

Georgia

Executive Summary

Throughout 2015, UNICEF continued to successfully position itself as a policy advisor to Government on key child rights' issues. Strong alliances were forged with the Parliament, the Prime Minister's Office, line ministries and Government agencies, to advance legislation, policies and programmes in order to promote the realisation of child rights in Georgia.

UNICEF, with support from the European Union (EU), advised the Government on the preparation of a Juvenile Justice Code covering all children in contact with criminal and administrative systems, which was adopted by Parliament in June 2015. According to expert opinion, it is fully compliant with international standards, and one of the most modern pieces of juvenile justice legislation in the region. It introduced a wide range of alternative measures to detention, the creation of a child-friendly environment, and the specialisation of justice professionals. Diversion and mediation services are functional nationwide and were expanded to cover serious crimes.

With UNICEF support, the Government developed a new Law on Early Learning and Pre-school Education, which was registered at Parliament in December 2015. The law foresees the introduction of a compulsory pre-primary year for all five-year-old children to improve school readiness, mechanisms for the prevention of violence against children, as well as increased responsibilities at the central level for establishing cross-sectoral national standards, and supporting municipalities to improve governance, quality and access in early childhood education. To support the implementation of the law, the Government, in partnership with UNICEF, launched the national school readiness programme in all 150 kindergartens of Tbilisi, piloting a revised curricula and capacity development of the teaching workforce required to ensure children's holistic development prior to the nationwide roll-out in 2016.

In an effort to reduce child poverty, the Government, with UNICEF support, revised the Targeted Social Assistance Programme, and projected that the number of children living in extreme poverty will be halved by end 2016. UNICEF advocated for, and advised on, the new methodology, which significantly improves the targeting of poor children, and introduces a child benefit to 40 per cent of children. As of November 2015, 115,096 children below the age of 16 qualified for the cash transfers and child benefits, out of which 22,455 qualified only by the new methodology. Future efforts to reduce child poverty will require raising the poverty threshold to a level more adequate for a middle-income country context, as well as addressing critical gaps in terms of access to and coverage of child-friendly social services and family support services.

The Government, with UNICEF support, has embarked on a key reform that aims to introduce home visits by primary healthcare professionals for families with children 0-3 years of age, in order to monitor and educate parents and caretakers on child-growth and development. A comprehensive home visiting concept for the Georgia context was developed and preparations for a pilot in two regions were initiated. With UNICEF support, the pilot will continue until its country-wide expansion. Furthermore, UNICEF collaborated with the Government to reform the maternal and child health (MCH) surveillance system, and developed a medical registry system,

which becomes functional in January 2016, tracking every pregnant woman throughout the life-cycle, based on Norwegian best practices.

Despite recent progress on deinstitutionalisation, concerns remain regarding the continued use of large-scale institutions for children with disabilities. Therefore, UNICEF, in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), initiated the establishment of small-scale, alternative family-type services for children with severe disabilities. In response to UNICEF's advocacy, the Government agreed to expand state child programmes, as well as funding for the new services in 2016.

The Parliament of Georgia, with UNICEF support, adopted the amendments to the National Law on Patient's Rights and the Law on HIV/AIDS removing previous legislative barriers by lowering the age from 18 to 14 years, for which HIV testing can be done without parental consent.

In Abkhazia, UNICEF transformed its engagement from a predominately emergency modality towards a more development-oriented approach that expands beyond MCH to education and child protection. UNICEF continued to support service delivery through community support and capacity building for medical professionals, teachers and social workers, while at the same time working on a more systematic collection of still missing information about the situation of children, undertaking a child protection assessment and an assessment of the education system in Abkhazia. The international community remains without access to the Tskhinvali / South Ossetia region and the situation of children continues to be unmonitored.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
ECE - Early Childhood Education
EU – European Union
GAVI – Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization
HACT – Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
ILO – International Labour Organization
IMCI - Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
KPI - Key Performance Indicator
MCH – Maternal and Child Health
MoES - Ministry of Education and Science
MoLHSA - Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation
OHCHR - Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PEP - Post Exposure Prophylaxis
PISA – Programme for International Student Assessment
RKLA - Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda (of UNICEF)
SIDA – Swedish International Development Agency
SP – UNICEF's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan
UN – United Nations
UNCT - UN Country Team
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR - United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID – United States Agency for International Development
WASH – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO – World Health Organisation

Capacity Development

Capacity development remained one of the key strategies of the programme of cooperation in 2015. UNICEF and the EU supported the Government in training 600 justice professionals on justice for children in order to support the implementation of the newly adopted Juvenile Justice Code. The training targeted multi-disciplinary professionals, including juvenile justice trainers, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, social workers, mediators, as well as probation and penitentiary staff.

In order to strengthen the Government’s MCH capacity, UNICEF supported the development of a surveillance system which will register every pregnant woman throughout the birth life-cycle. In total, 550 representatives from 273 medical institutions were trained on how to effectively work with the new data collection mechanism. The birth registry will make a critical contribution towards well-informed decision and policy-making for improved mother and child health outcomes in Georgia.

UNICEF supported capacity building on early childhood education at six major state universities. Lecturers and teacher trainers were educated on developing in-service training courses for a qualified teaching workforce, and the new national school readiness programme. UNICEF trained master trainers on the school readiness programme, who successfully transferred their knowledge to the teaching workforce in all kindergartens of Tbilisi. UNICEF developed a guide for teachers on how to communicate hygiene issues at pre-schools, and conducted a Training-of-Trainers for 171 teachers/master trainers from all districts of Georgia.

To strengthen the child protection system, UNICEF developed a Training-of-Trainers for senior social workers and provided training courses to the 20 newly recruited social workers of the Social Services Agency.

In Abkhazia, UNICEF strengthened quality health, education and child protection services via training courses for 200 doctors and nurses, 280 teachers, 30 militia/police inspectors, 20 psychologists, and, with World Vision, 25 staff of three Child Development Centres and a new Rehabilitation Centre for Children with Disabilities.

Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

UNICEF’s continued investment in evidence-generation and public advocacy, built strong alliances to undertake substantive legislative changes for children, and advanced the realization of child rights in Georgia.

The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) was assisted to develop a national action plan for an improved data collection and monitoring system, which systematically reports data for critical indicators for out of school children and children at risk of dropping out.

The Government, with UNICEF support, designed a national nutrition surveillance system to systematically assess the nutritional status of the population. Furthermore, UNICEF supported the development and field-testing of a new water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure monitoring instrument, which was recommended to be mainstreamed into the State Statistics’

Department database.

UNICEF conducted the 2015 biennial longitudinal Welfare Monitoring Survey covering data on the socioeconomic situation of households in terms of poverty, education, health, and WASH. Furthermore, the National Statistic Office developed a Country Analytical Report focusing on equity issues related to ethnicity and language.

UNICEF, in partnership with the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Government, carried out a joint appraisal and immunisation programme review to provide a sound baseline for the development of Georgia's Graduation Action Plan for 2015 and beyond.

Together with the World Bank, UNICEF developed the joint, peer-reviewed publication "Continuous Improvement-Strengthening Georgia's Targeted Social Assistance Programme" capturing the reforms recently undertaken.

In line with the European Neighbourhood Policy, the MoES, with UNICEF support, launched a policy dialogue on quality education for ethnic minorities in Georgia. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) research study on multi-lingual education served as a basis for the formulation of a new National Policy on Education for Ethnic Minorities in the best interest of the child.

In Abkhazia, UNICEF carried out the first systematic education and child protection assessments, which led to a comprehensive overview of the situation of children in the region.

Partnerships

UNICEF built strong partnerships and alliances with the Parliament, the Prime Minister's Office, line ministries and Governmental agencies to promote legislative changes for children, including the following:

- a) In partnership with the EU, UNICEF promoted the development and implementation of the Juvenile Justice Code adopted by Parliament in June 2015;
- b) The Law on Early Learning and Pre-school Education was registered at the end of 2015 and the official hearings in the Parliament Committees will be held in February 2016;
- c) The draft Law on Adoption and Foster Care was finalized in 2015 and is to be initiated in 2016;
- d) Amendments to the Law on Patient's Rights concerning HIV testing were adopted in May 2015;
- e) A package of amendments to several laws in order to improve legal safeguards of children living and working on the streets and victims of domestic violence was finalised in June 2015;
- f) The introduction of a revised, more child-sensitive targeted social assistance system, which includes a new child benefit for all children below 16;
- g) A legislative gap analysis and proposed recommendations to harmonise Georgian national legislation in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD);
- h) Advocacy for the Government's ratification of the CRC Third Optional Protocol;
- i) Revision of technical regulations on WASH and Nutrition for pre-school institutions.

UNICEF, along with UN agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and donors, successfully advocated for the inclusion of child rights in the National Human Rights Strategy

and Action Plan, the Association Agreement and Human Rights Dialogue between the Government and the EU.

External Communication and Public Advocacy

In line with its 2015 Communication and Public Advocacy Strategy, UNICEF further enhanced its leading voice as an advocate for children, stimulating both a national debate on child rights, and positive social norms. UNICEF Georgia actively engaged in social media and public advocacy campaigns, public discussions, special events involving celebrities, and extensive pitches in the media with up to 1,000 media stories about children. Specific public advocacy campaigns focusing on violence against children, pre-school education, the school readiness programme, the newly revised more child-sensitive social protection system revision, justice for children including the newly adopted Juvenile Justice Code, malnutrition of women and children and inclusive education for children with disabilities. All of these helped in building strong alliances to undertake substantive legislative changes that support the realisation of child rights in Georgia.

UNICEF Georgia continued its comprehensive monitoring of the coverage of children and UNICEF in the media, and continued working with the Charter of Georgian Journalists and other media development institutions to promote in-depth ethical reporting on children. Regular monitoring, seminars and dialogue with practicing journalists resulted in no major violations of ethical norms while reporting. The leading national and regional television companies took part in a special agreement activating self-regulation mechanisms in relation to reporting on children's issues.

The office's enhanced digital engagement strategy embraced the development of a high-quality video for the State of the World's Children Report in a social experiment about public attitudes towards street children. UNICEF Georgia also contributed to a global video about early marriages. Videos featuring professionals, experts and opinion-makers on the specific, concerts, infographics and animated illustrations for social media, resulted in reaching decision makers and the public on child rights issues.

The revised web and social media strategy, which included specific campaigns such as nutrition, 'fight unfair', and disability, resulted in 30,000 unique web visitors, and reached 50,000 people.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

UNICEF facilitated South-South cooperation on inclusive, quality education and justice for children. UNICEF Georgia in collaboration with UNICEF Tajikistan organized and hosted a study tour on inclusive education policies and practices for a Tajik delegation of education and health professionals. For three days the 10 Tajik delegates visited different schools, vocational schools and universities to learn about the Georgian education system. The delegation met with national education leaders and exchanged ideas for possible replication.

Estonia's school students rank among the best in the world and at the top in Europe while in Georgia, according to the 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), two-thirds of all 15-year-olds are not proficient in reading, math and science. Hence, UNICEF fostered South-South cooperation between the Georgian and Estonian Ministries of Education. As a result, the Government of Georgia revised the national curriculum for grades 1 - 6 (2014), and 7 - 9 (2015). Grades 10-12 are planned for 2016. UNICEF and Estonian experts supported eight state universities (four in 2014 and 2015) to improve programmes for in- and

pre-service training of school teachers. Finally, UNICEF organized a study tour for representatives of the Georgian Ministry of Education and Science to Estonia, and facilitated a vibrant knowledge exchange on inclusive, quality education at the policy and school level.

According to expert opinion, Georgia's newly adopted Juvenile Justice Code is one of the most modern pieces of juvenile justice legislation in the region. As such, UNICEF Georgia hosted a delegation of seven countries (Armenia, Belarus, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan) to share its experience regarding the justice for children system reform focusing on the Juvenile Justice Code. Furthermore, UNICEF Georgia supported UNICEF Kyrgyzstan and Albania to introduce diversion and to develop a national Juvenile Justice Code.

Identification and Promotion of Innovation

In 2015, UNICEF developed and launched an interactive data portal (data.unicef.ge), which enables user-friendly access and analysis to UNICEF-generated data to the public. The aim is to engage the wider public, academia, researchers, think-tanks, as well as the local and national government, in order to encourage further analysis and promote evidence-based policy making, enriching advocacy and public discourse.

Support to Integration and cross-sectoral linkages

UNICEF supported the Government to initiate the establishment of comprehensive, cross-sectoral early childhood development services for healthy child growth, development, and protection. The primary healthcare system was identified as the main entry point to support families with young children (0-3 years of age) through the introduction and systematic implementation of a home visiting service. In 2015, the Government, in partnership with UNICEF, undertook preparations to pilot the newly developed home visiting model in two regions of Georgia, so that nationwide expansion can follow.

As part of the revision of the Targeted Social Assistance Programme, UNICEF supported the Social Service Agency of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs to develop a child assessment screening instrument that will be used by the social agents. The social agents visit families to assess their economic and social wellbeing, and identify potential cases of child rights violations and refer them to the respective agencies, including social workers, doctors and the police. As of October 2015, the social agents had visited around 50 percent of all families in Georgia, and assessed around 35 percent of the child population below 18.

In Abkhazia, UNICEF, in cooperation with World Vision, continued the provision of basic, cross-sectoral health, education and child protection services within 48 social community centres for children in remote rural and returnee areas.

Service Delivery

Due to Georgia's middle-income country context, service delivery has not been a primary intervention strategy, and was mainly applied to support the conflict-affected regions. Hence, in Abkhazia, UNICEF's work continued to have a major component that supported service delivery, providing community support and capacity-building for doctors, nurses, teachers, psychologists and para-social workers, and - for the first time - also militia/police inspectors dealing with children. UNICEF, through its partner World Vision, provided 272 children with disabilities and their parents, with basic services (life-skills development, speech therapy, physiotherapy, psychological counselling) through three child development centres. In addition,

495 children in returnee and remote rural areas received pre-school education services in 46 pre-school groups.

Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

UNICEF continued mainstreaming human rights principles into all programmes, and closely cooperated with its national and international partners to achieve progress in the realisation of children's rights in Georgia.

UNICEF provided technical advice to the development and implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan, which includes a chapter on child rights, and is based on the National Human Rights Strategy (2014-2017) that has been an important basis for UNICEF programming and cooperation with its partners. With UNICEF support, the Child Rights Centre of the Public Defender's Office monitored the implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan, as well as the Anti-Discrimination Law.

The Government of Georgia finalised and submitted its fourth periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

UNICEF established a strong partnership with the Parliament of Georgia, especially with its Human Rights Committee, and continued to drive the above-mentioned legislative changes for children in Georgia.

Gender Mainstreaming and Equality

UNICEF Georgia is part of the UN Gender Theme Group that works to strengthen coordinated action of UN agencies, donors, and NGOs towards greater gender equality and women's empowerment. In September 2015, a new Task Force on Early Marriages was established based on the initiative of the Gender Theme Group and the Inter-Agency Council Implementing Measures for Elimination of Domestic Violence, focusing on the following tasks:

- a) Advocacy for placing child marriage high on the Government Human Rights and Gender Equality agenda;
- b) Supporting refinement of policy recommendations based on data and evidence;
- c) Integrating prevention of child marriage in Government policies, strategies and action plans;
- d) Improving coordination on child protection referral procedures and prevention of child marriage;
- e) Supporting coordination among NGOs working on child marriage in order to maximise synergies;
- f) Identifying research needs and advocating for increased availability of reliable data on early marriage.

In November 2015, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the law prohibiting the marriage of girls under the age of 18, leaving the discretion to allow the marriage to the courts only. Previously, marriage for 16 and 17 year-olds was possible and subject to parental consent. The new law is a temporary measure, as the Government is planning to prohibit marriages before age of 18 of all boys and girls.

With UNICEF support, the Ministry of Education and Science developed a national school readiness programme for all five year-olds, building on the key strategies to promote gender equality in classrooms.

UNICEF developed a gender plan for its Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)-funded programme on strengthening sustainable social services for children in Abkhazia. The plan focuses on the generation of gender-disaggregated data, a comprehensive analysis of how gender roles and relationships between genders relate to vulnerability, community participation sensitizing on gender equality, and gender-based violence.

Environmental Sustainability

UNICEF continued to facilitate youth engagement and social capital development by engaging youth groups in environmental protection activities and in reducing threats to the environment in the conflict-affected regions of Abkhazia, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, and Shida Kartli. The programme also contributed to increasing the knowledge and understanding of youth about the environment, and associated challenges, such as human health, ecosystems, as well as on developing skills to address these issues.

Effective Leadership

In 2015, UNICEF Georgia developed key strategic frameworks for the new programme of cooperation for 2016 - 20, including the Country Programme Document and Country Programme Management Plan, through a participatory and comprehensive process, which included the involvement of all Tbilisi Office and the Sukhumi Zone Office staff. Similarly, all staff participated in the development of the 2015 Annual Management Plan. Furthermore, UNICEF was actively engaged in the shaping of the new UN Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development 2016-20.

In leading UNICEF Georgia, the Representative was advised by the Country Management Team, which played a major role in supporting the efficient and effective implementation and monitoring of the country programme. Performance was closely monitored by the Country and Programme Management Teams against established management indicators for operations and programme. Significant attention was paid to addressing the results of the local and global staff surveys, and the development of a response plan.

To improve overall office effectiveness, the Country Management Team supported the establishment of the Microsoft Outlook/Teamsite-based task assignment system to enhance the oversight function of assigned tasks to sections and staff.

The office maintained other well-established, functioning statutory committees aimed to ensure the efficient and effective monitoring of key office processes.

UNICEF Georgia regularly updated its Business Continuity Plan to ensure that the UNICEF Georgia office can continue to perform essential operations under all conditions.

Security/emergency related telecommunication measures were updated, and training courses for security and warden staff were undertaken in both the Tbilisi and Sokhumi offices.

Financial Resources Management

UNICEF Georgia performance was closely monitored by the Country and Programme Management Teams against established management and programme indicators. By the end of 2015, UNICEF Georgia achieved full utilization of Regular Resources and Other Resources with no outstanding Direct Cash Transfers over six months, which was a result of successful management oversight throughout the year.

Efficiency gains were achieved by:

- a) Initiating the use of the cashier's office services from Division of Financial and Administrative Management for large international transactions in US dollars resulting in 50 percent cost savings per transaction. Recipients were mainly international implementing partners, and local institutions with bank accounts in US dollars;
- b) Strengthening the bank replenishment process for the Sukhumi field office through a partnership with UNICEF Armenia, achieving a significantly shortened transaction lead time and increased flexibility for urgent requests for replenishment;
- c) Increasing the outsourcing of non-core activities, such as event management, administrative, logistical and clerical support, through Long Term Agreements leading to efficiency gains in human resources.

UNICEF Georgia continued to comply with new Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) and partnership policies, and ensured to have in place the respective monitoring and management tools. The office successfully continued using the services of a local audit firm, which assisted in micro assessments and assurance activities related to HACT.

Fund-raising and Donor Relations

While successful fundraising in 2015 assured the required OR funding for the country programme 2015 and over 40 percent for the new country programme 2016-20 (US\$10 million), UNICEF continues to operate in a challenging resource mobilisation environment with donors reducing their development cooperation budgets for Georgia, and shifting their attention away from health and education.

The UNICEF Georgia Resource Mobilisation Committee ensured a systematic approach to resource mobilisation, and capitalised on opportunities to strategically leverage resources. The committee met on a monthly basis to monitor the implementation of the resource mobilisation strategy.

The major donors to UNICEF Georgia are the European Union, USAID, SIDA, Government of Estonia, GAVI and UNICEF National Committee in Luxembourg, in addition to UNICEF's thematic funds.

Furthermore, UNICEF Georgia engaged with UNICEF Brussels to position children's rights in key EU policies, and strategic agreements with the Government of Georgia, including the new EU Neighbourhood Policy.

UNICEF further strengthened its cooperation with other UN agencies through the finalization of UN Joint Programmes on the Protection of Human Rights (with the United Nations Development Programme/UNDP, International Labour Organisation/ILO, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights/OHCHR), Access to Justice (with UNDP) and on MCH in Abkhazia (with UNDP, United Nations Population Fund/UNFPA with successful fund mobilisation from the EU.

UNICEF Georgia's performance and utilisation of financial resources was closely monitored by the Country and Programme Management Teams against established management and programme indicators, as well as the Annual Work Plan 2015 on a monthly basis.

Evaluation

UNICEF Georgia prepared and implemented the Plan for Research, Impact Monitoring and Evaluation.

In 2015, the office prepared its management response to the recommendations of the evaluation of the childcare reform which was conducted in 2014 and incorporated key lessons learned into the new UNICEF country programme for 2016-2020. This included an increased focus on developing family support and alternative care services, further investment in inter-sectoral cooperation, and robust referral within the social work system.

UNICEF Georgia also participated in the multi-country evaluation concerning juvenile justice in the framework of the UNICEF Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda (RKLA).

Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

In the third quarter of 2015, the UN Country Team (UNCT) analysed the benefits and constraints of adopting a Business Operations Strategy for the UN agencies in Georgia, and approved an action plan for implementation of the strategy in 2016. The strategy will be a more systematic approach to enhance the already existing collaboration and joint work.

Joint procurement by UN agencies has significantly increased efficiency in both human and financial resources. There are two modalities being exercised: (1) The interagency procurement team undertakes the entire process, with subsequent recommendation/endorsement by the UNCT. In such cases, each agency contributes a small proportion of one staff member's time and as a result receives the procurement decision; (2) A lead agency is identified and undertakes the procurement. Afterwards, the result is presented to the UN Operations Management Team which, if satisfied, recommends for the UNCT's endorsement for use of other UN agencies. This modality saves human resources for the entire selection/contracting process for other UN agencies.

In addition to saving human resources, there are also savings in financial resources. The comparably higher procurement volumes for entire UN often results in better prices and significant discounts compared to procurement contracts if undertaken separately by individual agencies.

There is no exact estimation of monetary savings available for 2015, but such an exercise is planned following implementation of the Business Operations Strategy.

Supply Management

In recent years, UNICEF Georgia has reduced its supply component and this continued in 2015. This is mainly related to a change in the programming focus towards policy advisory, advocacy and capacity development activities. The only area where a supply component is still active is the conflict-affected region of Abkhazia, for which the programme activities are operated from the Sokhumi Field Office.

Until the end of 2015, UNICEF Georgia benefitted from the warehouse space provided free-of-charge by the Government. During the year, the warehouse was mainly used for Abkhazia operations. The logistics related to the conflict-affected area are relatively complex. Regular shipping companies available in-country are not able to enter the conflict area. UNICEF Georgia uses trucks available through the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR),

which can enter the conflict area and deliver goods directly to the recipients. The warehouse is currently at almost zero balance. The actual value of the inventory is about US\$700, which is earmarked as prepositioned supplies, and not intended for immediate programme activities.

The value of Government Orders via Procurement Services totalled US\$1,722,776 (out of which US\$594,195 was channelled via GAVI). These were mainly vaccines and safety injection supplies, which were efficiently managed by the office throughout the year. The supply inputs were of good quality and delivered in a timely fashion. The process also involved the procurement and delivery of vaccines and safety injection supplies to the conflict-affected area. This was successfully facilitated by UNICEF without any stock-outs or delays identified.

UNICEF Georgia 2015	Value in US\$	
	Supplies	Services
Programme	95,115	396,417
Operations	124,760	31,654

Security for Staff and Premises

The UNICEF office is located in the UN common premises. In this respect, all security-related matters, including the staff and premises, are managed by UNDP/ UN Department of Safety and Security, with the oversight function from the UN Security Management Team where UNICEF is represented as a regular member. UNICEF is in full compliance with the security standards in the country.

Currently, the main concern for UNICEF in respect to staff security remains the field office operation. There are significant restrictions and limitations of staff movement between the country and field offices. Tbilisi office local staff are not allowed to enter the Abkhazia conflict region. Similarly, local staff in Sokhumi are also restricted to move outside Abkhazia. Due to these travel limitations of the local staff, the international staff often has to drive themselves between offices. On several occasions, international staff had to transport newly-arrived consultants and guests across the administrative boundary line.

Human Resources

In 2015, the office elaborated a Country Programme Document and Country Programme Management Plan, which included adjustments to the staff structure in line with the capacity needs for future programme delivery. For each output of the new Country Programme a lead/convener function was identified.

UNICEF Georgia developed an action plan in response to the results of the Global Staff Survey. The implementation of the action plan was reviewed regularly at meetings of the Joint Consultative Committee.

The UN HIV/AIDS Joint Team nominated UNFPA as a focal point for the implementation of the UN Cares programme in 2015-2016. All UN managers, including UNICEF, restated their strong commitment to the programme. UNICEF personnel and their families were provided with information about UN system policy, programmes, personnel rights, benefits, and their own responsibilities regarding HIV and AIDS. All personnel and their families are aware of where and how to access voluntary counselling and testing. In addition, in November 2015, UNICEF personnel had an opportunity to attend a webinar for Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) Kit custodians, which aimed at raising awareness about PEP in HIV prevention.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

The Office 365 platform and its supported components have been fully implemented by UNICEF Georgia. LYNC/Skype for Business was actively used for conducting webinars, and remote meetings with UNICEF regional office, headquarters and the field offices. It was one of the main methods for communication with the Sukhumi field office due to the restricted access for local staff to this area. OneDrive was actively used for file sharing, and it also provided additional space for files and documents.

On the SharePoint platform, a team site was implemented for the UNICEF Georgia, which was also used to archive internal documents, official correspondence and office plans. It also hosts a task monitoring system for the office. All staff members have been trained on how to use the new systems.

Social and digital media platforms were some of the active components used to share ongoing processes and achievements of the office to the public. One of the large projects implemented together with communication and social policy sections, was the data analysis platform (<http://data.unicef.ge/>).

Emergency telecommunication: A new communication solution using satellite phone systems was established between the Tbilisi and Sukhumi offices. Using this system, staff members are able to communicate both ways, using a combination of mobile-GSM/Satellite channels. In the past, due to communication limitations between the region of Abkhazia and the remaining country, two-way communication was not possible). In addition, regular satellite phones and BGAN terminals were tested, and VHF/HF training conducted for the staff.

UNICEF Georgia established an SMS broadcast system through which senior management and security staff are able to send broadcast text messages to all staff for effective and prompt distribution of urgent information in emergencies.

Programme Components from Results Assessment Module

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 More children and mothers benefit from quality basic and alternative social services (including integrated and decentralized services) that address targeted disparities.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF's social policy advocacy and capacity development interventions contributed to the significant results that were achieved in the delivery of social services to children in Georgia (*RKLA 1,2,3,4, 6, 7, 10*). The rate of extremely poor children is expected to be halved following the introduction of a revised, more child-sensitive targeted social assistance system. UNICEF played an advocacy role, and advised on the new methodology, which significantly improves on the targeting of poor children, and introduces child benefits to 40 per cent of Georgian children.

While maternal micronutrient supplementation was introduced for all pregnant women, and a principle agreement was reached on the introduction of flour fortification (subject to further data collection on iron deficiency levels), progress on reducing child mortality still needs to be accelerated. The current under-five mortality rate is 13 deaths per 1,000 live births. Furthermore, the Government decided to embark on a key reform concerning child growth and development via the introduction of home visiting to Georgia. With UNICEF's support, a home visiting model for Georgia was developed, and agreed on by all key stakeholders. The next step

will be the revision of the *State Programme for Rural Doctors*, and the pilot of home-visiting services in the Imereti and Racha-Lechkumi regions. In addition, UNICEF collaborated with the Georgian Government in reforming the MCH Surveillance System, as well as developed a medical registry system based on best practices established in Norway. The system will become functional in January 2016.

The Parliament of Georgia, with UNICEF support, adopted the amendments to the *National Law on Patient's Rights* and the *Law on HIV/AIDS*, marking a major step forward in removing prior legislative barriers on HIV testing, effectively lowering the age for which HIV testing can be done without parental consent from 18 years of age to 14 years of age.

In partnership with UNICEF, the new Law on Early and Pre-school Education was developed and registered with Parliament. The law will increase the access and quality of services that are essential to the improved school readiness, transition and learning achievements of children later in school. The availability of pre-school facilities remains a challenge, and has been prioritized in the regional development plans. The Ministry of Education and Science, jointly with UNICEF, is in the process of introducing a national School Readiness Programme for all five year-old children. In order to improve the qualifications of the early childhood education (ECE) teaching workforce, UNICEF is supporting revisions in the curricula of in-service training programmes, and the development of a pre-service (BA-level) programme.

According to PISA 2009, two thirds of all 15-year-olds are not proficient in reading, math and science in Georgia. In order to improve quality education, UNICEF and Estonian experts provided assistance to the MoES in the revision of school curricula for grades 1-6 (2014), 7-9 (2015). Grades 10-12 will be conducted in 2016. In addition, UNICEF and Estonian experts helped eight state universities (four each in 2014 and 2015) to improve programmes for the in-service and pre-service training of school teachers.

After nearly a decade of UNICEF-supported child care reform, significant progress was made in ending institutional care, and ensuring a family environment for every child. The number of children growing up in institutions decreased markedly from 4,600 in 2005 to 83 in 2015. However, children with disabilities still comprise the majority of children living in the two last remaining state-run institutions. The fact that over 40 percent of the Georgian public continues to stigmatise children with disabilities, underscores the broader societal challenges that hinder the implementation of effective policy reform on this issue. A Law on Adoption and Foster Care, and a Government programme on home care for children with disabilities is under development.

Also noteworthy was the adoption of the Juvenile Justice Code, which contributed to the significant progress achieved in supporting juvenile justice reform in Georgia. This code covers all children in contact with the law, and was prepared in partnership with the Ministry of Justice and the EU. According to expert opinion, the code is fully compliant with international standards, and one of the most modern pieces of juvenile justice legislation in the region. It introduces a wide range of alternative measures to detention, the creation of a child-friendly environment, and the specialisation of justice professionals. UNICEF, in conjunction with the EU, supported the ongoing process of justice system specialisation, including the training of 40 juvenile justice trainers that will further build national capacities in Georgia.

In Abkhazia, the transformation of UNICEF's engagement, from a predominately emergency modality, towards a strategy with a longer-term approach targeting systemic change, progressed slowly. UNICEF's work continued to have a major component in support of service delivery in the form of community support and capacity-building for medical professionals,

teachers and para-social workers. Furthermore, UNICEF worked on a more systematic collection of still-missing information about the situation of children in Abkhazia. This was achieved by undertaking preparations for a household welfare monitoring survey, a child protection assessment/mapping programme, and an assessment of the education system. With regard to the Tskhinvali / South Ossetia region, the international community is still afforded no access to the region, leaving the situation of children in the area unmonitored.

OUTPUT 1 Fifty per cent of the poorest municipalities ensure pre-schools provide inclusive and quality education in line with national standards.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
A Child's Right to an Inclusive Quality Education:

Early Learning and School Readiness (SP Outcome 5, RKLA 3): In 2014/2015 the Parliament of Georgia with UNICEF's technical assistance developed a Law on Early and Pre-school Education, which was registered by the Parliament in December 2015 and to be adopted in 2016. The law will enable increasing access to and quality of services that are essential for children's improved school readiness and learning achievements later in school.

With UNICEF support, the MoES developed a school readiness programme (national standards, curriculum and teacher's guide) for all five year old children, which was launched by the MoES for all 150 kindergartens of Tbilisi municipality on 1 October 2015. UNICEF supported the revision of in-service training programme for the current ECE workforce in six state universities and the development of a Bachelor programme for future ECE educators.

Including All Children in Quality Learning (RKLA 4): Due to low quality of curricula and teachers' standards, according to PISA 2009, two thirds of all 15-year-olds are not proficient in reading, math and science in Georgia. UNICEF and Estonian experts provided assistance to the MoES in the revision of school curricula for grades 7-9. In addition, UNICEF and Estonian experts helped four state universities to improve programmes for in- and pre-service training of school teachers.

Guided by UNICEF's global and regional strategy, UNICEF Georgia assisted the MoES in developing a national action plan for an improved data collection and monitoring system on out-of-school children.

In December 2013, the Parliament ratified the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. In order to reinforce the implementation of basic principles of the Convention, the MoES, with UNICEF's technical support initiated development of a Regulatory Document, which is to be adopted by the MoES in 2016.

A Child's Right to Clean Water, Safe Sanitation and Hygiene (SP Outcome 3, RKLA 6): UNICEF provided the technical assistance to the Government to develop the technical regulations on WASH and Nutrition for pre-schools, a monitoring instrument on WASH infrastructure and an ECE educators' guide on hygiene. The educators guide has been distributed to the pre-schools through the MoES, and a WASH module was incorporated into the school readiness programme. Some 170 pre-school caregivers and pre-school agency representatives improved their knowledge and skills in teaching hygiene issues in schools.

In Abkhazia, UNICEF promoted access to quality pre-school services in returnee and remote rural areas. 495 children benefitted from these services in 46 pre-school groups (RKLA 3).

UNICEF carried out an education assessment, developed a training programme on student-centred teaching methodologies and trained 280 teachers, principals and methodological specialists (RKLA 4). Furthermore, UNICEF continued promoting youth development and participation (RKLA 10) in conflict-affected areas for 2,000 youth of various ethnic communities through educational and recreational activities in 25 youth groups of Social Community Centres and 36 youth clubs in schools.

OUTPUT 2 Maternal and child health services have resourced programmes which address gaps in quality and access of services and gaps in household knowledge of child birth and parenting

Analytical Statement of Progress:

A Child's Right to Health (*SP Outcome 1, 4; RKLA 6,7*): In line with "A Promise Renewed", the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs (MoLHSA) and UNICEF collaborate to address gaps in access to health services that have resulted in disparities in child mortality, immunization and nutrition.

MoLHSA has embarked on the key reform aiming at strengthening MCH counselling services at the primary health care level, through the introduction of the home visitation for families with children aged 0-3. UNICEF, in partnership with the Government, developed a home visiting concept, initiated a pilot for two regions and reached agreement on capacity building and real time data collection and analyses. The initiative will continue over the upcoming years until its country-wide expansion.

In addition, UNICEF supported the development of a medical birth registry in order to strengthen the MCH management information system. The system will register every pregnant woman from January 2016 with their ID number and track them throughout the life cycle (*SP Outcome 1; RKLA 6*). Both the component on 0-3 child growth and development monitoring (home-visiting) and the birth registry will be linked together creating an enormous opportunity for further analyses and improvement of MCH services.

UNICEF in collaboration with USAID supported the Government in regionalization of perinatal care (*SP Outcome 1*). With UNICEF support, a plan of action and cost estimation for the remaining implementation of regionalized perinatal care countrywide was developed for the Government to continue the process beyond 2015.

Half a million Georgians, mainly women and children, suffer from malnutrition. UNICEF mobilized key nutrition stakeholders to jointly commit the advancement of nutrition agenda for women and children in Georgia. UNICEF has supported the Government in designing the future surveillance system and leveraged the resources for its implementation in 2016.

An Adolescents Rights to Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Second Chances (*SP Outcome 7, RKLA 10*): With UNICEF's technical support, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the amendments to the *National Law on Patient's Rights* and the *Law on HIV/AIDS* and lowered the age of adolescents to undertake HIV testing without parental consent from 18 to 14 years. The UNICEF and its partners developed the comprehensive service standards on HIV/AIDS for MARA and young people.

In Abkhazia, UNICEF continued to promote access to quality MCH services through capacity building for medical professionals and health promotion. Around 200 medical professionals benefitted from UNICEF's training on, amongst others, the integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI), identification of disabilities, public health promotion, and the use of the

immunization data base, which includes over 52,000 children/adolescents. UNICEF carried out an IMCI assessment, an HIV assessment among youth, as well as an initial study on iodine deficiency among school children. Furthermore, UNICEF continued its support to rural primary healthcare centres. Additionally, about 4,500 pupils, teachers, parents and community members received knowledge and skills on WASH in schools and immunization through various UNICEF health promotion activities in rural areas.

OUTPUT 3 Government strengthens prevention of institutionalization and social work response mechanisms to protect vulnerable children from abuse, violence, exploitation and loss of family care.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

A Child's Right to a Supportive and Caring Family Environment (RKLA1): Georgia's Human Rights Action Plan 2014-2015 demonstrated Government's continuous commitment to prevent placement of children in institutions and expand family support services to avoid unnecessary family separation. The Government agreed on the need for more systematic and quality monitoring of the situation of children in child care institutions and other alternative care services. The new law on adoption and foster care was developed and is expected to be adopted by the Parliament in spring 2016.

Following ratification of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD), UNICEF issued a systematic review and recommendations to align national laws and policies on children with international standards. A set of recommendations on necessary policy reforms on children with disabilities were developed and validated by key stakeholders. With USAID's support, UNICEF initiated a process to end the use of institutional care for children with disabilities through the development of small-scale residential services for infants and young children with severe disabilities which are fully embedded in the broader child care, social protection and health care systems.

UNICEF supported MoLSA to train psychologists and social workers to identify and address cases of violence against children in 2015. The new version of the Child Care Referral Procedures – a major instrument to address violence against children – remains to be adopted by the Government.

A Child's Right to Access to Justice (RKLA 2): The Juvenile Justice Code was finalized and then adopted by the Parliament in June 2015. It covers issues concerning children in conflict with the law, child victims and witnesses of crime and children participating in administrative violation proceedings and recalling the international main principles. In 2015, 600 justice professionals received specialized training on juvenile justice. The number of social workers in the justice system was increased: 40 trained social workers and 15 psychologists are in place in penitentiary and probation offices throughout the country. Diversion and mediation services are functional nationwide, and were expanded to cover grave crimes.

In Abkhazia, UNICEF and World Vision conducted a child protection assessment, and initiated a dialogue with the de facto authorities on further strengthening and better coordinating institutional and community child protection mechanisms and integrating these into a basic child protection system. Community-based services for children with disabilities were strengthened (*RKLA 1*). The staff of Child Development Centres were trained to enhance their professional, organizational and managerial capacities. In three Child Development Centres, 272 children living with disabilities and their parents received services in early life-skills development and education, speech therapy, physiotherapy and psychological counselling. Training for rural

nurses and doctors for early detection of disabilities was conducted. UNICEF and four local NGO partners fostered good parenting practices among parents of pre-school aged children by establishing 12 parent study circles in rural areas and training future trainers/facilitators (RKLA 1, 3, 7).

OUTCOME 2 Georgia advances the fulfilment of key outstanding CRC observations.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Within the framework of the Year of Protection of the Rights of the Child, UNICEF forged a strong alliance with Parliament, the Prime Minister's Office, line ministries, and governmental agencies, in order to develop specific laws, and influence policies that better protect child rights. Within this strategic partnership, the preparation of a number of legislative initiatives was supported, of which some were already adopted by Parliament in 2014/15, and others are still under discussion for adoption in 2016. At the same time, extensive media pitching and public advocacy contributed to enhanced visibility and a stronger voice for children.

UNICEF Georgia continued to generate evidence and knowledge, influencing key policy-makers to promote social policies that address critical equity gaps in child rights. This was undertaken in close partnership with Government and non-government counterparts, as well as the National Statistics Office and the statistics departments of line ministries. UNICEF Georgia collaborated with the media to ensure the evidence was promoted, contributed to public discussion and was generated influence on decision-makers.

The number of children living in extreme poverty (below US\$1.25 per day) is projected to fall by 50,000 from nine per cent in 2013 to 3.3 per cent, as the result of increased social benefits, and the UNICEF-supported revision of the Targeted Social Assistance scheme. UNICEF advocated and advised on the new methodology, which significantly improved the targeting of poor children, and introduces child benefits to 40 per cent of children (RKLA 8).

OUTPUT 1 Ministries access and use integrated and disaggregated data for policy formulation, budgeting and monitoring of social exclusion and child poverty.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

A *Child's Right to Social Protection* (SP Outcome 7, RKLA 8): In 2015, UNICEF continued to advocate and provide technical support for evidence-based decision-making in the social sector. This involved working closely with Government and non-government counterparts, as well as National Statistics Office and statistics departments of line ministries. UNICEF continuously generated knowledge and information which was used to influence key policy-makers to design the child-centred social protection system.

In 2013, UNICEF had signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs and the Social Service Agency, and since then has been closely working with the Government to reform the social protection system to become more child-sensitive. In 2014, UNICEF assisted in the development of a new methodology for identifying poor households and a new benefits scheme, which includes child benefits. The new benefits scheme commenced implementation in June 2015. UNICEF continued to provide technical support for the implementation and challenges to ensure the revised social protection system is fully functional and effectively reduces child poverty.

UNICEF continued to generate and promote the use of strategic evidence on the situation of children in Georgia. This included: i) The completion of field work of the fourth longitudinal

Welfare Monitoring to collect comprehensive child-related data; ii) Finalizing a joint publication with the World Bank on the recent reforms on the social protection system, that will serve as a basis for Government and stakeholders to have a well-documented reform process as well as discuss further the needed changes to the social protection system; iii) Presentation of a paper on child poverty trends and the social protection system in Georgia at a conference organized by International Society for Child Indicators in September 2015, and; iv) Launching of an interactive online data portal (<http://data.unicef.ge>), which makes UNICEF datasets available to the wider public, with the purpose to encourage further social and economic analysis on child rights issues. The portal includes data with around 4,000 questions and 16,000 respondents.

OUTPUT 2 Child rights monitoring bodies and civil society organisations analyse, advocate and participate in policy dialogue on legislation and budgeting for children, including advancement of targeted CRC observations.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The Charter of Journalistic Ethics with UNICEF's support carried out media monitoring for the period March-June 2015 in order to analyse the compliance of the Georgian media with ethical norms and professional standards of reporting on children. The result was that no major violations to ethical reporting were observed. However, in-depth analysis of the crucial issues for improving the situation of children remains a problem. A major milestone was the development of a special agreement aimed at activating self-regulation mechanisms in relation to children's issues by the Georgian national and regional TV companies. In order to further enhance the capacity of journalists on in-depth and ethical reporting on children, training workshops were held for journalists working in Gori, Telavi and Batumi. The Charter-UNICEF prize was awarded in December (the Charter of Journalistic Ethics and UNICEF established an annual prize to reveal the best examples of ethical and in-depth reporting).

UNICEF continued to enhance public advocacy on child rights issues, including the Juvenile Justice Code, children living and working on the streets, school readiness year, goals of general education, social model of disability and malnutrition. In partnership with the Frontline Media Club, UNICEF organized 10 discussions featuring key speakers on these topics, ensuring the participation of media and civil society, resulting in increased public awareness.

The Government of Georgia submitted their Fourth Periodic Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the CRC Committee. UNICEF supported the Government in the translation of the report from English to Georgian language.

UNICEF continued to support the visibility and advocacy on the state programme on children living and working on the streets, which included: i) a media briefing to present street children services newly established in Kutaisi; ii) fact sheets and feature stories about the children supported by the programme; iii) a final newsletter summarizing the overall achievement of the project disseminated at the event devoted to the closure of the three-year programme.

Furthermore, UNICEF Georgia initiated communication for social change strategies around children with disabilities and violence against children in order to address stigma and negative social norms.

UNICEF supported NGO members of the Child Welfare Coalition to further develop their advocacy skills and to coordinate advocacy around important child rights' issues.

OUTCOME 3 Cross Sectoral

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Cross-sectoral costs covered the recurrent costs for activities not directly attributable to one programme. These include travel and equipment, salaries for staff performing cross-cutting functions, external relations and the country programme administration.

OUTPUT 1 External Communication

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF Georgia's 2015 Communication and Public Advocacy Plan was developed in line with the Global Communication and Public Advocacy Strategy. UNICEF Georgia continued its media monitoring to keep up-to-date about the coverage on children and UNICEF. The new communication key performance indicators (KPI) were integrated into the media monitoring strategy and the relevant indicators were revised and aligned to the KPI Handbook.

UNICEF's voice for children was strong and children's issues were active on public's agenda through social media campaigns, public discussions, special events involving celebrities, public advocacy campaigns and extensive media pitching (up to 1,000 media stories about children). Specific public advocacy campaigns were carried out around violence against children, pre-school education, school readiness programme, the newly-revised more child-sensitive social protection system revision, justice for children (including the newly adopted Juvenile Justice Code), malnutrition of women and children, and inclusive education for children with disabilities. Media engagement and public advocacy helped to succeed in lobbying the specific legislative and policy initiatives such as the pre-school law, juvenile justice code, adoption and foster care law amongst others.

The enhanced digital engagement strategy embraced the development of a high-quality video for the State of the World's Children report on a social experiment about public attitude towards street children. The video is expected to be widely shared through social media and to generate discussions. UNICEF Georgia also contributed to a global video about early marriages. Videos featuring professionals, experts and opinion makers on the specific issues like juvenile justice, nutrition, education; Infographics and animated illustrations for social media were also popular and resulted in high reach and engagement.

The revised web and social media strategy including specific campaigns on nutrition, "fightunfair" and disability resulted in 30,000 unique web visitors and in reaching 50,000 people. The number of Facebook likes reached 16,000 people. The key milestones for social media were #FightUnfair and nutrition campaigns that resulted in active public engagement.

New partnerships were forged with celebrities giving social dimension to their concerts and voicing out children's concerns. The Georgian Symphonic Orchestra and classical music performers dedicated two concerts to the issue of violence against children, and called for the public to speak out and be more active on the issue.

In terms of global awareness of UNICEF, Georgia's score increased by 23 points (from 44 in 2013 to 67 in 2014). This was the highest improvement in performance out of the 57 countries measured in the WIN/Gallup survey.