for children with disabilities has been more limited and opportunities have been missed. Predominant social norms still exclude children with disabilities from their peers and institutionalization is often seen as the only opportunity for rehabilitation. Belarus' statistics portray the vulnerabilities of these children, with a 14 per cent increase over the last five years of children registered with disabilities (30,611 as of November 2017). Families with children with disabilities are at greater risk of falling into poverty, and 48.2 per cent of children in institutional care have disabilities. Adolescents from low-income families with special needs in psychological and physical development and disabilities are in particularly difficult situations, especially in environments where they are exposed to violence.

Applying an equity lens, UNICEF Belarus advocated that child rights cannot be achieved without addressing the needs of children with disabilities and their families. Momentum in the national “disability agenda” promises to influence change in social policy and to develop equitable services for the most vulnerable populations. While the recently ratified United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (October 2016) provides a “renewed” starting point to improve the quality of services for children with disabilities from birth through adolescence into adulthood, responses are still built on initiatives that are outdated and take a medical approach to disability.

To close the equity gap for children with disabilities, UNICEF Belarus has been building on its partnership with the Government to establish an age and gender-appropriate ECI system and to focus resources on the window of opportunity that early years bring, which could in turn diminish the country’s burden of disability. By addressing particular vulnerabilities of children with disabilities in the first decade of life, UNICEF Belarus worked to ensure the right of young children to timely early intervention and rehabilitation. For that, in 2015 UNICEF and MoH put a roadmap in place for ECI system strengthening to help this system become equitable in practice and identify early children that may be hard to reach due to a range of barriers, such as poverty, family crisis and stigma. The newly drafted national ECI regulation ensures the universal access of all young children to ECI centres near their place of residence. Secondly, considering that disability is the main reason for children’s institutionalization, UNICEF Belarus strives to foster family resilience by enhancing the quality of early interventions using a family-centred approach.

The SDG’s ‘leave no one behind’ principle makes the equity agenda even more relevant, with Belarus making the SDG commitments the driving force in their sustainable development strategy. As such, UNICEF Belarus continued to stress the need to address all forms of exclusion of children with disabilities, ensuring equity and social inclusion, with particular attention to the education sector. UNICEF Belarus’ efforts mainly target advocating with the Ministry of Education (MoE) to shift the focus on those who are traditionally excluded from mainstream education and additional educational opportunities.

The systemic change is far from complete. However, it has started with change in social policy, such as an amendment to the Code on Education and a move towards institutional changes such as review of curriculum and re-profiling special education institutions. UNICEF Belarus’ main programme intervention in the current cycle will be to support the Government to advance these institutional shifts, with particular attention to providing practical skills to teachers that facilitate inclusive and equitable practices in the classrooms. For example, teachers’ skills and attitudes are being strengthened through development of new methodological materials on inclusion of children with different abilities into mainstream education processes and on the use of assistive technologies in the classroom. The methodological materials are being imbedded into the pre-service core curriculum of Belarussian State Pedagogical University, which annually prepares about 2,600 teachers.

UNICEF Belarus also supported 850 teachers with opportunities to pool their professional and practical experience to re-examine their practices, with the goal of making them more flexible and responsive to the needs of children with disabilities. This pool of teachers will reach out to at least 25,500 children in the communities in which they work.

UNICEF Belarus will continue to strengthen its disability agenda, with the foundation set in the SDGs, which are seen as a golden opportunity to promote equitable health and inclusive societies.

Strategic Plan 2018-2021

UNICEF Belarus is striving to make contributions to implementing the New Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 in the areas described below.

Goal area 1

ECD

All ECD interventions in Belarus are owned by the Government and delivered by the line ministries and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). A challenge is that the current ECD policy is not unified in one normative provision, thus failing to ensure the holistic development of children. One of the main goals of UNICEF Belarus' ECD programme is to strengthen national institutional capacities in ECD through enhancing coordination of key stakeholders by developing a national ECD strategy. This is supported by quality evidence generated within an on-going national knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) study on ECD and better parenting.

Goal area 3

Violence

UNICEF Belarus contributed to achieving the result on girls and boys receiving prevention and response services for violence against children by generating evidence on violence prevalence and establishing a child hotline for child victims of violence that offers psychological assistance to children exposed to violence and maltreatment and in crisis. The study identifies gaps in policies and practices on prevention and response to violence against children, and provides the framework for development of an inter-agency action plan.

Access to Justice

UNICEF Belarus is contributing to achieving the result on girls and boys that come in contact with the law by participating in Belarus' Rule of Law and Access to Justice Initiative launched in 2016. A particularly disturbing challenge is that children in contact with the law (53,611 in 2015) have limited or no access to child-friendly justice procedures. A punitive approach remains widespread in the justice system with lack of diversion and probation services that focus on prevention of juvenile offending and rehabilitation. Furthermore, many children are still being registered through police inspections dealing with minors, which leads to these children's stigmatization and exclusion. Belarus' weak coordination between sectors provides children in need with fragmented and ineffective responses.

Goal area 5

Gender

A joint UNICEF Belarus and Belarus State Statistical Committee (Belstat) project for 2018-2019, "Assistance in strengthening national statistical capacity in the production and dissemination of information on the situation of children, women and persons with disabilities to monitor the implementation SDGs by the Republic of Belarus" includes support of a module dedicated to gender statistics. Data from MICS and other surveys supported by UNICEF will improve disaggregation of child rights by gender and will be disseminated jointly with Belstat.

Adolescents

To ensure an ongoing dialogue with the Government and civil society over child-related policies and build consensus around the benefits of investing more resources in adolescents, UNICEF Belarus intensified its advocacy with the Deputy Prime Minister and the National Commission on Child Rights. UNICEF Belarus provided analysis of adolescent vulnerabilities and possible intergenerational consequences of failure to address these vulnerabilities. With UNICEF

Belarus' evidence based advocacy, the Government and the MAPS mission considered adolescents' health and well-being as a potential priority area in the country's SDG implementation.

Child poverty

The first Government-approved multidimensional child poverty measurement is planned for 2019, in accordance with the Strategy for the Development of State Statistics of the Republic of Belarus for 2018-2022. The corresponding SDG indicator will be measured using data collected through MICS6, which is co-financed by the World Bank.

Social protection

The estimated number of children in households that were routinely reached by government cash transfer programmes was 558,000 in 2016. The existing social protection system is relatively generous and is dominated by centralized categorical payments. To strengthen targeting of the most vulnerable children, the child-related social assistance programmes need to be reorganized. Given the lack of family-centred services and weak intersectoral and inter-agency collaboration, it is critical for UNICEF Belarus to achieve a set priority: to enhance an integrated cross-sectoral approach in which social support and benefits are closely connected with social services to create the synergy in response needed to reduce overlapping adolescent vulnerabilities and child poverty.

Disability

Despite the recently ratified Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Belarus' commitment to promote the rights of children with disabilities, these children and their families continue to face multiple institutional, attitudinal and structural barriers in realizing their rights. At the beginning of 2017, over 168,000 children (9.1 per cent) had disabilities and special needs. Lack of data and coordination across sectors may result in failure to effectively address the needs of children with disabilities and their families. To address the challenge of timely evidence generation, UNICEF and Belstat initiated a population-based survey implementing the UNICEF/Washington Group data module on child functioning (indicator 5.e.2 of the Strategic Plan).

Emerging areas of importance

In 2017, UNICEF Belarus continued to advocate with Government, civil society, and bilateral and multilateral partners as well as the general public and business communities for their engagement in emerging children's issues, such as children with disabilities, vulnerable adolescents and children in institutions.

Working in an upper-middle-income country with a middle-size office in the Europe and Central Asia region, it has been critically important for the team to apply strategies such as integrated ECD and focus on the "second decade", which advance cross-cutting responses that create greater synergies across programmes. Taking a cross-sectoral response on emerging issues such as investment in critical stages of the life cycle (e.g. early childhood and adolescence) also enabled UNICEF Belarus to better harmonize its programme with Belarus' commitment to the SDGs.

Accelerate integrated early childhood development (ECD). Belarus' concerted efforts to maintain high levels of health care and immunization have resulted in important advances over the last years for young children's health, with significant improvements in infant and under-five mortality rates as well as maternal mortality. Moreover, the country significantly reduced equity

gaps (both between sexes and geographical areas) in neonatal, infant and under five mortality rates.

As result, UNICEF Belarus' focus in ECD has been on strengthening parent-child attachment where caregivers become critical partners in supporting services for their children such as early intervention, and advancing positive parenting. During 2017, UNICEF Belarus initiated a KAP study on ECD and parenting to serve as the foundation for development of a national ECD strategy. The MoE and MoH agreed to develop an ECD strategy, thereby promoting greater intersectoral coordination.

At the same time, UNICEF gained political agreement from the MoH to partner in 2018 to strengthen the monitoring process for ECI services, with plans to establish 14 ECI resource centres across the country that will be responsible for monitoring and oversight of ECI services.

Focus on the second decade. Over 2017, following UNICEF Belarus' high-level policy advocacy, the Council of Ministers agreed to develop a national strategy for adolescents, fostering greater intersectoral coordination and bringing attention to adolescents' unique needs. UNICEF Belarus advocated for attention to be paid to adolescence within the country's planning for SDG implementation, proposing adolescents as a potential "accelerator" group where focus on their progress could close the existing gap in children's second decade, maintaining the success the country has obtained in the first decade.

At the same time, UNICEF Belarus is focusing on the second decade as a cross-cutting issue throughout programming (i.e. adolescent health and development, access to justice and participation), with the objective of building synergies and establishing more cohesive and comprehensive interventions across programmes.

Support "Movements" to accelerate results for children. UNICEF Belarus has made concerted efforts to strengthen public-private partnerships for children. In 2017, UNICEF Belarus was able to transition from sensitizing businesses on child rights issues to forging sustainable partnerships that involve members from all parts of society. UNICEF Belarus fostered partnerships with private companies to mobilize additional resources and reach out to their customer base with specific messages and calls for action. For example, the partnership with the Renaissance Hotel Minsk, a national champion in providing employment opportunities for young people with disabilities, resulted in both monetary and in-kind contributions with the business supporting a series of highly successful UNICEF events culminating in a joint gala dinner.

In another case, UNICEF started a fund-raising project on deinstitutionalization of children with disabilities with Priorbank, the second largest bank in the country. With public fund-raising initiatives that define ways to support children with severe disabilities, the partnership with Priorbank does not just create opportunities for financial resources but also provides channels for the public to participate in solutions, learning about children's rights and how to take action. These steps create forums for members from different parts of communities to think more deeply about child rights and the links between the issues and the potential roles for community members to become part of the solution. They begin to broaden the overall public dialogue on child rights and foster more inclusive and support social norms over the longer period.

Belstat	Belarus State Statistical Committee
CFC	child-friendly city
CMT	country management team
CSO	civil society organization
ECARO	Europe and Central Asia Regional Office
ECI	early childhood intervention
eZHACT	electronic harmonized approach to cash transfers
EU	European Union
GSS	Global Staff Survey
HACT	harmonized approach to cash transfers
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
HIV/AIDS	human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ICF	International Classification of Functioning
ICT	information and communication technologies
IT	information technology
KAP	knowledge, attitudes and practice
LSA	local staff association
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MAPS	Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MICS	Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey
MLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
NGO	non-governmental organization
PBR	Programme Budget Review
PMTCT	prevention of mother-to-child transmission (of HIV)
PRIME	plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
YFHS	youth-friendly health services

Capacity development

Capacity-development strategies focused on building professionals' knowledge and skills to better serve children's needs; strengthening Belarus' systems for children; and enhancing assessment processes to ensure quality services.

More than 2,380 professionals gained knowledge on cutting-edge practices on matters such as inclusive education, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) prevention among most-at risk adolescents, management of risky behaviours and violence prevention among vulnerable adolescents. UNICEF Belarus not only strengthened individual professionals' abilities, but also fortified resources for ongoing mentoring. UNICEF Belarus supported the establishment of the Republican Inclusive Education Resource Centre, providing oversight at the national level for inclusive practices. Steps are underway to setup additional support in the regions. The Regional Knowledge Hub for specialists dealing with most-at risk adolescents was further scaled up at the national and regional levels, providing three distance learning courses that contributed to cross-border fertilization and networking of multidisciplinary professional teams within the

Europe and Central Asia region.

UNICEF Belarus closely linked capacity development at the individual and system levels. The development of a manual on early identification of children's development delays and screening tools, updating of clinical protocols for prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) and a screening algorithm to support children using psychoactive substances advanced more consistent responses across the country.

Stakeholders' commitment to advancing adolescents' participation was supported through cross-sectoral regional round tables targeted at engaging the most vulnerable adolescents in decisions concerning their lives. Adolescents' capacities to voice their opinions and needs were strengthened through training activities where those with special needs or disabilities and those practising risky behaviour increased their critical thinking, project management and presentation skills. Adolescents were also empowered to engage in their local communities through partnerships with children/youth councils/parliaments.

UNICEF Belarus strengthened the capacity of local think tanks through a workshop on methods for impact evaluations and cost-benefit analyses. These actions built quality assurance initiatives, bridging professionals' development and system enhancement.

Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy

UNICEF Belarus implemented the plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation (PRIME), conducting research on violence against children and adolescents' use of psychoactive substances that considered key government ministries' interests and involvement. UNICEF Belarus' RSE Steering Committee for research oversight became an effective mechanism to assure higher and consistent quality of PRIME inputs especially regarding development of research concept notes and terms of reference.

UNICEF Belarus intensified advocacy with key stakeholders through ongoing policy dialogue with the Government and civil society that built consensus for investing more resources for adolescents. Advocacy efforts resulted in the Ministry of Economy's commitment to conduct joint research that will inform the 2035 National Sustainable Development Strategy.

Striving to share high-quality evidence with partners and stakeholders, UNICEF Belarus reinforced its in-house analytics, launching a series of analytical briefs and factsheets and conducting an analysis of adolescent vulnerabilities. A dashboard of child rights monitoring indicators, with visualizations of child-related SDG indicators, was developed and supported the MAPS mission.

To strengthen the country's capacity in monitoring child rights and SDG implementation, UNICEF Belarus leveraged resources to initiate three population-based surveys (MICS6, a population-based disability survey and a universal data-portal on child-related statistics), which were reflected in the 2017-2021 National Plan of Action for Improvement of the Status of Children and Protection of their Rights. UNICEF Belarus gained a commitment by the World Bank to co-finance MICS6, establishing the Bank as a key partner in monitoring children's rights and advocating for policy improvements

To enhance decision makers' demand for quality evidence, UNICEF Belarus drafted a Strategic Action Plan on Data for Investments for Children that envisages solutions to strengthen advocacy efforts and better communicate generated findings and encourage their use for

evidence-based policy making. The plan is guided by UNICEF's recent strategic framework on data for children and UNICEF Belarus' approach towards strengthening the child rights monitoring system.

Partnerships

UNICEF Belarus implemented its partnerships strategy in line with the 2009 UNICEF Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships in three areas: programme cooperation, engagement and visibility/brand awareness. UNICEF Belarus took a lead role in pooling, leveraging and coordinating domestic and international stakeholders' resources to advance Belarus' child rights agenda.

UNICEF Belarus used its relationship with government agencies to support the country to uphold child rights to international standards and amend its policies and practices based on evidence generated by UNICEF. UNICEF Belarus brokered a dialogue between the Government and civil society and rallied child rights CSOs to establish a common platform for advocacy and capacity building.

To match domestic resources and complement regular programmatic activities with specific projects, UNICEF Belarus worked with international donors, raising funds from Canada, Estonia, Poland, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom, and the EU. UNICEF Belarus fostered partnerships with private companies to mobilize additional resources and reach out to their customer base with specific messages and calls for action. Local fund-raising modalities were developed and tested, such as a fund-raising project on deinstitutionalization with Priorbank. The success of UNICEF Belarus networking with private companies was showcased by the annual gala dinner, which raised US\$40,000.

UNICEF Belarus facilitated scaling up of innovations and technology for development in its programming and established successful cooperation with Hi-Tech Park, the national IT hub, and EPAM, a leading software producer. UNICEF Belarus with guidance from UNICEF NY Headquarters Director of the Office of Global Innovations also developed a joint activity on children's online safety with MTS, a major mobile network operator.

Finally, UNICEF Belarus established close ties with the media, and a memorandum of understanding was signed with ONT, a nationwide TV channel. As a result, UNICEF Belarus was prominently featured in news stories, enabling outreach to a wide audience on child rights messages.

External communication and public advocacy

External communication focused on stimulating community engagement through a UNICEF Belarus volunteer network, expanding engagement with media outlets and cultivating fund-raising and advocacy partnerships with the private sector.

Programme colleagues' involvement in media engagements resulted in over 20 in-depth child rights broadcasts on key media channels, reaching close to 1.5 million viewers. Multimedia communication for development activities focused on child injury prevention, ECD and youth participation.

SDG advocacy targeted youth and decision makers. Two quest games were held for adolescents, focusing on UNICEF Belarus' work to achieve the SDGs. UNICEF Belarus integrated SDG strategies into advocacy materials for ministry partners. The Representative

chaired the UN Communication Group, bringing the child rights agenda to the forefront of UN communication.

Use of online flash mobs, a Facebook bot and opinion polls increased the engagement of young people and influencers in social media. Examples included the June 1st “For every child” online photo flashmob in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to launch UNICEF Belarus’ new brand identity and the localized #Kidstakeover bot in the lead-up to Convention on the Rights of the Child Day.

To establish a more relatable image of UNICEF in the country, five human interest video stories were developed, one of which generated 98,000 views. UNICEF Belarus’ Facebook page following increased 50 per cent, surpassing 3,000 at year’s end. A team of 30 volunteers increased capacity for partner events engagement, such as Dinamo hockey matches, where over 150,000 parents learned about better parenting. The countrywide volunteer network more than doubled to include 1,000 young people.

Fact sheets and fund-raising presentations positioned UNICEF Belarus as a child rights opinion leader among Embassies, ministries and the private sector. The second annual fund-raising gala dinner attracted over 20 partners and almost 200 guests, raising US\$40,000.

A brand identity survey revealed that 68 per cent of Belarusians have heard of UNICEF. Actions identified to enhance brand awareness included widening reach in the regions and strengthening focus on people 25 to 35 years of age.

South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation

UNICEF Belarus’ South-South cooperation among various colleagues reflected its expansion in partnerships.

UNICEF Belarus facilitated sharing of inclusive education practices from Estonia. Country partners expressed interest in learning about overall education strategies including the Programme of International Students’ Assessment (PISA) and inclusive education, among other things. UNICEF Belarus is exploring opportunities to establish a systemic partnership with the key Estonian implementing partner for inclusive education in 2018.

Expanding public-private partnerships, UNICEF Belarus, with the country’s second largest bank, Priorbank, is developing a broad fund-raising and advocacy campaign for children with disabilities. As this venture is new territory for the country, it was critical to learn from other colleagues’ experiences in the region. UNICEF Belarus facilitated a study tour for partners from Priorbank to travel to Bulgaria, where UNICEF Bulgaria has established a successful fund-raising relationship with a key national bank. The exchange enhanced opportunities for similar collaboration in Belarus, although this is still in the initial stages.

UNICEF Belarus also continued to facilitate South-South collaboration on early intervention with UNICEF Georgia. The Abkhazia field office and implementing partners obtained knowledge and skills on ECD and good parenting programming, as well as on the methodologies to train community leaders, teachers and nurses in counselling parents in such practices. From this exchange, Abkhazia partners applied Belarusian materials on good parenting, upbringing and prevention of violence, which contributed to promotion activities with parents in almost all regions of Abkhazia.

In the area of early intervention, there exists a true collaboration of experiences across the region among specialists and managers. In particular, a strong synergy of good practices exists across Belarus, Russia and Ukraine, where there has been an extensive exchange of training capacities, information exchange and professional networking.

Identification and promotion of innovation

UNICEF Belarus places special emphasis on incorporating innovative solutions into its office management, and programme and communication work.

A cross-sectoral innovation team met quarterly to identify entry points for innovative solutions in the office and for programme work. The team identified several opportunities for cooperation with the country's promising IT sector, involving artificial intelligence technologies, the messaging app Viber, and the software company Epam. During the Regional Management Team meeting in Minsk, the Director of the Office of Global Innovation met with the Belarus High-Tech Park management to further identify opportunities for cooperation.

To become more inviting for participation, UNICEF Belarus continued to establish innovative communication approaches to bring attention to child rights and UNICEF. For example, using an approach suggested by the communications division, colleagues' business cards contain a 'wish' for every child. Each staff member has a different wish, e.g. education, childhood or access to justice. In addition, individuals can write in their own wishes for children. Partners receiving a UNICEF Belarus colleague's card are asked to think about what they would want for children and in a small way become "involved."

UNICEF Belarus continued to foster the influence of its social media presence, using new formats such as bots, flashmobs and polls to engage viewers. UNICEF Belarus' June 1 online flashmob asked ministry partners, the diplomatic corps, the private sector and the general public to think of one thing they wish #foreverychild on this day, write it on a card and post it online. It helped position UNICEF Belarus as an innovator among UN agencies, and similar flashmobs were later organized by other agencies.

Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages

Challenges in cross-sectoral coordination and 'linkages' have been a constant issue highlighted among agencies as well as in reports, noting that the needs of a child and family call for greater holistic, child-centred responses.

In 2017, UNICEF Belarus advanced effective intersectoral coordination across four line ministries on child injury prevention that was formalized through the Interagency Action Plan on Child Injury Prevention. Significant reduction of child mortality from external causes was only possible through joint efforts that addressed different target groups simultaneously within defined timelines. The Government acknowledged the approach's effectiveness with the decision to amend and extend the mandate of the Action Plan to 2020 (originally planned to end in 2018).

UNICEF Belarus also led intersectoral collaboration in analysing adolescents' key vulnerabilities, which served as the evidence base for the development of the National Action Plan on the Improvement of the Status of Children and Protection of their Rights for 2017-2021 (endorsed by the Council of Ministers in July 2017).

Over 2017, UNICEF Belarus worked collaboratively with other UN agencies to develop project strategies on disability issues, violence against women and children and good governance. UNICEF Belarus led on the development of a disability proposal with the United Nations Population Agency (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which was submitted to the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) and the Swedish International Cooperation Agency.

A joint research initiative on gender was also coordinated across government and UN partners. UNICEF Belarus' proactive position in collaboration with UNFPA and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP) within the longitudinal survey 'generations and gender' resulted in strong attention to child-related data analysis and evidence generation. A special chapter was developed that examined: upbringing and education; consumption of child-care services by households; children with disability; children in single-parent families; child poverty; and gender-related distribution of child-care activity in families.

Human rights-based approach to cooperation

With programming founded on a human rights-based approach, UNICEF Belarus continued to facilitate the country's commitments to implement Universal Periodic Review recommendations and Committee on the Rights of the Child recommendations, with particular attention to prioritizing the adolescent agenda in the Government's policy and programming formulation.

To strengthen Belarus' human rights-based approach in identification of rights holders and their needs, UNICEF Belarus supported the MAPS mission in developing a roadmap on SDG implementation in Belarus. UNICEF Belarus also participated in parliamentary hearings and working groups on SDGs and adolescents to prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable: children with disabilities, those in institutions, children with human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and children in conflict with the law.

UNICEF Belarus continued to support the Government's implementation of the first national Human Rights Action Plan, and advocated for establishment of the Ombudsman for Children Office through an international seminar organized jointly with the MFA.

Following advocacy and technical expertise provided by UNICEF Belarus, the Government approved the National Plan of Action on the Improvement of the Situation of Children and Protection of their Rights by 2020, and the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for 2017-2025. UNICEF Belarus continued its advocacy for prioritizing adolescents' rights and interests in national programming and supported the drafting of a comprehensive National Strategy on the Improvement of Children's and Adolescents' Health.

UNICEF Belarus extended its support to Belarus in strengthening its capacity to tackle violence against children. Against this background, UNICEF continued its cooperation with UNFPA on developing the first comprehensive law on domestic violence.

Together with ECARO and MLSP colleagues, UNICEF Belarus conducted a rapid assessment in Minsk and Gomel on the needs of children with severe disabilities living in institutions. Through these actions, UNICEF Belarus defined an action plan to improve the well-being for these children and explore ways to protect their right to live in family settings. The Minister of Labour and Social Protection visited the institutions in Minsk and Gomel, with agreement to

more closely review the status of children in MLSP institutions and explore ways to enhance their support.

Gender equality

UNICEF Belarus continued to participate actively in the UN Gender Thematic Group, contributing to the gender and generations study co-funded with UNFPA as well as the UN Gender Scorecard. Furthermore, the UNICEF Representative represented the UN Country Team (UNCT) at the National Council on Gender Policy under the Council of Ministers.

UNICEF Belarus was one of the organizers of the MAPS SDG mission to Belarus, in which one of four recommended 'accelerators' was on gender equality. UNICEF Belarus is fully committed to supporting the Government and strengthening its operations for all of the accelerators. Fine tuning UNICEF Belarus' programme to align with the SDG roadmap, including on gender equality, will also facilitate the office's work within the new UNICEF SP 2018-2021.

To strengthen UNICEF Belarus' programming, a rapid gender programme review was conducted with the assistance of the UNICEF ECARO Regional Gender Adviser. Two programme areas were identified to focus on greater gender integration: violence against children and women, including child protection issues regarding institutionalization of children; and gender-responsive adolescent health and development.

Applying a family-centred approach, targeted gender responses involved families as well as girls and boys directly, which was critical given the interconnectedness of rights and needs among family members.

UNICEF Belarus supported ECI centres that apply a family-focused approach for their work with parents and children under three with disabilities, reaching approximately 5,000 in 2017. To advance families' resilience, a particular focus was placed on gender-related aspects such as identifying maternal depression and gender roles within families with children with disabilities.

For adolescents, UNICEF Belarus supported the certification of 48 youth-friendly health centres nationwide, with preliminary analyses showing that centres have reached 1,269,517 adolescents (70 per cent boys/30 percent girls) between 12 and 24 years of age since the initiative began. Gender issues such as reproductive health become even more critical for adolescents facing multiple vulnerabilities, for example female adolescents with disabilities.

Environmental sustainability

In 2017, UNICEF Belarus made active use of digital products both within and outside the office to save on printing. At the same time, electricity and water consumption were closely monitored, and all lamps were energy-saving LED bulbs.

Within the November 2017 SDG MAPS mission, the expert team identified "green transition" as a potential accelerator for Belarus' nationalization of the 2030 Agenda. This accelerator proposes to examine issues such as efficient use of resources, including in the public sector, and green skills for employment.

A second accelerator identified by the MAPS team was "adolescence and youth," across-cutting programme area for UNICEF Belarus. In looking at these two accelerators, UNICEF Belarus is considering how to strengthen its existing 25 child-friendly cities (CFCs) to become platforms where adolescents can be active players in enhancing Belarus' steps to a green transition. In

2018, UNICEF Belarus will be exploring these options for programme interventions within its adolescence programme.

Effective leadership

In 2017, the country management team (CMT) met six times, with a standing agenda covering programme and budget implementation, including direct cash transfer status and donor reporting; key human resource and operations issues; review of fund-raising results and strategy; local staff association (LSA) briefing; and visibility, media and reputational risks. The local staff association chairperson and a general service (GS) staff member participated in the country management team, following best global practice. The country management team promoted participatory and transparent discussions, decision-making and consideration of staff opinion in office management issues, and country management team meetings minutes were shared with the entire staff.

The annual management plan defined the roles and responsibilities of the results managers and pillar coordinators for the programme. The composition of the statutory and advisory committees was delineated, and steps were taken to continue the participation of general service staff to increase independent judgement and advice in relation to important management decisions.

With the arrival of the policy and planning manager, monthly programme management meetings were organized, involving participation of all programme officers as well as the partnership officer, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E), operations and communication specialists. Meeting objectives were to: ensure programme management was conducted in a timely manner and was of high quality; sharpen programme focus on strategic aspects and prioritize initiatives to better guarantee results that contribute to programme commitments; and promote greater cross-sectoral communication and coordination. Meetings had ongoing agenda items such as overview of key performance indicators where the office had challenges and where there were earlier audit issues.

At the same time, these meetings provided opportunities for each programme section to flag key developments and challenges in their work, promoting coordination and greater interaction among the programmes. Specific issues were also brought up, such as the introduction of electronic harmonized approach to cash transfers (e-ZHACT) or planning for the SDG MAPS mission.

The business continuity plan was updated and planning on emergency preparedness response was undertaken.

Financial resources management

Effectively managing financial resources was a key component of the office's general management. Optimum funds utilization, maintaining and improving financial and administrative management systems and procedures to ensure efficient, cost-effective and transparent utilization of resources were a standing agenda at country management team meetings. In 2017, the team met regularly to discuss issues such as budget utilization rates, direct cash transfer status, donor reporting and fund-raising results and strategies. To support country management team decisions and enhance operational effectiveness, UNICEF Belarus set up a system of weekly manager meetings.

To ensure compliance with the HACT framework, UNICEF Belarus monitored and updated its HACT status on InSight. Following the global e-ZHACT initiative, UNICEF Belarus' HACT focal

point participated in the May 2017 HACT network meeting in Budapest. As part of the office transition plan, the HACT focal point delivered training to all staff on the content and management of e-ZHACT transactions. UNICEF Belarus organized an in-house HACT and Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditure (FACE) training for six new implementing partners in October 2017, enabling the office to smoothly enter into e-ZHACT live.

To enhance the office controls over risks to meeting operational and programmatic objectives, UNICEF Belarus began preparations for a possible audit. The road map for a mock audit, audit self-assessment and audit preparation was developed.

To enhance office performance, managers were encouraged to use online monitoring tools such as the office dashboard on InSight, the Global Shared Services Centre, and the human resources and supply portals.

In February 2017, UNICEF Belarus had an all-staff outing that identified performance issues from 2016. The office scrutinized the utilization of funds, especially the high volume of transactions in the last quarter of 2016 to find the bottlenecks and mitigate the risks in 2017. Office operational efficiency, in particular enhancements to the cash replenishment process, was further discussed at the December team-building retreat.

Fundraising and donor relations

UNICEF Belarus' fund-raising strategy focused on diversification of donor funding and increased sustainability of income. Fund-raising initiatives involved traditional fund-raising with bilateral and multilateral donors as well as partnerships with the private sector and individuals, reaching a total of US\$370,000 leveraged for children.

The Russian Federation remained the biggest donor for UNICEF Belarus, supporting a US\$2.4 million, four-year programme addressing the needs of children with disabilities. At the same time, UNICEF Belarus continued to work with the EU Delegation in Belarus, developing a project document for a joint good governance programme with other UN agencies, with a budget of US\$2.5 million. This project will facilitate cooperation between civil society and the Government on child rights issues that is expected to start in mid-2018.

Two grants from the Government of Poland, with budgets of US\$102,000, to address the issues of access to justice and youth participation, and global thematic funding of US\$210,000 for deinstitutionalization and US\$100,000 for inclusive education, further solidified the financial position of UNICEF Belarus to provide core funding for critical child right issues.

Complementing more traditional approaches, UNICEF Belarus continued to reach out to the private sector to raise awareness and build solidarity around key child rights issues and leverage resources. In October 2017, UNICEF Belarus held its second annual gala fund-raising dinner, which was attended by representatives of leading private companies and raised US\$40,000 for children with disabilities. The gala provided a means for the general public to become directly involved in supporting children's rights. The participation of the Renaissance Hotel in a UNICEF Belarus team in the Minsk marathon raised the visibility of the issue of children's rights. UNICEF Belarus also signed a memorandum of understanding with Priorbank to start a fund-raising project to address the deinstitutionalization of children with disabilities.

Evaluation and research

In 2017, UNICEF Belarus implemented PRIME, which regularly tracked research activities and necessary adjustments. To facilitate knowledge generation, UNICEF Belarus invested in research on violence against children and use of psychoactive substances by adolescents, paying due attention to the interests, concerns and participation of key government ministries. Data on adolescents resulted in successful mobilization of resources needed to launch a study on investment in children in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy.

To build reliable evidence for informing programming, UNICEF Belarus initiated three population-based surveys. The generations and gender survey was finished in November, while the preparatory work for MICS6 and a population-based disability survey was completed with full roll-out planned in 2018. UNICEF Belarus reinforced the quality of in-house analysis by launching a series of briefs and factsheets and producing an assessment of adolescent vulnerabilities, enabling UNICEF to share high-quality policy and programme evidence with partners and stakeholders. With enhanced evidence, UNICEF Belarus advocated successfully with the Government on the unique needs of adolescents, with agreement for the drafting of a state strategy on adolescents and youth as well as consideration of adolescents' specific needs in the country's MAPS mission for implementing the SDGs at the country level.

To strengthen the evidence framework on the situation of adolescents, UNICEF Belarus initiated jointly with the Government a thematic evaluation of key interventions for 2012-2017. The evaluation will review UNICEF Belarus interventions as well as critical state responses for adolescents, having both a retrospective and forward perspective to identify lessons learned and opportunities for further programming. Recommendations will be considered, shaping UNICEF Belarus' mid-term programme review as well as providing evidence for the development of the state strategy for adolescents and for the UNCT's mid-term review of the UN Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP). The evaluation is expected to be completed by the fall of 2018.

Efficiency gains and cost savings

In April 2017, UNICEF Belarus oversaw the establishment of an inter-agency cost-shared information and communication technologies (ICT) consultancy, as UNICEF Belarus did not have the dedicated ICT staff in its structure. By pooling resources, four UN agencies managed to cover their basic ICT needs, optimizing resources and cost savings. At end of 2017, the global decision for an IB ICT post provided UNICEF Belarus with significantly stronger capacity, enabling the office to move from basic ICT needs to taking full opportunity of the country's strong high tech capacity. Working with hi tech partners, the new post will create the human resources needed to leverage technology for children's interests.

To reduce operating costs, including cost savings on externally sourced goods and services, and improve quality of services, UNICEF Belarus advocated actively through the operations management team to establish an interagency cost-shared common services consultancy post. The consultancy started in November 2017, with the primary tasks including analyses of procurement needs, priorities and supply plans, and relevant rules and regulations, and an assessment of the eight participating agencies' capacity to conduct a procurement process efficiently. Another major task was the revision of existing long-term agreements to better respond to agencies' needs and developing trends in the local market. Based on the acquired knowledge and data, the market will be screened to assess the areas where the biggest savings could be obtained.

To streamline practices and establish a reference point for fee calculation, UNICEF Belarus undertook a desk review of national consultants' practices and rates across the UN agencies in Belarus. Based on the results, procedures were established for individual and institutional consultancies. The proposed rates served as a guideline to be applied by UNICEF Belarus staff to define and negotiate consultancy rates.

UNICEF Belarus did the Environmental Footprint Assessment for 2016 as part of the UNICEF global initiative on sustainable development.

Supply management

In 2017, most procurement was conducted for programme purposes. UNICEF Belarus had a large supply component within the child-injury prevention project. Over the year, UNICEF Belarus equipped ten model centres to educate parents on the basics of child trauma safety, with furniture, multimedia equipment and laptops. The centres now function in all regional perinatal centres of Belarus.

During the year, four training areas for hands-on learning of road traffic rules and practising safe behaviour on the grounds of preschool and secondary schools were equipped with road signs, bus stops, bicycle parking and information stands.

Forty-one information modules were purchased and software developed for school-aged children within the educational programme on the "Basics of Safe Living", along with an online game.

Ninety-three billboards on the prevention of child injuries and disabilities were designed and produced. They will be placed on a rotational basis in all cities of Belarus.

An educational centre functioning at the State Institution Republican Scientific and Practical Centre for Traumatology and Orthopaedics was equipped with computers, multimedia equipment, a TV set and a multifunctional device.

One video reel for parents on the risks of emergency situations faced by children, an animated film for children on safe living conditions, a ten-episode series of video lessons for children on the basics of safe living and three social video reels for parents on safe living conditions were produced.

UNICEF Belarus also supported the purchase of prizes for the winners of multi-stage competitions aimed at teaching children the basic rules of safe behaviour and skills for prevention of emergencies (backpacks, multifunctional devices, audio equipment).

Under the project "Preventing non-communicable diseases, promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting modernization of Belarus' health system" funded by the EU, the ECI centre was equipped with two vertical standers, a laptop, multimedia equipment (projector and screen), fax machine, kitchen with supplies and development toys.

An electrical surgical generator and a set of furniture were purchased for the youth-friendly health centre.

In 2017, UNICEF Belarus also supported the opening of a Resource Centre on Inclusive Education based in the Belarusian State Pedagogical University's Institute of Inclusive Education. The Centre is fully equipped with furniture, equipment, teaching aids and tools, and serves as a training centre for teachers.

In September 2017, a Resource Centre of Youth Initiatives was also opened in Minsk and equipped with furniture and multi-media equipment funded by the MFA of Poland.

Security for staff and premises

Throughout 2017, the security situation in Belarus was relatively stable, though there were some minor protests and tensions. The inter-agency cost-shared country security associate continued to provide UN staff with up-to-date information on the country's criminal and political situation, which remained at a relatively low risk level. In line with the UN Code of Conduct, staff members were regularly reminded to refrain from attending mass gatherings, including public meetings, demonstrations, or rallies. .

The Security Management Team arranged a risk assessment of Belavia, the most frequently used national airline, to determine whether it was safe for usage by the local UN community without concerns and limitations. It provided the safest 'A' category for the national air carrier.

All UNICEF Belarus premises were equipped with an electronic access system and security cameras that protect staff and equipment from unauthorized access. The operations manager managed the software.

To enhance further the safety of staff and office equipment, UNICEF Belarus negotiated with the property owner for the installation of new fire alarms in all UNICEF premises. The landlord covered the costs.

In June 2017, UNICEF arranged the logistics for a major inter-agency event (with over 100 participants from all UN agencies), UN Sports Day. UNICEF managed the extensive safety and security measures, including ambulance services, the presence of a UN doctor, and a security assessment of the location and facilities.

UNICEF Belarus hosted the Regional Management Team and Programme Budget Review (PBR) meetings in October 2017. The UN Department of Safety and Security did the risk assessment of the hotel, ensuring all participants remained safe in terms of fire reliability, seismic sustainability and evacuation plan.

Human resources

Capitalizing on increased international attention, UNICEF Belarus attracted considerable funding that resulted in larger programmes. These programmes increased the need for high-level operational engagement as well as rigorous quality assurance. To align office responses with the growing challenges, UNICEF Belarus upgraded its operations manager post to NOC.

Frequency of travel throughout Belarus increased significantly due to the increased programming, leading UNICEF Belarus to establish a second driver post. The recruitment was in the process of being finalized at the end of 2017.

Global PBR decisions brought consistency to office structures across the regions. As a result, three new integrated budget-funded assistant posts were established in the office: human resources, G6; ICT/technology for development, G6; and administrative assistant, G5.

Staff empowerment and capacity development have been always taken seriously in the UNICEF Belarus office. Anticipating staff development needs, UNICEF Belarus reserved learning funds and encouraged all staff to apply. At the beginning of 2017, UNICEF Belarus joined the regional

coaching initiative that provided opportunities for the operations manager to maximize leadership skills to develop individual and team performance.

The increased complexity and scope of operations required the office team to work more coherently. To assist, office management hired an experienced coach to support greater consistency, effectiveness and initiative into operations. All staff welcomed the coaching sessions held in May 2017.

In June 2017, the GSS results were made available. The office also did an anonymous survey among staff to identify issues not addressed by the GSS. Results of both surveys served as reference points for discussions and brainstorming during the office team-building retreat in mid-December 2017.

Effective use of information and communication technology

The ICT utility is effective across all processes in the office, becoming even more critical with development and enhancement of business processes with limited resources and workforce. Office365, SharePoint, Skype for Business and OneDrive were introduced in the office and made it technologically efficient in terms of speed of communication, reliability and data security and also significantly reduced costs. Uptake of all new tools was high among the staff due to the fact that staff were informed in advance and properly trained.

With the Global PBR decision, the office received the long-awaited post for ICT and technology for development. The person will not only manage the ICT systems and services, but will also actively engage in programme discussions to leverage technical skills to identify opportunities for innovative uses of technology in programming.

Many business processes in programmes, finances and human resources were automated. To gain better skills in managing the new software, UNICEF Belarus carried out a number of training sessions for its staff, such as an ACHIEVE training activity that was delivered to all staff, and a hiring portal for human resources practitioners, among others.

Anticipating the launch of Windows 10 and the new MS Office package, UNICEF Belarus planned for replacement of outdated hardware and went through the supply process accordingly. To navigate in Windows 10, the staff actively enrolled in Windows 10 webinars and online training sessions.

The increase in staff called for an upgrade of the office's PBX (telephone station), which was accomplished in November 2017. This upgrade allowed for more users as well as IP telephony technology.

The office continued to enjoy the advantages of the cloud technology project, office "LIGHT", which was launched in 2016.

UNICEF Belarus is prepared for the launch of the Enterprise Content Management system.

Programme components from RAM

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 Special Purpose Outcome

Analytical statement of progress

The operations management team (OMT) was the driving force in assessing the needs and reviewing existing services/practices. The Yammer platform for OMT members continued to facilitate exchange of documents, sharing of opinions and experiences, promotion of new ideas for common discussion and finalizing of the documents for the UNCT review and approval.

To reduce operating costs and improve quality of services, including cost savings on externally sourced goods and services, UNICEF Belarus advocated actively through the OMT to establish an interagency cost-shared common services consultancy post. The consultancy started in November 2017, with the primary tasks including analyses of procurement needs, priorities and supply plans, and relevant rules and regulations, and an assessment of the capacity of the eight participating agencies to undertake a procurement process efficiently. Another major task was the revision of existing long-term agreements to better respond to agencies' needs and developing trends in the local market. Based on the acquired knowledge and data, the market will be screened to assess the areas where the biggest savings could be obtained.

The office continued to function under the LIGHT project/'servers in clouds', with no major breakdowns in system operations. The ICT utility is beneficial across all processes in the office and is becoming even more critical with the development and enhancement of business processes in the face of limited resources and workforce. Office365, SharePoint, Skype for Business and OneDrive were introduced and made the office technologically efficient in terms of speed of communication, reliability and data security, and also significantly reduced costs. Uptake of all new tools was high among the staff, due to the fact that staff were informed in advance and properly trained.

In April 2017, UNICEF Belarus initiated and managed the establishment of the inter-agency cost-shared ICT consultancy. By pooling resources, four UN agencies managed to cover their ICT needs. UNICEF Belarus, which did not have a dedicated ICT staff member in its structure (the operations manager performed the functions of ICT focal point), enjoyed the advantages of having a dedicated ICT staff resource for a small contribution of approximately US\$600 monthly. The overall savings on the cost-shared ICT initiative could be as high as US\$20,000 for the nine months of 2017.

OUTPUT 1 Premises and Security

Analytical statement of progress

Throughout 2017, the security situation in Belarus was relatively stable, though there were some minor protests and tensions. The inter-agency cost-shared country security associate continued to provide UN staff with up-to-date information on the country's criminal and political situation, which remained at a relatively low risk level. In line with the UN Code of Conduct, staff were regularly reminded to refrain from attending mass gatherings, including public meetings, demonstrations, or rallies. .

The Security Management Team arranged a risk assessment of Belavia, the most frequently used national airline, to determine whether it was safe for usage by the local UN community without concerns and limitations. It provided the safest 'A' category for the national air carrier.

All UNICEF Belarus premises were equipped with an electronic access system and security cameras that protect staff and equipment from unauthorized access. The operations manager managed the software.

To enhance further the safety of staff and its equipment, UNICEF Belarus negotiated with the property owner for the installation of new fire alarms in all UNICEF premises. The landlord covered the costs.

In June 2017, UNICEF Belarus arranged the logistics for a major inter-agency event (with over 100 participants from all UN agencies), UN Sports Day. UNICEF managed the extensive safety and security measures, including ambulance services, the presence of a UN doctor and a security assessment of the location and facilities.

OUTCOME 2 Management Outcome

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Belarus maintained effective and efficient management operations in support of programme results. The governance committees met regularly to discuss the major office objectives, plans, priorities and challenges.

The annual priority results were regularly monitored by the country management team and provided the reference for performance assessments, prioritization of scarce time and resources, workload issues and other issues. Through the team, management monitored the budget utilization to secure smooth programme implementation, delivery and good expenditure rates.

In April 2017, UNICEF Belarus initiated and managed the establishment of the inter-agency cost-shared ICT consultancy. By pooling their resources, four UN agencies (UNICEF, UNFPA, the UN Refugee Agency [UNHCR] and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS [UNAIDS]) managed to cover the costs of their ICT needs.

In 2017, most procurement was conducted for programme purposes. UNICEF Belarus had a significant supply component within the Child-Injury Prevention Project, funded by the Russian Federation. During the reporting period, UNICEF Belarus equipped ten model centres for the education of parents on the basics of children's safe living with furniture, multimedia equipment and laptops. The centres now function in all regional perinatal centres of Belarus.

In terms of security, throughout 2017, the situation in Belarus was relatively stable, though there were some minor protests and tensions. The inter-agency cost-shared country security associate continued to provide UN staff with up-to-date information on the country's criminal and political situation, which remained at a relatively low risk level.

OUTPUT 1 Governance and Systems

Analytical statement of progress

The local staff association chairperson and a general service (GS) staff member continued to participate on the country management team, following best global practice. The country management team promoted participatory and transparent discussions, decision-making and consideration of staff opinion in office management issues. The team met six times, and its minutes were shared with all staff members for follow-up. In addition, seven all-staff meetings covering key management and strategic programme issues were held with minutes also shared.

UNICEF Belarus developed the 2017 Annual Management Plan, which defined the role and responsibilities of the results managers and pillar coordinators for the programme. The composition of the statutory and advisory committees was clearly delineated, and steps were

taken to continue the participation of general service staff to increase independent judgement and advice in relation to important management decisions.

With the arrival of the policy and planning manager, monthly programme management meetings were organized, involving participation of all programme officers as well as the partnership officer, and monitoring and evaluation, operations and communication specialists. The objectives of these meetings were to: ensure programme management was conducted in a timely manner and was of high quality; sharpen programme focus on strategic aspects and prioritize initiatives to better guarantee results that contribute to programme commitments (country programme document); and promote greater cross-sectoral communication and coordination. Meetings had ongoing agenda items such as review of action points from the last meeting, overview of the key performance indicators where the office had challenges and where there were earlier audit issues, such as utilization rates. At the same time, these meetings provided opportunities for each programme section to flag key developments and challenges in their work, promoting coordination and greater interaction among the programmes. Specific issues were also brought up, such as the introduction of e-ZHACT, M&E issues or planning for the SDG MAPS mission.

The business continuity plan was updated and planning on emergency preparedness response was undertaken.

OUTPUT 2 Financial Resources and Stewardship

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017, the country management team regularly discussed key financial management issues, including budget utilization rates, direct cash transfer status and fund-raising results and strategies.

In February 2017, UNICEF Belarus had an all-staff outing that addressed challenging performance issues from 2016. The office scrutinized the utilization of funds, especially the high volume of transactions in the last quarter of 2016 to find the bottlenecks and mitigate the risks in 2017.

To ensure compliance with the HACT framework, UNICEF Belarus monitored and updated its HACT status on InSight. In May 2017, in line with the global e-ZHACT initiative, UNICEF Belarus' HACT focal point participated in the HACT network meeting in Budapest. In September 2017, the same staff member went to Sofia to take part in e-ZHACT training. As part of the office transition plan, the HACT focal point delivered training to all staff on the content and management of e-ZHACT transactions. UNICEF Belarus organized an in-house HACT and Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditure (FACE) training for six new implementing partners in October 2017, enabling the office to smoothly enter into e-ZHACT live.

To enhance office performance, managers were encouraged to monitor the online tools available within UNICEF, such as the office dashboard on InSight, the Global Shared Service Centre, and the human resources and supply portals.

UNICEF Belarus continued to enjoy Global Shared Services Centre services with improved quality of transactions. The lengthy service-level agreement time frame for invoice processing and payment in the volatile local currency remained an issue.

OUTPUT 3 Human Resources Management

Analytical statement of progress

Larger programmes increased the need for high-level operational engagement as well as rigorous quality assurance. To align with the challenges and new opportunities, UNICEF Belarus upgraded its operations manager post to NOC to ensure effective quality assurance for financial management and to bring resources in line with the expected responsibilities. The upgrade was approved, and the selection process was undertaken.

Staff empowerment and capacity development have always been taken seriously in the office. Anticipating staff development needs, UNICEF Belarus reserved the learning funds and encouraged all staff to apply. In the beginning of 2017, UNICEF Belarus joined the regional coaching initiative that provided opportunities for the operations manager to maximize leadership skills to develop individual and team performance.

With larger programmes, the frequency of travel throughout Belarus increased significantly as well. Anticipating these changes and the requirements for greater presence in the regions, UNICEF Belarus requested a second driver post funded from other resources funds. A selection process ended with a job offer being declined, requiring UNICEF Belarus to restart the process. It is expected that the preliminary selection procedure will be completed by the end of December 2017.

The global PBR decisions, which brought consistency into the office structures across the regions, led to the establishment of three new integrated budget-funded assistant posts: HR, G6; ICT/T4D, G6; and administrative assistant, G5.

The increased complexity and scope of operations required the office team to work more coherently. To assist, office management hired an experienced coach to support greater consistency, effectiveness and initiative into operations. To meet staff development needs, the office did a survey monkey that was the basis for further discussions and brainstorming during the training.

In June 2017, the GSS results were made available, serving as a reference point for office management to address staff issues. Staff also did an anonymous survey to identify issues not addressed by the GSS. Results of both surveys served as reference points for discussions and brainstorming during the office team-building retreat in mid-December 2017.

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

To strengthen families' resilience and coping mechanisms as well as their knowledge for better care of children in the early years, UNICEF Belarus merged strategies on strengthening of the Government's system building with enhancement of parents' skills and behaviours and overall social and cultural practices and beliefs on childcare, particularly for young children. It is the interaction between building of a normative framework ('enabling environment') and social and cultural practice development ('demand') that creates workable solutions where there is engagement from society.

The intersection between these strategies is seen in UNICEF Belarus' early childhood development (ECD) work. A KAP assessment on ECD and parenting practices will inform the framework for establishing an ECD system as parents are key players in advancing young

children's well-being. The establishment of an inter-agency protocol on identifying children and families in socially dangerous situations requires standards and principles that guarantee consistent and objective responses. In addition, it is important to understand how families end up in crisis and identify ways to use families' resources to support, through case management, steps to improve the family environment that can make it again safe for children.

Working on the enabling environment in 2017, UNICEF Belarus conducted assessments on existing home-visiting practices of different professionals and on the prevalence of violence against children in different environments. The findings informed the establishment of normative provisions and programmatic actions. UNICEF Belarus with the MLSP initiated an examination of the status of residential institutions for children with complex disabilities to define actions for gradual steps in de-institutionalization and ways to establish family-based services. Within efforts to develop normative frameworks, UNICEF Belarus actively partnered with government colleagues to ensure their buy-in to the process and to build common understanding and open dialogue.

Accompanying normative steps, UNICEF Belarus also raised demand by enhancing awareness about key child rights and children's development. With the Global ECD Campaign, UNICEF Belarus reached nearly 56,000 people with messages through videos and other materials on issues such as brain development, responsible parenting, the importance of early intervention and the importance of play. UNICEF Belarus also targeted demand by enlarging its range of partnerships and reaching out to the private sector.

Leveraging resource opportunities, UNICEF Belarus entered into a memorandum of understanding with the number two bank in Belarus, Priorbank, to take steps to transition from institutional care to more family-like approaches. Through fund-raising initiatives aimed at the public on ways to support children with severe disabilities, the partnership with Priorbank does not just create opportunities for increasing financial resources, but also provides channels for the public to learn about children's rights and to take action, being given a role for participation. These steps create forums for members from different parts of communities to think more deeply about child rights and the links between the issues and the potential roles for each community member to be part of the solution. These steps start to broaden the overall public dialogue on child rights and foster more inclusive and supportive social norms over the longer period.

OUTPUT 1 Programme implementation and strengthening

Analytical statement of progress

Programme planning with national counterparts was strengthened by the development and signing of biannual work plans with the Ministries of Education, Health and Internal Affairs. In addition, an opportunity also arose whereby for the first time UNICEF Belarus was able to define a work plan with the MLSP.

Participation in the regional workshops and webinars organized by UNICEF ECARO on issues such as justice for children and child-friendly procedures for children victims of violence contributed to raising the programme staff's knowledge and competences to better understand programme issues and get new ideas for their implementation.

OUTPUT 2 By 2020 National ECD Strategy and Action Plan operational

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Belarus recognizes the critical window of opportunity that early interventions provide. As a result, its 2016-2020 Country Programme priorities advance an integrated approach to ECD, strengthening comprehensive approaches to maximize young children's cognitive, physical and psychological development.

Specifically, UNICEF is working with the government to enhance normative frameworks, promoting interagency collaboration regarding ECD, improving access to service quality and developing new cost-effective ECD models. One of the main goals of the ECD programme is to strengthen national institutional capacities and resources in ECD by advancing coordination of the main stakeholders through development of an ECD national strategy.

In 2017, output efforts focused on capacity development of parents and caregivers, as the key figures in a young child's life that can take the necessary steps to ensure a child's development opportunities.

UNICEF actively participated in the Global ECD Campaign supported by the LEGO Foundation to increase awareness of the general public, with some focus on parents, about the importance of the first 1,000 days of a child's life and the impact of early experiences on brain development. UNICEF Belarus reached nearly 56,000 people through videos and other materials with ECD messages on brain development, responsible parenting, importance of early intervention services, nutrition, child stimulation and the importance of play. UNICEF is finalizing an animated educational video on ECD for parents.

At the same time, UNICEF Belarus initiated actions to develop a normative framework for ECD in the country. The first step was with the MoE. UNICEF defined the design for a national KAP study on ECD and better parenting. The study's findings will establish the baseline on parents' knowledge regarding young children's development milestones and their caring practices that will serve as the evidence base for developing an ECD strategy framework. Comparing attitudes and practices, UNICEF Belarus will be able to measure existing social norms that hinder parents in meeting their full parental responsibilities. As part of the data collection, a survey will be conducted of 1,500 parents, both mothers and fathers, of children up to six years of age. Particular attention will be provided to ensure views and practices of fathers and socially vulnerable families are adequately represented within the survey. Focus group methods will be used to deepen the results of the survey.

OUTPUT 3 By 2020 normative framework of home-visiting system improved

Analytical statement of progress

To support the strengthening of Belarus' normative framework for home visiting, UNICEF Belarus in 2017 conducted a desk review to examine relevant national legislation and practices, as well as international experiences on home-visitation techniques with a particular review of cases from the Russian Federation. The review examined Belarusian practices of home visits by health, education and social protection representatives as well as police. Findings of the desk review will serve as the basis for the development in 2018 of a roadmap for the MoH that defines actions to improve Belarus' home-visitation system.

Findings from the desk review highlighted the capacity gap of professionals conducting home visitations to be able to identify potential development risks. As a result, UNICEF negotiated with the MoH to include within the 2018 work plan two new courses for home-visiting professionals (e.g. paediatricians, general practitioners) that will be included in the curriculum of in-service training for medical professionals. This curriculum includes two components. The first is a 20-hour course, "Observation and home visitation of children in first year of life, treatment and prevention of age-associated illnesses," that was included in the general curriculum as of September 1, 2017. The second component will start from September 1, 2018 and will focus on home visitation of children with disabilities and special needs. The course will provide knowledge and skills of visiting professionals working with a family raising a child with disabilities and special needs to enable them to:

- provide qualified home medical, social, pedagogical and socio-psychological assistance to a child;
- consult a caregiver on the child development;
- identify the mother's psychological state; and
- form an adequate position of parents in raising a child.

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

Analytical statement of progress

Through this stronger dialogue, UNICEF was able to develop its first rolling work plan (2017-2018) with the MLSP, planning actions to address the rapid assessment recommendations. A first step was a more comprehensive assessment of the ten institutions under MLSP's authority, which will be completed in the first half of 2018. This in-depth review will identify those gaps and resources within the existing system that need to be addressed in the short and long-term for effective transitions to care options that are as close to a family setting as possible. Direct involvement of national and local government colleagues in the assessment and consideration of its conclusions will contribute to a common understanding and development of realistic and relevant recommendations on system reform. A roadmap on improvement of the situation of children and reforming institutional care will be developed on the basis of collected evidence, suggesting measures for the transformation of the institutions and the whole network to better realize the rights of children and young people with disabilities, in particular to live in a caring family environment.

With high-level advocacy, UNICEF Belarus reached out to bilaterals and the private sector to raise attention and leverage resources for the proposed transition plan. This strategic direction became the main target of a fund-raising initiative of UNICEF Belarus with Priorbank. Through this work, UNICEF Belarus is setting an example of public-private partnerships, with collaboration developing across UNICEF Belarus, the MLSP and Priorbank to create visibility on the issue and propose ways for the public to participate in establishing solutions. In early December, a joint visit to Gomel institution for children with severe disabilities by the UNICEF Belarus Representative, the Belarus Minister of Labour and Social Protection and Priorbank representatives was conducted to advocate for reforming established residential care. While the Gomel institution is only a transitional step, it provides examples of improving care and moving closer to family-like care within small group home settings. This visit raised understanding among the partners, enhancing common views that will broaden messages that will not only

raise the issue on the political agenda but will help to popularize the issue and raise dialogue among communities who must be involved for sustainable social change.

Work was also initiated to coordinate responses across professions to children in social danger, with the drafting of a Council of Ministers Resolution on procedures for defining when a child is in social dangers and standardized work procedures across sectors. The draft resolution provides a working protocol for professionals involved in social investigation and rehabilitation assistance to families in social danger. It stipulates revisions on a cross-sectoral coordination mechanism where a new list of indicators and risk assessment techniques are proposed. This draft protocol aims to promote more objective decision-making on assessments of a child's situation in the family and child's separation. The draft protocol was submitted to the MoE to use as part of the official resolution drafting procedure.

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

Analytical statement of progress

Based on a discussion with the National Commission on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF Belarus coordinated with MoE, MoH, Mol and MLSP a nationally representative assessment of the scale and prevalence of violence against children in the home, schools, community and residential care and penitentiary systems.

Due to the extensive nature of the report and the number of stakeholders requiring review and agreement, the research took longer than initially envisaged, with the official launch planned for early 2018. Nonetheless, the report has important findings to build common understanding and upon which to develop action. For example, even though 85.7 per cent of parents reported practising positive parenting, 50.1 per cent had used violent disciplinary measures over the past month. The study also confirmed the trans-generational nature of violence against children, with 56.8 per cent of parents who reported physical violence in their own childhood applying physical punishment to their own children. In comparison, only 17.6 per cent of parents without experiences of violence in their childhood applied such punishment toward their children. In addition, peers and older children were identified as the main perpetrators in the surveys regarding exposure to violence in schools, institutions and communities. Based on the findings and recommendations, UNICEF Belarus will support the Government with CSO partners to develop an inter-agency action plan.

In addition to research on violence against children, UNICEF Belarus, under the framework of the GLO.ACT project, is partnering with the MoH to support the opening of a children's hotline, which had been dormant over the last year. The goal of the hotline, which reopened on 7 December 2017, is to offer psychological assistance to children exposed to violence and maltreatment and those in a crisis emotional state. Landline calls are free. UNICEF Belarus agreed with the MoH to support the establishment of a standard that defines the operational procedures for immediate psychological counselling to children via phone, specifying the functions required for hotline service, staffing prerequisites and call registration processes. In addition to development of the standard, UNICEF Belarus in 2018 will work with the Belarusian Medical Academy of Post-Graduate Studies to develop a training course for specialists (psychologists) working on the hotline that will be later integrated into the Academy's regular course programmes to ensure greater sustainability and to better assure the quality of hotline services. An active phase of the hotline promotion campaign will start in the beginning of the

next year as well as capacity development training seminars for the phone counselling specialists.

UNICEF Belarus also coordinated with UNFPA and national counterparts to establish a common understanding of the value added of a comprehensive Law on Domestic Violence for the country. UNICEF Belarus advocated for the law to: have provisions relating to families with children; stipulate special protection and assistance measures for child victims and witnesses; enforce child-friendly legal and judicial procedures; and ensure remedies are available to children when their rights are violated. The Government took a decision to develop a concept of a separate law counteracting domestic violence in 2018, which is the first step within the law-making process.

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

Analytical statement of progress

Children with disabilities are some of the most vulnerable child groups in Belarus and are often isolated from their peers, communities and even families due to their disabilities. Following UNICEF Belarus' equity agenda and the call of the SDGs to close the gaps for those most left behind, children with disabilities is a priority child group in UNICEF Belarus' work.

UNICEF Belarus is applying the momentum of Belarus' ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to advance partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) and UN agencies on the issue of rights of children with disabilities. These partnerships promote the development of the country's normative framework to incorporate international standards on social inclusion and the social approach to disability.

In 2017, the UNICEF Belarus/CSO advocacy platform on children with disabilities consolidated efforts and provided the Government with the technical advice and assistance for development of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities implementation roadmap. This was translated into the national plan of action on the implementation of the Convention (2017-2025).

In addition, UNICEF Belarus reached an agreement with Belstat to conduct research on disability with the goal of defining a roadmap for implementing the Convention. With this work (to be completed in 2018), UNICEF Belarus will contribute to the verification of quality data on children with disabilities and the definition of the prevalence rate. At the same time, UNICEF Belarus obtained agreement for the inclusion of the International Classification of Functioning for Children and Youth (ICF-CY) to be harmonized into Belarus' system as defined in the National Plan of Action for implementation of the Convention. Application of this framework will result in the revision of criteria for eligibility of benefits and services – a shift to a social model for disability. The state partner for this work has also been identified.

Complementing efforts on establishing a normative framework underpinned by international standards, UNICEF Belarus is partnering with the state and CSOs to strengthen system responses that build quality integrated services for children with disabilities and their families. Looking at young children with disabilities and special needs, UNICEF Belarus focused in 2017 on setting a regulatory framework that establishes a unified approach to ECI services and provides guidance for taking these services to scale. With a government requirement that all cities with more than 15,000 children must have an ECI centre, UNICEF Belarus gathered

evidence to direct steps for going to scale. Methodological resources were developed and tested to enhance professionals' capacities to screen and refer ECI cases, with national dissemination. At the same time, UNICEF Belarus reviewed and documented Minsk's ECI model, which proved its effectiveness and feasibility for replication. Documentation of the ECI centres will contribute to UNICEF's further support to the establishment of 14 ECI resource centres that will provide the network for mentoring and quality assurance for ECI services.

For children with disabilities, the education system plays a critical role in social inclusion and enhancement of quality of life. In 2017, UNICEF Belarus targeted efforts to strengthen teachers' capacities, bolster the adaptability of the school system to include more children with disabilities and ensure their participation and learning in regular settings alongside their peers. Capacity-development resources for inclusive education were instituted through the creation of the Republican Resource Centre on Inclusive Education to serve as the network hub to increase knowledge and skills of education system specialists and quality of inclusive education activities.

Through 2017, UNICEF Belarus supported the Centre to develop 16 methodological and educational resources for in-service and pre-service teacher training programmes, building practical skills on how to set up an inclusive classroom, adapting assistive technologies and defining reasonable accommodations. Within the development of these programmes, 1,143 teachers, parents and students tested the modules, gaining knowledge and skills on how to provide daily assistance to children with disabilities and special needs in an education setting. As with ECI, UNICEF will continue to strengthen the system response for inclusive education resource capacities to foster a system approach that provides mentoring and quality assurance consistently across the country.

Establishment of a normative framework and professionals' capacity development must also be fortified with steps to build inclusive social norms, addressing stigma and discrimination. In 2018, UNICEF Belarus will start a three-year education campaign that targets negative social norms around children with disabilities.

OUTPUT 1 Programme implementation and strengthening

Analytical statement of progress

An enhanced focus on disabilities has given UNICEF Belarus a better understanding of programming in the areas of inclusive education and child disability, prevention of child injuries and creation of safe living environment for children at home through regional adviser missions, network meetings and regular meetings with national counterparts. Exchanges of international experiences were also enhanced through a study tour to Portugal, and a rapid assessment mission by Estonian experts to Belarus to examine inclusive education practices. The UNICEF ECARO advisers provided solid and timely expert support, substantial inputs and recommendations at all stages of the programme planning, implementation and monitoring.

With US\$2.4 million provided from the Russian Federation for work on disability, the programme was able to substantially expand, although some delays were experienced due to challenges of registering resources with the Ministry of Economy (a step required for all international assistance). The ECD post was also upgraded in 2017 to NOC level to reflect the increased complexity of tasks and responsibilities connected with the committed funding from the Russian Federation.

OUTPUT 2 By 2020 national legislation is aligned with provisions of Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017, UNICEF Belarus supported the Government's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and commitment in the country programme document to align national legislation and procedures to the Convention and international standards.

Following UNICEF Belarus' advocacy with CSOs, the Government included within the National Plan of Action for Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Belarus (2017-2025), the following related to on child disability: the International Classification of Functioning (ICF), abilitation, review of education legislation, assisted living and deinstitutionalization where 44 per cent of the children have registered disabilities. The Council of Ministers adopted the plan in May 2017. A critical principle in the Convention is the issue of social inclusion of people with disabilities. For children, a key step in inclusion is making schools in their communities accessible.

Collaborating with the National Centre on Legislation and Political Resources, recommendations for amendments to the Code of Education were submitted for consideration to the MoE. The Government put on hold the approval of the amended version of the Code. However, a Parliamentary hearing is planned for April 2018 for which UNICEF was asked to provide international expertise on inclusive education.

While progress has been made in building understanding on inclusive education, challenges still exist in obtaining agreement on concrete policies and steps with MoE colleagues. UNICEF Belarus advocated with Council of Ministries, the MoE and Parliament to include programmatic interventions into National Plans of Action, which are based on principles defined by Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Committee General Comment 4. UNICEF Belarus recognizes the need to analyse the inclusive education agenda for a better understanding among governmental partners of the international principles of this agenda. In this context, UNICEF Belarus is planning to sensitize national and local authorities on General Comment 4 starting with the 2018 April Parliamentary hearing and beyond by supporting the Government in development of the first periodic report on the Convention.

The right of children to be raised in the family was actively up taken by the UNICEF Belarus programme in 2017, which directly corresponds to the country's obligations under two conventions: children with disabilities' right for respect for home and the family (Article 23.2 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child's Article 23, Children with Disabilities. In addition, UNICEF with UNFPA advocated linking implementation of the provisions of both the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to ensure greater attention to the multiple layers of discrimination faced by girls with disabilities and the right of children born to mothers with a disability to be raised in a family environment. These efforts resulted in planning joint research with MLSP on the situation of women and girls with disabilities, which will inform further programming. The results will be available in Q1 of 2018.

Policy changes need to be fostered with programming focused on behaviour change of the general population towards children with disabilities, specifically identifying and targeting

negative social norms towards children with disabilities through an education campaign on stigma and discrimination. The campaign will start in early 2018 and will last for three years until the end of the programme cycle.

OUTPUT 3 By 2020 national system of ECI services is enhanced

Analytical statement of progress

To establish a strong national ECI system, UNICEF Belarus initiated an assessment defining the technical capacities and areas of potential growth of existing ECI services, which informed UNICEF Belarus work around formulating a regulatory framework and enhancing service supply. While resources have been received by the Russian Federation, significant delays in programme implementation were experienced due to Belarus' registration system of foreign funding through the Ministry of Economy. Approval was only received in November 2017.

Assessment findings pointed to the need to establish a unified approach for ECI framed within a normative provision. Collaborating with the MoH, UNICEF Belarus supported the development of a regulation on ECI centres, which defines organization of ECI activities. It will come into effect in 2018. The regulation foresees 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 regulation will provide guidance on how health and education sectors can collaborate, fostering greater intersectoral coordination. The regulation requires cities with more than 15,000 children to establish ECI centres. The ECI regulation was reviewed by an international World Health Organization expert who provided a positive assessment of the ECI service, noting as well scientific and practical recommendations on steps that could be taken to further improve the service.

While setting the regulatory framework, it was critical to develop the supply side of ECI to ensure that the ECI centres to be established have the capacities to care out the services. The assessment showed that professionals had not mastered the screening process to identify development delays or risks at early ages. To strengthen professional capacities of education, health care and NGO specialists, UNICEF Belarus created a manual on the early identification of children's development delays with screening tools. Tools and methodologies were discussed at a workshop with 50 national experts whose feedback was taken into account. Following its fine tuning, the manual was disseminated nationwide among paediatricians, neurologists, physical therapists and psychologists.

For scaling up the ECI services, UNICEF explored the feasibility of the Minsk ECI centre being a model of excellence and resource point. Currently in Minsk there are seven fully functioning ECI centres. Assessment findings showed a significant uptake of ECI services and availability of ECI services. The number of children with disabilities with their families receiving services increased 6.2 times over the last seven years; and the number of professionals applying ECI advisory methods increased 3.9 times. The review of the Minsk ECI centres proved to be strong examples of good ECI practices and with potential for replicability. In this context, the assessment provided the evidence to contribute to the creation of 14 ECI resource centres to be located throughout the country. They will provide methodological support and mentoring to ensure quality assurance and monitoring of consistent ECI service delivery.

OUTPUT 4 By 2020 ICF integrated into healthcare system; multisectoral unified database on children with disabilities is set up

Analytical statement of progress

With the advocacy for ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UNICEF Belarus also called for a shift in monitoring and classifying disabilities from a medical to social approach, looking at functions rather than deficits. Specifically, UNICEF Belarus' recommendation included implementation of the ICF in the country, which was accepted and included into the National Plan of Action on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The national expertise to adapt the ICF was identified, with the National Scientific Centre on Medical Expertise and Rehabilitation responsible for the commissions for categorization. This Centre is in the process of developing a set of recommendations on ICF use in the country. This process will also result in the revision of criteria for eligibility of benefits and services.

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 Belarus with the UNCT actively advocated for the country's signing of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and within that process also coordinated with the MoE the drafting of a national concept paper on inclusive education, which was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers and established an action plan for implementation of the concept provisions. These initiatives created the momentum in 2017 to take a critical step in the shift from integrated education to inclusive education practices.

Following this advocacy, the second step for the country was to strengthen teachers' capacity and the adaptability of the school system to include more children with disabilities and ensure their participation and learning in regular settings alongside their peers. Recognizing the high professional capacity of national experts, UNICEF Belarus partnered with the Belarussian State Pedagogical University to design a new approach to pre-service training for teachers, developing modules with new knowledge on inclusive education practices. Sixteen methodological and educational resources were established for in-service and pre-service teacher training, building practical skills on how to set up an inclusive classroom, adapting assistive technologies and defining reasonable accommodations. The two sets of materials will be integrated into the obligatory curriculum of pre-service teachers in key pedagogical universities: Belarussian State Pedagogical University, Mozyr State Pedagogical University and pedagogical faculties of other state universities.

UNICEF also supported the Foundation of the Institute of Inclusion in the Belarussian State Pedagogical University to establish the National Resource Centre for Inclusive Education to advance methodological support and professional capacity development of teachers to ensure a quality shift from integrated to inclusive education for children with disabilities and learning difficulties. In the 2017-2018 academic year, the adapted curricula are being piloted in ten schools for primary school teachers, enhancing knowledge on differentiated instruction and the development of a set of methodological guidelines on assistive technology and individual approaches of including children with disabilities in learning process within the mainstream school setting. Through the National Resource Centre, 828 school professionals improved their professional qualifications and applied knowledge and skills gained in their daily assistance to

children with disabilities and special needs. At the same time, 306 parents and university students (slightly over one-quarter of those trained) participated in training sessions, obtaining new knowledge and insights on how to better support children.

UNICEF Belarus' programme monitoring through site visits, working meetings and telephone interviews revealed the usefulness of the resources established, with all reviews expressing high satisfaction with the resources from a scientific and practical point of view. Feedback was provided that the set of materials on assistive technologies could be extended even further and turned into the database of resources. The National Resource Centre on Inclusive Education will be self-sustaining in 2018, continuing with training outreach and organization of educational courses without UNICEF Belarus support.

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

Analytical statement of progress

Traumas and injuries represent a serious challenge to children's health, where approximately 80 per cent of child injuries occur at home. Strengthening efforts to prevent child trauma, UNICEF Belarus partnered with the Ministries of Health and Emergencies to enhance both parents' and caregivers' knowledge and involved children themselves to create solutions to prevent trauma.

To enhance children's knowledge about safe behaviour patterns, UNICEF Belarus contributed to the development of electronic safety corners for secondary school children (4th-8th graders) together with the MoE and with inputs from the Ministries of Interior and Emergency. The electronic safety corner comprises a tablet computer containing a software programme on health and safety in the form of an interactive quiz. Forty-two schools across the Republic of Belarus are equipped with such safety corners. An interactive computer game for preschool children (five to six years of age) was developed to teach children basic rules of safe behaviour at home, outside, at the water and in other places. The programme was developed with the MoE. The game can also be downloaded to smartphones and electronic tablets.

Involving learning through play, UNICEF collaborated with schools in developing four training grounds in Gomel, Grodno, Mogilev and Vitebsk where children learn road traffic regulations. The playgrounds are used by schoolchildren in grades one to five, with the MoE estimating approximately 4,000 children will use the playgrounds annually. UNICEF Belarus also supported the drafting of scenarios for school video lessons on fire and road safety, as well as public service announcements and interactive clips for children. Nine video lessons, two video-films, two social advertisements and an interactive clip on safety rules for children in different circumstances were shot to enhance children's knowledge on safe behaviour.

Complementing outreach directly to children, UNICEF advanced professionals' and parents' knowledge about how to prevent trauma with the development of the TEACH-VIP course comprising a two-day training upgrade qualification course, which was tested by 148 specialists. In addition, two methodological recommendations were developed and disseminated to traffic inspectors and secondary school teachers to guide their child injury prevention work and to help focus on the most effective tools.

To raise parents' awareness on home safety for children, UNICEF Belarus supported the design of "household trauma prevention" modelling centres for parents with didactical and visual materials to enhance parents' knowledge and formation of practical skills. Ten centres were

created in all regions of Belarus, with 36 seminars for approximately 300 parents with newborns conducted since the centres' opening.

Reaching out to the general public, a public awareness campaign comprising 137 billboards of 7 different designs on child injury prevention was designed and placed in Minsk, Brest, Homiel, Hrodna, Mahiliou and Vitsebsk in collaboration with MoI and MoE. These billboards have the potential to be viewed by two million people.

OUTPUT 7 Iodine Deficiency Disorders Sustainability

Analytical statement of progress

A key role for UNICEF Belarus is to strengthen system successes through monitoring and quality assurance process. To ensure sustainability of results achieved in prevention of iodine deficiency disorders, UNICEF supported the MoH to test iodine levels in salt that is produced, imported and marketed, strengthening the technical capacity of the monitoring bodies. To provide new and comprehensive evidence on the iodine status of the population, an assessment of the iodine status of pregnant and lactating women and children as a specific population group was initiated in 30 localities, where 1,300 children and women who were pregnant were tested for ioduria levels. The testing will continue into 2018 and review prevalence of goitre in children and pregnant women and indicators of intellectual development in schoolchildren. Test results will be ready in January 2018 and will establish an evidence-based framework to establish the needed steps to minimize remaining disparities. The MoH will be provided a set of practical recommendations to ensure the sustainability mechanisms for optimum ioduria levels.

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

In 2017, UNICEF Belarus worked across its programmes to establish a strong evidence base to position the rights of adolescents and youth higher in the political agenda. Specifically, UNICEF Belarus highlighted the risks to vulnerabilities that adolescents face, advocating for the need for policies and programmes designed to the specific needs of adolescents. UNICEF Belarus gained agreement from the Inter-Ministerial Commission for Child Rights to conduct a comprehensive review of the status of adolescents that will inform creation of the country's roadmap for sustainable development.

To create an enabling environment for adolescents and youth, UNICEF Belarus is taking a cross-cutting approach that examines the needs of adolescents and youth, as well as policies and responses across the areas of health, development and participation. This approach involves intersectoral coordination both among state partners and within the UNICEF Belarus office, placing the adolescent in the centre of the response.

UNICEF Belarus made concerted efforts to support streamlining of state youth policy and align with best international standards/practices through an analysis of national legislation to assess its compliance with the legislation of European and Central Asian countries. The analytical report of the assessment of the current status and perspectives of the youth policy normative

framework in Belarus was presented at a Parliamentary roundtable for adolescents, with recommendations shared to inform policies and decision-making. UNICEF Belarus also supported the National Strategy on the Improvement of Children's and Adolescents' Health, strengthening the normative framework to advance the work of UNICEF/MoH on child health and prioritizing the interagency and cross-sectoral collaboration for better health outcomes for adolescents.

At the same time, UNICEF Belarus advanced quality assurance tools and systems to consolidate existing progress for adolescents and young people. Building on the progress of youth-friendly health services, UNICEF Belarus partnered with the MoH and experts to establish a regulated certification process for youth-friendly health services, advancing greater service consistency across the clinics. Findings from the certification process were translated into a roadmap that defined steps for scaling up youth-friendly health services as well as required service adjustments to better meet the needs of the most vulnerable adolescents. These recommendations were submitted to the MoH to further inform policy development.

The establishment of the National Monitoring Resource Centre at the National Practical Research Centre 'Mother and Child' serves as a mechanism to ensure coordination, advanced methodological assistance and monitoring and assessment of healthcare institutions' work in implementation of projects and programmes dedicated to the improvement of mother, child and adolescent health. The accreditation process for child-friendly cities also provides a forum to promote child rights criteria in local policies and responses for children. In 2017, three additional cities received the title of "child-friendly," bringing the total number of accredited cities to ten. The child-friendly city movement focuses the attention of local administrations on children and has provided a channel for children themselves to become involved in the dialogue for child-friendly cities.

Finally, UNICEF Belarus collaborated with state and CSO partners to expand capacities for adolescents and young people through stronger evidence generation and capacity development of professionals. Findings from a study on adolescents' psychoactive substance dependency directed the development of a screening algorithm for identifying adolescents' risks of addictive behaviour, which was tested with a multidisciplinary group of professionals. Professionals' capacities to reach out to vulnerable adolescents were also enhanced through the widening of the thematic areas and geographic coverage in the work of the Regional Knowledge Hub on HIV prevention among most-at risk adolescents. Through the Hub, good in-country and international HIV prevention practices for most-at risk adolescents were shared not only in Belarus but in 13 countries across the region, which strengthened an informal professional network as additional capacity resources.

Evidence generation on legislative analysis and practices on mediation and alternatives to criminal prosecution for children provided the framework for a dialogue to advance community-based services as well as enhance professionals' knowledge on justice for children's issues and shifting approaches. In 2017, UNICEF Belarus participated in the Government's high-level Rule of Law Working Group, which was created to examine the country's justice reform process. Within the framework of the joint UN agencies, UNICEF Belarus designed with the Ministry of Justice and other partners in the working group the plans for a comprehensive assessment of the national justice system with particular focus on justice for children. This assessment will be conducted in 2018 and will play a critical role in informing national policies and programme development for justice.

OUTPUT 1 Programme implementation and strengthening

Analytical statement of progress

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

The programme specialists consistently increased their professional qualification through self-learning and e-learning courses and participation in UNICEF NY Headquarters and ECARO-facilitated webinars, conferences and network meetings.

The ECARO advisers actively participated in UNICEF Belarus' planning and programme design, particularly as the 'second decade' was a key advocacy priority for the office as well as in the SDG planning. In addition to specific support to UNICEF Belarus, the regional advisers facilitated Skype discussions and thematic webinars.

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 (United Nations Development Assistance Framework [UNDAF])

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Belarus continued high-level advocacy for improvement of the capacity of youth-friendly health services to include services tailored to the needs of the most vulnerable adolescents. Efforts focused on establishing a unified monitoring process for youth-friendly health services that guarantees more consistent and quality services across service clinics, as well as building the evidence base for interventions with adolescents dependent on psychoactive substances.

In partnership with the MoH, UNICEF Belarus supported the establishment of the National Methodological Monitoring Resource Centre, a key state focal point for resource outreach, monitoring and coordination across youth-friendly health services. To ensure effective management of the Centre, UNICEF Belarus organized a visit of centre specialists and MoH representatives to Ukraine to learn the business processes, data collection, monitoring and analysis of youth-friendly health services in Ukraine.

The regulation for youth-friendly health services certification was developed and approved by the MoH, and a team of national experts including NGOs and adolescents applied the certification standards to assess the service compliance of 48 youth-friendly health services. Through these assessments, the teams identified the main gaps and bottlenecks and drafted recommendations for tailoring services to the needs of the most vulnerable adolescents and up-scaling the most relevant youth-friendly health services for service standardization.

Through a study on psychoactive substances used by adolescents and young people, UNICEF Belarus established the evidence base, and agreed upon actions with key stakeholders from the line ministries. Based on study findings, methodological recommendations were developed on prevention and rehabilitation services for adolescents using these substances and prone to addiction. Specifically, screening algorithms for early identification of adolescents at high risk of addictive behaviour were created, discussed at regional capacity development workshops and

finalized based on the feedback and recommendations of multidisciplinary teams of specialists from the education, health and protection systems. Finalized methodological recommendations were distributed among professionals of the MoE, MoH, MoI and NGO outreach workers.

Three hundred and fifty physicians, psychologists, social pedagogues, youth-friendly health service professionals and specialists of inspections dealing with minors, representatives of NGOs and parents of adolescents gained knowledge and skills on effective interventions, screening algorithms and cross-sectoral collaboration on prevention of psychoactive substance use through training sessions facilitated by experienced national experts in six regions and Minsk city.

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) (United Nations Development Assistance Framework)

Analytical statement of progress

The gaps and challenges identified within PMTCT monitoring visits were presented at regional workshops in line with the results of the study of the fulfilment of the rights of women living with HIV and updated PMTCT protocols. Some 455 PMTCT workshop participants composed of paediatricians, obstetrician-gynaecologists, epidemiologists and specialists on infectious diseases gained knowledge and skills on the effective management of medical and social care for women who are HIV-positive and pregnant, including drug users. This included information on updated antiretroviral treatment and adherence to treatment that contributed to improved quality of care and reduction of mother-to-child HIV transmission to less than two per cent.

UNICEF Belarus continued to support the widening of the thematic areas and geographic coverage in the work of the Regional Knowledge Hub on HIV prevention among most-at risk adolescents run by the NGO BelAU. Five new landing pages were created for Armenia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. In total, 889 specialists from 13 countries were trained through three distance learning courses conducted by Hub experts, gaining knowledge and skills in state-of-the-art international approaches and best practices in HIV prevention in Europe and Central Asia, and management of prevention programmes for adolescents. At the same time, almost 400 adolescents gained knowledge on healthy lifestyles and prevention of risky behaviours.

Client outreach included 2,000 brochures for pregnant women living with HIV including drug users, which were disseminated in all regions and raised the level of parents' awareness on taking care of infants born to mothers who are HIV-positive. Some 120 adolescents from three countries were trained through the distance learning course "TEDDY- tribune for Children". Thirty-five video reels promoting healthy lifestyles and prevention of drug use, smoking and internet dependency were developed by graduates and made available on the ALLTeensCan channel. Another 276 adolescents from five countries increased their level of knowledge on prevention of bullying and implementation of videoblogging techniques on promotion of healthy lifestyles through the distance learning course "School for video bloggers: Digest for Adolescent." In addition, a series of face-to-face mini-training workshops were conducted by the Regional Knowledge Hub experts in the Centre of Innovation and Partnership in the National Children's Education Recreation Centre "Zubrenok".

OUTPUT 4 National and sub-national mechanisms established to promote adolescents' civic participation

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF's activities at the regional level focused on advancing child-friendly cities, with an additional three being accredited (Baranovichy, Novogrudok and Minsk), bringing the total number to ten. In 2018, CFCs will be used as a platform for a future good governance initiative.

To raise the public's awareness about child-friendly cities activities, the website detivgorode.by was rebranded and became accessible on FC, VKontakte and Twitter. Information on these forums are regularly updated by children themselves as well as local authorities, providing information about child-friendly cities best practices, challenges and human interesting stories in child rights implementation. The story about a children's initiative for renovation of a children's café on Dobrush was submitted and posted in the international child-friendly cities newspaper created by children for adults and children and dedicated to the World Children's Day.

Working across programmes, UNICEF Belarus was able to establish extensive evidence generation on adolescents' vulnerabilities, which provided the grounds for high-level advocacy on the added value of the investment in the second decade and the role of adolescents as 'accelerators' for progress in achievement of the SGDs. Heightened awareness and increased commitment to take action for adolescent issues were exhibited through the National Commission on the Rights of the Child, which called on four line ministries and UNICEF Belarus to conduct a thematic evaluation of adolescent-related policies and practices to inform the development of the National Strategy and Programme on the sustainable development of adolescents.

Through SDG-related information communication activities, training sessions and quests organized in Zubrenok and in Park Gorkogo in Minsk, 600 adolescents gained knowledge on the SDGs and their potential roles and contributions in ensuring progress related to them. Increased participation was also shown by the growing number of UNICEF social network followers, with 1,500 new followers, including adolescents.

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

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017, UNICEF Belarus continued its support to a rule of law/access to justice initiative, which included a comprehensive assessment of the national justice system with particular focus on justice for children. This was initiated in the framework of the joint UN agencies-Belarus Government Rule of Law/Access to Justice. This initiative was developed to inform programme responses on the state's rule of law rule of law/access to justice and to build capacity of key stakeholders working on justice for children. UNICEF Belarus also supported national partners to identify priorities through advocacy efforts within the rule of law/access to justice events and three working groups meetings. Within the working groups, key national priorities that UNICEF is focusing on include justice for children, mediation and other penitentiary reform.

Within the GLO.ACT programme (a four-year joint EU and UN Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC] initiative implemented in partnership with the International Organization for Migration [IOM] and UNICEF Belarus), UNICEF Belarus conducted three studies on justice for children issues: on mediation, alternatives to criminal prosecution and regulation of the best interests of the child principle. They provided comprehensive comparative analyses of national and international legislation along with practical recommendations for future legislative development.

Agreement was reached with the National Centre of Legislation and Policy Research to organize an international conference in 2018 on prospects for the introduction of mediation in criminal cases involving children and extending the opportunities on alternatives to children deprived of their liberty and in conflict with the law. Another agreement for early 2018 was made with the Ministry of Justice to conduct an international seminar on the findings and recommendations of the study on the best interest of the child in the legislation on migration and international good practice and standards on child migration.

To ensure a comprehensive approach in the sphere of justice for children, UNICEF Belarus reached an agreement to sign rolling work plans with the Supreme Court, the National Centre of Legislation and Legal Research of Belarus, and the Ministry of Justice for 2018.

As part of its implementation of the first National Human Rights Action Plan, UNICEF Belarus supported the government to conduct an international workshop on the Child Rights Ombudsperson institution with 100 participants. Representatives from the Presidential Administration, Supreme Court, Prosecutor's Office, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, MoE, MoH, and MFA, as well as CSO members were provided information about independent monitoring mechanisms.

One hundred and fifty heads of juvenile commissions from all regions were trained on international best practices in dealing with children at the national seminar on 'Prevention of the Offences of Minors' that was organized with the Ministry of Interior. The Moldovan Ombudsperson for Children presented her experience during the seminar.

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 Convention on the Rights of the Child

Analytical statement of progress

To create a strong child rights culture and system, this outcome focuses on building interconnections across three cross-cutting strategic directions: evidence generation; positioning and messaging critical child rights issues; and advancing partnerships that leverage resources and engagement.

UNICEF Belarus in 2017 enhanced its investment in evidence building, initiating three population-based surveys on child rights issues as well as an in-depth analysis on vulnerabilities and risks faced by adolescents. Using data collected, UNICEF Belarus developed policy briefs and factsheets for advocacy with high-level decision makers. Providing strong evidence-based arguments, UNICEF Belarus was able to convince the Government about the special attention needed for adolescents' needs, with the Council of Ministers' protocol for the Inter-Ministerial Commission of Child Rights, which called for a comprehensive, intersectoral review of the situation of adolescents to feed into planning for the SDG implementation roadmap. It could also possibly serve as a separate concept or strategy for responses for adolescents.

Data provided critical insights to the MAPS mission to understand the consequences for children and specifically adolescents and the "gap" they face. While the MAPS report was still being developed at the end of 2017, one of the proposed "accelerators" is adolescence and youth in achieving SDG commitments. These results provide clear examples of how UNICEF

Belarus is strengthening evidence generation on child vulnerabilities for decision-making. At the same time, UNICEF Belarus is partnering with Belstat, the Ministry of Economy and the World Bank to take steps to build the state's capacity for strong and unified data collection and monitoring for key child rights.

Linked with evidence gathering, the positioning of messages helped UNICEF Belarus gain the attention of key decision makers. To position UNICEF as an authority on child rights, UNICEF Belarus' communication team enhanced outreach through a multitude of media forums such as Instagram, flash mobs online, and other social and traditional media interaction. The office's Instagram account enabled interaction with new audiences such as "mommybloggers." Messaging with partners such as the Minsk hockey team, Dinamo, also broadened UNICEF Belarus' outreach to new audiences, providing information on positive parenting practices to more than 200,000 people.

The third component is UNICEF Belarus' efforts to build strong child rights coalitions, aligning agendas of stakeholders from all segments of society. Over the last two years, UNICEF Belarus has expanded and intensified its partnerships, with efforts in 2017 focused on consolidating relationships among CSOs, donors and the private sector. Building these partnerships, UNICEF Belarus focused not only on leveraging greater resources for children, but also engagement of partners to take a stance for children. For example, UNICEF Belarus signed a memorandum of understanding with Belarus' number two bank, Priorbank, with a commitment to support children with disabilities and particularly those children with disabilities most vulnerable in residential care.

With the Minister of Labour and Social Protection and Priorbank staff, UNICEF Belarus conducted a site visit to a social protection institution that has created closer family care approaches for children and young people with severe disabilities. By convening these colleagues, UNICEF Belarus is building a dialogue across a wider audience to gain understanding and greater solidarity to address sensitive issues that touch and challenge social norms and require shifts to create sustainable change in society.

OUTPUT 1 Programme implementation and strengthening

Analytical statement of progress

Close collaboration continued with the ECAROM&E section to strengthen research and evaluation workflows, with particular support for planning of an evaluation on adolescent programming (to be implemented 2018). Staff capacities were strengthened through network meetings and workshops to advance relations with the existing and potential donor communities, build alliances with CSOs and promote corporate social responsibility. UNICEF Belarus fostered an exchange with UNICEF Bulgaria on lessons learned of private fund-raising and building alliances with banks. At the same time, UNICEF Belarus also enhanced its consultancy capacities in monitoring and research as well as private partnerships, with the increased activities in evidence building and fostering of coalitions for children.

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

Analytical statement of progress

To strengthen the country's capacity in monitoring child rights, UNICEF Belarus leveraged resources to initiate three population-based surveys. The preparatory work was completed in 2017, with full roll-out of the surveys planned for 2018. The first work plan (2017-2018) with Belstat was signed, committing critical investment in the country's data system through conducting MICS6 and a disability survey, and developing a universal data-portal on child-related statistics, which were also reflected in the National Plan of Action for the improvement of the status of children and protection of their rights for 2017-2021.

UNICEF Belarus reinforced the quality of in-house analytics by launching a series of analytical briefs and factsheets and produced an analysis of adolescent vulnerabilities to effectively share high-quality policy and programme relevant evidence with partners and stakeholders. A dashboard of child rights monitoring indicators was developed as a diagnostic, monitoring and knowledge management tool covering all programme areas, including child-related SDG indicators. UNICEF Belarus continued to improve availability of data through the Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity (TransMonEE) database update. By aligning data efforts with current and future programming, UNICEF Belarus sustained its comparative advantage as a knowledge broker in the country.

To facilitate knowledge generation, UNICEF Belarus invested in research on violence against children and the use of psychoactive substances by adolescents, paying due attention to the interests, concerns and participation of key Government ministries. Data on adolescents resulted in the successful mobilization of resources needed to launch research on public investments in children and adolescents. A commitment of the Ministry of Economy was secured to use the results for informing the dedicated section on children and adolescents in the National Strategy of Sustainable Development. With enhanced evidence, UNICEF Belarus advocated successfully with the Government and the MAPS mission on the unique needs of adolescents, and the need to select this group as a priority area in SDG implementation at the country level.

UNICEF in Belarus engaged in collaboration with the World Bank, considering it a key partner in revealing and monitoring bottlenecks in realization of children's rights and advocating for policy improvements in social protection. Engaging the World Bank as a donor in MICS co-financing resulted in securing finances for the survey.

To ensure an ongoing dialogue with the Government and civil society on child-related policies and build consensus around the benefits of investing more resources in adolescents, UNICEF Belarus intensified its advocacy with two Deputy Prime Ministers and the National Commission on Child Rights. High-level advocacy was also conducted within the Kastrychnicki Economic Forum on a key policy initiative related to public investment in children's and adolescents' education and integrated services.

Strengthening capacity of local think tanks (selected through a mapping exercise for strategic partnership in evidence generation), UNICEF Belarus organized a capacity-development workshop for them on conducting rigorous impact evaluations and cost-benefit analysis of policies and services for children. Furthermore, to be in compliance with corporate policy, a thematic evaluation of key adolescent interventions was initiated jointly with the Government.

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

Analytical statement of progress

External communication strategies in 2017 focused on two objectives: positioning the rights of the most vulnerable children at the heart of the political and social agenda through greater media interaction, public events, partnerships and online actions; and strengthening UNICEF Belarus' brand to develop trust and engagement among media, partners and other stakeholders for fund-raising and advocacy.

Through increased media interaction, use of engaging human interest stories and two flash mobs online, UNICEF Belarus messages on child rights issues were seen over one million times through social and traditional media. UNICEF Belarus established an Instagram account that reached new audiences, such as "mommy bloggers", with engagement and reach of posts growing two-fold. The top posts reached approximately 97,000 people, more than triple the number from last year.

To support partnership-building and fund-raising, various visibility materials, such as infographics, web pages and thematic fact sheets were developed for use among key stakeholders. Seven field visits with key partners and donors, such as the Minister of Labour and Social Protection, the Head of the EU Delegation and the Russian MFA to UNICEF Belarus-supported facilities allowed partners to see UNICEF work first-hand, meeting the challenges of the fund-raising environment.

The partnership with Dinamo Minsk hockey team increased UNICEF Belarus' visibility, reaching over 200,000 Belarusians with "4 rules of better parenting" messages. The development of a network of over 30 dedicated volunteers enabled UNICEF Belarus to enhance its number of public events. UNICEF Belarus plans to expand its volunteer network to the regions in 2018. Engagement of world-renowned celebrities contributed to UNICEF Belarus' visibility and positive reputation. The second annual fund-raising gala attracted over 20 partners and raised around US\$40,000 for programmes for children with disabilities.

Advocacy communication, such as development of an ECD educational animation, PSAs, billboards, and games on child injury prevention, an update of the CFC initiative website, a photo exhibition on parenting children with disabilities and development of UNICEF quest games for use at events for adolescents helped strengthen UNICEF Belarus' efforts to raise awareness on the rights of the most vulnerable children in the country.

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 worked to strengthen existing partnerships and establish 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 to secure progress for children.

Along with cooperation of government agencies in knowledge generation, policy support and capacity building, UNICEF Belarus revitalized its partnership with CSOs within both regular activities and large-scale dialogue. In January and March 2017, UNICEF convened two meetings with CSOs to outline joint activities in collaboration with government on child rights monitoring and advocacy for the interests of specific groups of vulnerable children. A seminar "Children's Rights Institutions: Best International Practices" facilitated by UNICEF Belarus with

the participation of the MFA and civil society representatives on November 27, 2017 was an example of a productive intersectoral dialogue.

At the same time, UNICEF Belarus secured EU funding to support a good governance project designed to strengthen governance policies, plans and services on the rights of vulnerable families, children, adolescents and young people through an enhanced partnership between civil society and the Government. The project will provide the practical framework and operational resources for the implementation of UNICEF Belarus initiatives through civil society and government channels in 2018-2021.

Continuing its promotion of long-term relationships with the private sector, UNICEF Belarus was able to transition from sensitizing businesses on the child rights issues to forging sustainable partnerships. The partnership with the Renaissance Hotel Minsk, a national champion in providing employment opportunities for young people with disabilities, resulted in both monetary and in-kind contributions. The business supported a series of highly successful UNICEF events culminating in a joint gala dinner. The guests of the dinner organized by UNICEF Belarus, Renaissance and PRCI (a public relations agency) raised a record US\$40,000 for the needs of children with disabilities. Other highlights of the year included the signing of memorandums of understanding with the ice hockey club Dinamo Minsk and the second biggest bank in Belarus, Priorbank. The partnership with Dinamo helped UNICEF reach out to mass audiences of over 100,000 ice hockey fans with messages of inclusion and responsible parenting. The partnership with the Priorbank is part of a joint project of UNICEF Belarus with the MLSP, through which the bank has committed to raise a target of US\$350,000 annually to advance deinstitutionalization of children with disabilities residing in institutions.

UNICEF Belarus also has ongoing work to foster partnerships with MTS (a mobile operator) and Belavia (the national airline). The former will have a more targeted focus on promoting online safety for children, while the latter will address the issues of adolescents. Both are expected to have a strong fund-raising component. Another partnership, with leading national TV channel ONT, was being finalized at the end of 2017. UNICEF Belarus expects ONT to be a major media partner for broadcasting UNICEF messages and making the child rights agenda a subject of countrywide public discussion.

OUTPUT 5 Programme Coordination - Deputy Representative

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Belarus' capacity was advanced to enable the expansion of different alliances for children with different stakeholders: CSOs, private sector, bilaterals, donors and government.

OUTPUT 6 Policy and Planning Manager

Analytical statement of progress

At the end of 2016, the PBR approved a P4 policy and planning specialist post to improve programme planning in the difficult Belarus context, and to provide substantive policy advocacy built on best international practices and cross-country fertilization. This specialist started in July and implemented management structures such as regular programme management meetings that improved the programme's utilization rates and promoted greater cross-sectoral

collaboration among programmes. Three thematic areas were defined for office project teams: disabilities, prevention of violence against children and adolescence.

UNICEF Belarus also recognized the importance of cross-sectoral initiatives on child rights. Together with the ECARO Regional Gender Adviser, UNICEF Belarus conducted a gender review of programming and internal practices that highlighted two potential areas for an integrated community response: enhanced focus on gender-based violence issues and gender-specific adolescent issues, including in reproductive health. Through this review, UNICEF Belarus also recognized the importance of applying a gender lens on child groups at risk with multiple vulnerabilities, for example the reproductive health rights of adolescent girls with disabilities. The gender review will be completed in early 2018 helping UNICEF Belarus make more concerted efforts within its programming and informing UNICEF Belarus' evidence gathering for the programme's strategic moment of reflection scheduled in 2018.

Towards the end of 2017, another cross-cutting opportunity arose when the MFA expressed an interest in reopening a dialogue on the possibilities for establishing an Ombudsperson Office for Child Rights. This interest followed Belarus' more open dialogue on human rights with the development of the first Human Rights Action Plan in 2016. The workshop included renowned international child rights experts, child rights ombudspersons from other countries and CSOs. An active discourse took place with specific questions on steps that could be taken and why such as institute was critical for upholding rights. A specific result from this workshop was the agreement by the MFA to establish a work plan for 2018 with UNICEF Belarus.

Document centre

Evaluation and research

Title	Sequence Number	Type of Report
Study of psychoactive substances use among youth and adolescents	2017/126	Study

Other publications

Title
MAPS Mission Brief
UNICEF engagement in SDGs (factsheet)
Situation of Children in Brest City (factsheet)
Children with Disabilities in Belarus: An Overview (factsheet)
Access to Justice (factsheet)
Child Poverty and Social Assistance (factsheet)
Second Decade –Second Chance (factsheet)
Second Decade – Second Chance (Policy Paper)
Analysis of Adolescent Vulnerabilities in Belarus
Study of psychoactive substances use among youth and adolescents (summary in Russian)
Socio-Economic Analytical Brief, April 2017
Animation game / video-reel
Social experiment video for parents for use online
Video story on safe driving

3 PSAs on child safety
10 video-lessons on safety

Lessons learned

Document Type/Category	Title
Lesson Learned	Investing in child rights monitoring is crucial in the SGD era
Lesson Learned	Investing in child rights monitoring is crucial in the SGD era

Programme documents

Document Type	Title	Name
Reviews	Analysis of Adolescent Vulnerabilities in Belarus	UNICEF_Adolescent vulnerabilities in Belarus_2017_En.pdf
Fact Sheet	Disability Fact Sheet	Disability factSheet.pdf
Fact Sheet	Access to Justice Fact Sheet	Copy of justice_advocacy_paper+updated_16.05.pdf
Fact Sheet	Adolescent Fact sheet	Adolescents_Fact_Sheet_to_En_fin.docx