This annual report sets out UNICEF’s key achievements in Kazakhstan for 2016, which was the first year of implementation of the UNICEF-Government of Kazakhstan Country Programme of Cooperation for 2016-2020. The report also describes progress towards the achievement of results for children in 2016, building on the progress made in the prior cycle. Additionally, the report reflects on ongoing efforts to change the strategic direction of UNICEF’s engagement with Kazakhstan and to ensure that it is ‘fit for purpose’ to continue support for advancing the realization of children’s rights.

A key result for the country programme was the establishment by Presidential Decree of the Office of the National Commissioner (or Ombudsperson) for Child Rights (NCCR), in response to recommendations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its 4th periodic report on Kazakhstan (CRC/C/KAZ/CO/4). A member of Parliament was appointed as Commissioner for Children’s Rights in Kazakhstan. The Commissioner maintains a high profile in the country and represents an important collaborative partnership for UNICEF.

UNICEF Kazakhstan does not receive public funds, and thus it was technical, material and financial assistance that heavily supported UNICEF’s functioning in 2016.

In November 2016, UNICEF, in collaboration with Parliament, the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) and the Office of the National Commissioner organized a two-day international conference entitled ‘A Child-Friendly Kazakhstan’, which facilitated comprehensive, inclusive discussions - including participation by children, civil society and Government - on children’s rights in Kazakhstan. The results of the third national multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) were presented at, and informed, the high-level conference. Action plans for advancing implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) over the next four years are under development. UNICEF is well-positioned to leverage the continued work and consensus established around results for children.

The Country Office leveraged the occasion of the 70th anniversary of UNICEF and the 25th anniversary of the Independence of Kazakhstan to highlight critical issues related to the elimination of violence against children (VAC) and suicide prevention among adolescents, through a series of high-profile events with partners across the country. UNICEF maintains a close partnership the General Prosecutor’s Office, which has emerged as an important partner in preventing violence against children, facilitating cross-sector collaboration and response, including on data collection, monitoring and research. Parliament continued to be a key partner in 2016, working with UNICEF on: implementation of legislation for alternative forms of care; drafting the Law on the Optimization of Social Services, in support of children at-risk of committing offences and social vulnerability; and the Law on Probation, adopted in December 2016, introducing probation as an alternative to sentencing and incorporating pre-trial and conditional sentence probation.

UNICEF Kazakhstan took steps in 2016 to advance strategic management priorities for 2016-2020 to ensure that the Country Office is positioned to address the unfinished child rights agenda. Consistent with these priorities, the Office broadened its partnerships at sub-national levels, engaging local governments in assessing the situation of children and
exploring critical support needs for 2017 in regions where the deprivation of some children’s rights is more acute, such as South Kazakhstan, West Kazakhstan and Aktobe oblasts. Implementing a stronger focus on managing for results and ensuring consistent contributions to the regional knowledge and leadership agenda (RKLA), the Office organized into inter-sectoral ‘results groups’ to ensure timely and effective contributions by key specialists across programmes to multisectoral results, strengthening UNICEF’s overall contributions and promoting a multi-sectoral approach to systemic reform for children in the country. The Office also mobilized partnerships with academia, civil society and the private sector around results for children. As co-chairs of outcomes within the UN Partnership Framework for Development, UNICEF and WHO coordinated contributions by UN agencies to improving access to quality social services.

UNICEF Kazakhstan also strengthened its knowledge management function, with an emphasis on the packaging and dissemination of knowledge for policy advocacy and horizontal cooperation. The Office finalized a work-plan with the CEE/CIS Regional Office (RO) and the RO Bureau in Almaty, focusing on ways to strengthen collaboration within the country partnership with Kazakhstan and specific initiatives in health, nutrition and disaster risk reduction.

Humanitarian Assistance

The Office did not provide humanitarian assistance during the reporting period.

Emerging Areas of Importance

Accelerated integrated early childhood development (ECD). UNICEF is progressively incorporating accelerated early childhood development (ECD) into its support to the country programme. While the country programme does not have a specific component for ECD, UNICEF supports national authorities to model universal-progressive home-visiting services, which provide a comprehensive range of social and health assistance to vulnerable children under five and their families, as well as to pregnant women, covering nutrition, health and critical services. In 2016 the office initiated an evaluation of national ECD and early childhood education (ECE) systems, which will contribute to programme knowledge and identify further potential areas of support from UNICEF.

Greater focus on the second decade of life. Successive UNICEF-supported country programmes have incorporated a strong focus on the second decade of life. The present country partnership focuses on two significant issues for adolescents particular to Kazakhstan, namely suicide prevention and the engagement of vulnerable adolescents through outreach by Youth Resource Centres (YRCs) nation-wide. The situation analysis on the rights of children and women (currently underway) may support further work in healthy lifestyles. There is also opportunity, building on current cooperation, to support national partners in advancing adolescents’ social, cognitive and spiritual well-being though life skills instruction in schools. In addition, the office is considering researching the situation of adolescents at risk of radicalisation.

Support “movements” to accelerate results for children. Under the framework of its support to the newly established NCCR, UNICEF together with the MoES and Parliament of Kazakhstan co-organized a two-day international event dedicated to the implementation of outstanding recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its fourth periodic report. Thirteen dialogue platforms were opened during the event, representing clusters of CRC recommendations, each focusing a specific set of children’s rights. The platforms facilitated comprehensive and inclusive discussions on children’s rights in Kazakhstan, with the participation of children, civil society and Government. National
consultations and round-table meetings were also held in the run up to the conference. Each dialogue platform was chaired by a Member of Parliament and/or Government official and benefitted from the technical support of a variety of international experts, representatives from civil society and UNICEF. At the end of the conference, the dialogue platforms presented their preliminary actions for addressing the remaining Committee recommendations, which will contribute to multisectoral action plans for implementation over the next years, and which may be funded from the national budget. It is intended that dialogue platforms will convene frequently in coming years to monitor that the recommendations are being implemented. The initiative presents an opportunity for UNICEF to leverage the continued work and consensus of the dialogue platforms around results for children.

**Summary Notes and Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>Core Commitments for Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFC</td>
<td>Child-friendly City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEE/CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States/Central and Eastern Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMT</td>
<td>Country management team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil society organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CwD</td>
<td>Children with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRA</td>
<td>Disaster risk analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRR</td>
<td>Disaster risk reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early child development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHO</td>
<td>European Community Humanitarian Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>EKO</td>
<td>East Kazakhstan Oblast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPO</td>
<td>GPO – General Prosecutor’s Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSSC</td>
<td>Global Shared Service Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HACT</td>
<td>Harmonized approach to cash transfers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human immunodeficiency virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRBA</td>
<td>Human rights-based approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>Horizontal cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communication technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IITU</td>
<td>International Information Technology University</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSA</td>
<td>Local staff association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LQAS</td>
<td>Lot quality assurance sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCC</td>
<td>Joint Consultative Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAP</td>
<td>Knowledge, attitudes, practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICS</td>
<td>Multiple indicator cluster survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNCH</td>
<td>Maternal, new-born and child health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoES</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoHSD</td>
<td>Ministry of Health and Social Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTCT</td>
<td>Mother-to-child transmission (of HIV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCR</td>
<td>National Commissioner for Children’s Rights</td>
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</table>
Partnerships

Under the programme component 'Innovative Partnerships for Children's Rights', UNICEF Kazakhstan initiated significant re-orientation and strengthening of a range of strategic partnerships in 2016: with government (at both national and central levels, and including ministries, departments and agencies), with a number of civil society organizations (across sectors and disciplines), with the private sector (including financial institutions and the hydrocarbon industry), and with influential individuals and international organizations, including UN agencies.

For example, the strategic importance of UNICEF's collaboration with the Office of the Commissioner for Children's Rights is indicative of the returns for children from well-placed investment in partners providing technical, material and financial assistance. Collaboration provided significant opportunities for implementation over the next four years through 13 national dialogue platforms, and expanded horizontal cooperation opportunities with Ombudspersons in other countries. Continued cooperation with the General Prosecutor’s Office will greatly facilitate UNICEF's 2017 support for reducing the impact of negative social norms and practices and facilitating cross-sectoral collaboration on violence against children. Close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Development (MoHSD) enabled UNICEF to advocate for a new movement to enhance flour fortification for better nutrition for children.

Parliament continues as a key partner, working with UNICEF on implementation of several legislative initiatives and raising children's issues in public discourse. Lessons from the previous country programme suggest that direct partnership with sub-national governments
can yield greater collaboration and responsiveness to new initiatives.

New partnerships with academia and civil society are enabling UNICEF to work in emerging areas of importance and advance innovative approaches, while working more closely with the private sector has revealed significant demand for UNICEF guidance on corporate social responsibility and on children's rights and business principles (CRBP).

**External Communication and Public Advocacy**

With special attention to UNICEF’s global communication initiatives, discourse around children’s rights was well-profiled throughout the year on UNICEF Kazakhstan’s social media accounts. Facebook was updated, shifting from posting official news to more story-friendly content with strong messages, videos and images. The legacy Twitter account was revived, and substantive and relevant information is now regularly posted there. A UNICEF account was launched on Instagram, which steadily gained followers.

The UNICEF Representative raised awareness on issues related to child suicide and violence against children and launched a communication campaign on early childhood development at the Central Communications Service, the state media platform with access to all media outlets in Kazakhstan.

The international conference 'Child-Friendly Kazakhstan' was dedicated to the 70th anniversary of UNICEF and the 25th anniversary of the Independence of Kazakhstan. High-level officials spoke about and were informed about priority issues for children. Thirteen national dialogue platforms were established, dedicated to advancing children’s rights realisation, resulting in the adoption of ambitious recommendations for accelerating results for children in Kazakhstan.

Celebrations around UNICEF’s 70th anniversary received full support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which organised a round-table meeting on ‘SDGs and the Child’. An exhibition of children’s drawings was held in Astana in December as a culmination of the national contest devoted to the 70th anniversary. The Italian singer, Son Pascal, presented a song dedicated to children in the Kazakh language at a function with state and civil society partners on 13 December in Astana. The Baiterek Tower, a landmark building in Astana, was lit in blue. Over several days, giant LED screens on Astana’s Congress Hall and Media Centre broadcast the unicef#imagine project video – the world’s biggest ever ‘sing along’ of John Lennon’s song ‘Imagine’, performed by celebrities and people from over 140 countries.

**South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation**

As part of the country programme component on ‘Innovative Partnerships for Children’s Rights', UNICEF Kazakhstan aimed to leverage the country’s capacity to promote children’s right domestically, regionally and globally by facilitating beyond-border exchange of Kazakhstan's knowledge, experience and lessons learned in selected areas where it has achieved significant results for children and/or innovations to tackle emerging issues affecting children.

In 2016, UNICEF established a framework for engaging in horizontal cooperation (HC) activities and began developing a strategy for systematic engagement with partners. In the case of the former, the Office mapped horizontal cooperation approaches and strategies prevailing in the UN System and used by other countries. It also identified existing and potential partners with common areas of interests and with which a suitable alliance for horizontal cooperation could be advanced; for example, national partners such as the Kazakh Academy of Nutrition (for HC on salt iodization). It may also consider international actors such as the Embassy of Canada in Kazakhstan (for HC on suicide prevention among
adolescents).

About the horizontal cooperation engagement strategy, UNICEF Kazakhstan strengthened knowledge management practices to ensure comprehensive content in the areas of knowledge exchange. It is developing a procedure for the regular collection of data for systematic monitoring of stakeholder engagement and establishing procedures to systematize follow-up on horizontal cooperation opportunities and activities.

In addition, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNICEF Kazakhstan is exploring the Government’s commitment to investing ODA in children’s programmes elsewhere in the region and globally, and will support effective strategies – including a child-friendly ODA concept and guidelines – that ensure that ODA is distributed in a manner consistent with the principle of protecting the ‘best interests of the child’.

Identification and Promotion of Innovation

The country programme took steps to mobilize Kazakhstan’s growing capacity in technology around results for children. Partnership with the International IT University (IITU) engages faculty and students in ways to identify technology-driven solutions to systemic issues affecting children with potential application beyond Kazakhstan. The university is developing curricula to guide the identification and development of innovative solutions for children in a structured and sustainable manner.

Similarly, as of January 2017 UNICEF’s first Innovations Lab in Kazakhstan (based on global UNICEF innovation principles), and hosted by IITU, will provide infrastructure to convene practitioners, academia, civil society, the private sector and authorities to collaborate around innovative, technology-driven ideas focused on results for children and to incubate and transform those ideas into ‘market-ready’ products.

UNICEF Kazakhstan will: ensure the relevance of these initiatives to the country programme; share knowledge on relevant socio-economic and political realities shaping solutions; support product development; and help bring products to market through its network of partners.

With IITU, UNICEF’s first hackathon, ‘Innovate for Children’, attracted 160 participants comprising 52 teams, with a winning mobile application connecting children at risk of suicide to confidential helpline support.

Other partnerships will be concluded in 2017 with technology partners. The Lab concept will be rolled-out with selected municipal and regional authorities and will focus on social entrepreneurship. UNICEF’s participation in EXPO-2017 will provide an opportunity to demonstrate best-of-UNICEF innovations for children.

Elsewhere, the Office engaged the MoHSD on digitizing data collection and reporting for home-visiting practitioners; mobile applications to improve parenting skills are also under development.

Partnerships with national statistics institutions will facilitate access to mobile data in areas of relevance to children. The Office is planning with partners to introduce U-Report in Kazakhstan.

Karaganda’s experience in establishing an innovative monitoring system for out-of-school children was documented, and the tool has been recommended for scale-up.
Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

The human rights-based approach (HRBA) was progressively mainstreamed within the country programme in 2016, particularly through UNICEF’s on-going support to national human rights institutions in Kazakhstan, including the National Commission for Children's Rights (NCCR). The NCCR was established by Presidential Decree in February 2016 in response to recommendations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its fourth periodic report on Kazakhstan. UNICEF Kazakhstan does not yet receive public funds, and heavily supported its functioning in 2016 with technical, material and financial assistance. Early cooperation focused around sharing of best practice knowledge (including from the experience of child rights ombudspersons from other countries), joint advocacy and monitoring of the status of the rights of the child at national and sub-national levels.

In 2017 UNICEF will continue to advocate for greater alignment of the NCCR with the Paris Principles, including on independence, infrastructure and sustainable financing and duration of its mandate. In November 2016 UNICEF, with Parliament, the MoES and the NCCR, co-organized a two-day international conference entitled ‘A Child- Friendly Kazakhstan’, which established a national dialogue platform to address the outstanding recommendations presented by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its fourth periodic report on Kazakhstan. The conference, which hosted 13 dialogue platforms representing clusters of Committee recommendations, culminated with a national, multisectoral and systemic approach and action plans for advancing implementation of their implementation over the next four years. The conference featured comprehensive and inclusive discussions on children’s rights in Kazakhstan that included participation by children, civil society and Government.

UNICEF Kazakhstan continued to strengthen capacity for monitoring of the situation of children's rights in the country, and further country reporting on human rights instruments, by supporting the generation of reliable, timely and disaggregated data through household surveys such as MICS (concluded in 2016).

Gender Equality

The National Concept on Gender and Family to 2030 was approved by Presidential Decree in December 2016. UNICEF contributed to the development of the concept, and its approval marks a significant inter-agency result for UNICEF and other UN agencies (UN Women, UN Population Fund and UN Development Programme). The concept articulates gender and family policy priorities for the country over the next 15 years. In 2016 UNICEF Kazakhstan continued to work closely with partners to improve the gender responsiveness of the country programme. The Office participated in a gender programme review that highlighted opportunities and set actions for further incorporating gender mainstreaming in health, child protection and social inclusion. UNICEF introduced gender-responsive key performance indicators (KPIs) for Youth Resource Centres in two regions that provide services for vulnerable young women aged 14-29 years. The experience will inform national initiatives to improve the management capacity of the Centres. UNICEF also supported gender-responsive home-visiting services (providing methodology and skills) to identify risks for and prevent anaemia among vulnerable women. Nurses were also supported to identify and refer those at risk of domestic violence.

Gender disaggregated data was a key feature of the UNICEF-supported knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) survey on violence against children in the family and Justice for Children. The findings suggested some prevalence of discrimination against girls in the justice system. In addition, the third national MICS provided gender-disaggregated data on children and women, which will continue to support the potential for gender-focused policy advocacy. For example, violence against children in the family remains a major concern in...
Kazakhstan, with MICS indicating that a large proportion of children experience violent discipline in the home, but that boys are somewhat more likely than girls to experience violent discipline (55.2 per cent boys, 49.9 per cent girls).

Environmental Sustainability

In line with the Executive Directive on 'Addressing the Impact of Climate Change on Children' (CF/EXD/2016-002), UNICEF Kazakhstan is progressively advancing its capacity to engage in advocacy to support programmes for children around climate change, with particular attention to related SDG targets set by the country. In 2016, the Office initiated a situational analysis in Kazakhstan, the results of which (due in 2017) will inform the country programme on the most urgent climate issues affecting children in the country and enable UNICEF to prioritize its engagement in coherence with other UN organizations working in the area. The Office will continue to work with regional and headquarters colleagues to maximise the opportunity to heighten awareness and advocacy on the impact of climate change on children through its participation at the upcoming EXPO-2017 on 'Future Energy' (focused on sustainable energy supply and resource management) taking place in Astana in 2017.

UNICEF Kazakhstan contributed to climate change risk mitigation, adaption and resilience through ongoing programmes. UNICEF continued to refine a methodology for disaster risk analysis focusing on children’s vulnerabilities, including those related to climate change. Tested in three regions, the analysis informed on the nature and extent of risks linked to various hazards and risky conditions. The Office also continued to support the National Child Rights Protection Committee and 17 cities and four districts participating in the child-friendly city initiative to apply an assessment system, comprising indicators on the concentration of harmful air pollutants (e.g. CO2, NO2, SO2 and lead), and questions about the impact on children of environmental hazards (e.g., air pollution and noise levels) and questions addressed to children themselves (e.g., availability of local green spaces, ecological education, access to drinking water, clean air and collection of garbage).

The Office continued to take steps to minimize its carbon footprint in line with the Greening UNICEF initiative, including though staff sensitization and information-sharing, continuous monitoring of office consumption of electricity (contributing 60 per cent of CO2 emissions), paper and water, installation of eco-friendly LED lighting and recycling.

Effective Leadership

UNICEF Kazakhstan took steps to advance strategic management priorities set out for 2016-2020 in the country programme management plan and operationalized in the annual management plan. The country management team (CMT) organized results groups to ensure timely and effective contributions by key specialists across programmes to multisectoral results, strengthening UNICEF’s overall contributions and promoting a multisectoral approach to systemic reform for children in the country. The country management team also pursued expanding and leveraging its programme presence at the sub-national level, engaging local governments in assessing the situation of children and exploring critical support needs for 2017 with local authorities, including in South Kazakhstan, West Kazakhstan and Aktobe oblasts.

The CMT explored and expanded innovative and strategic partnerships with Parliament, the Ombudsperson for Children's Rights, and national and international partners around a platform for continued implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC); and with academia, civil society, the private sector and the Regional Office Bureau in Almaty on accelerating results for children nationally and in Central Asia. The 70th anniversary of UNICEF and the 25th anniversary of the Independence of Kazakhstan were leveraged to strengthen UNICEF advocacy and public
discourse for children, with a series of high-profile events in the country, which will continue into 2017, including through UNICEF’s participation at EXPO-2017, taking place in Astana from June to September 2017.

Progress on annual priorities was monitored regularly by senior management. Management decisions were risk-informed. The most frequently applied operating procedures were reviewed, including processing of cash transfers, use of long-term agreements (LTAs) and procurement planning. Steps were taken to strengthen planning and reporting, including budget management and internal communication. In collaboration with UNICEF’s field results group, the Office also prepared to implement e-tools. The Office implemented a HACT assessment and assurance plan for 2016 and revised the Table of Authority and composition of statutory committees, which operated in accordance with UNICEF standards.

**Financial Resources Management**

During 2016, the Office maintained adequate and functioning internal controls over financial management, in line with UNICEF financial rules, regulations and procedures. Financial responsibilities were executed in a manner consistent with the delegation of authority established in the Table of Authority. The status of bank and general ledger accounts was monitored monthly, and financial year closure activities were completed on time. Bank reconciliations were error-free. Petty cash counts were conducted quarterly. Receivables and cash receipts (including VAT, reimbursement for common services, income from disposed assets and cash refunds) were recorded accurately.

The annual physical count of plant, property and equipment was conducted in both the Astana and Almaty offices and reconciled. The property survey board reviewed unserviceable and surplus assets for disposal.

The contracts review committee and programme cooperation agreement review committee met systematically, in accordance with procedure, to ensure efficient, transparent and cost-effective commitment of resources. Budget utilization was also reviewed systematically during country management team, programme and section meetings. The Office fully utilized its core resource budget (regular resources and support budget) for 2016. Donor reports pertaining to the country programme were submitted on time. The status of cash transfers was monitored regularly and there was no instance of unaccounted for direct cash transfers over nine months during the year.

All staff benefitted from training to introduce the revised UNICEF HACT policy and related procedures. The Office also implemented all planned programme monitoring visits related to partners’ appropriate use of cash transfers. Cash flow planning was strengthened through monthly review. In 2017, the country management team will continue to strengthen budget management practices. While the Office experienced constraints and delays related to invoice processing through Global Shared Services Centre during the first half of 2016, the situation improved significantly towards year-end.

**Fundraising and Donor Relations**

Other resource (OR) income continued to be a significant contributor to results for children in Kazakhstan in 2016, supporting a large share of activities taking place at the oblast level. Reliance on OR will continue in 2017. While the Office participates in regional initiatives and was a recipient of flexible OR thematic funds in 2016, much of the OR income available to the country programme was provided by the Government of Kazakhstan through the co-funding of UN joint programmes in three regions, which will continue through 2017. Approximately US$700,000 was received by UNICEF in 2016 to support programmes in
Kyrgyz, Mangystau and East Kazakhstan. UNICEF’s potential for raising OR funds from traditional donors remains limited. The major donors, such as the EU, have reduced or are reducing their presence in Kazakhstan, or are focusing away from supporting large-scale reforms in favour of small-grant funding of NGOs.

The private sector remains a largely untapped source of income and innovative partnerships to leverage results for children. The relatively large numbers of international subsidiaries in Kazakhstan point to a wider private sector base and greater potential for alliance-building around corporate social responsibility aimed at leveraging social changes, and with potential for generating OR income. In 2016 the Office started to explore a range of potential private-sector partnerships that could be followed through in 2017.

To meet the challenge in 2017 the Office will implement a revised funds mobilization strategy focusing on emerging donors and pursuing innovative fund-raising initiatives for flexible, non-earmarked resources, including through Government and the private sector.

While the number of donor reports was relatively few, the Office shared proposals and reports to donors with the CEE/CIS Regional Office for feedback. UNICEF Kazakhstan also applied quality assurance processes, including peer review, prior to report finalization.

**Evaluation and Research**

In 2016, the Office approved its plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation (PRIME) comprising 10 studies, one research activity, one joint evaluation with the Government of Kazakhstan, and one capacity development activity on monitoring and evaluation. During the year, a 75 per cent implementation rate for PRIME was achieved, with six studies completed and three activities in-progress, with a completion date of 2017.

Research supported by UNICEF in prior years was used in the formulation of the UNICEF-Government of Kazakhstan country programme of cooperation (2016-2020) and bi-annual work plans.

In accordance with the UNICEF Executive Board-approved costed evaluation plan for Kazakhstan, the Office initiated the joint evaluation on ECD and ECE systems. The final report is expected in May 2017.

For an effective and accountable realization of the joint evaluation, an Evaluation Review Board was established including UNICEF and stakeholders from the ministries of Education and Science and Health and Social Development and the Parliament.

UNICEF Kazakhstan participated in implementation of the final evaluation of two UN Joint Programmes, in Kyrgyz and Mangistau regions. UNICEF contributed to the quality assurance of the terms of reference, participated in the selection of the evaluator and, once underway, during key respondent interviews provided requested materials and information to the evaluators. The final reports for the evaluations are expected in 2017, and should include recommendations with potential for programmatic learning.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

The Office continued to make use of UNICEF-managed LTAs for frequent, repetitive and small-scale services such as translation, printing and transportation. It also used UN-managed LTAs for printing services, hotels, freight and courier services.

Telecommunication costs were further optimized by switching to a higher speed, lower cost package, helping to keep costs down in 2016 despite: a 30 per cent increase in the number
of Internet and telephone users (33, up from 25 in 2015), an expansion of local-level programme activities and a doubling of internet speed (from 22 to 40 Mbps for LAN and from 4 to 20 Mbps for Wi-Fi).

Staff continued to opt for economy class when travelling by air for more than nine hours. Duplex printing was set up as default property on the network printers to minimise excessive paper use; waste paper was collected and sent for recycling. Electric light installations in public areas of the office were replaced with more economical motion-sensor lighting. While printed publications remained a prominent programme supply input, to maximise efficiency and minimise waste, the Office adopted the practice of disseminating publications electronically and restricting print publications to an appropriate minimum quantity, based on expected demand. UNICEF Kazakhstan established an electronic catalogue of publications, which may be disseminated electronically and which is expected to help gauge printing needs. In some cases, printing is undertaken by partners.

Supply Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kazakhstan</th>
<th>Value of all supply input (goods and services) (in USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme supplies</td>
<td>US$44,139.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations supplies</td>
<td>US$169,784.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts for services</td>
<td>US$593,646.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kazakhstan</th>
<th>Value of all supplies channelled (in USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Channelled via regular procurement services</td>
<td>$ 534,980.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channelled via GAVI</td>
<td>$ 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2015 UNICEF signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with SK Pharmacia, the state distributor of vaccines and pharmaceuticals, for the future procurement of vaccines and other essential supplies. Under the terms of the MOU, the Government allocated approximately US$8.8 million for antiretroviral drugs in 2017, of which US$3.4 million was used in 2016 for procurement through UNICEF. By year-end, four shipments of other drugs were received, with a value of US$534,980. The MoHSD has expressed interest in further expanding its use UNICEF’s procurement services in 2017.

Supply assistance to the country programme amounted to US$805,570, comprising: US$593,646 (74 per cent) in contracts for services, US$167,784 in operating supplies (including consumables, assets and low-value programme support); and US$44,139 (5 per cent) in programme supplies. UNICEF procured mainly institutional contracts for services for research, including studies and surveys, which comprised approximately 59 per cent of supply assistance to the country programme. Other supply inputs included translation (5 per cent), and events (7 per cent). IT equipment (5 per cent) was procured via direct order, No emergency supplies were procured in 2016.

In addition, and where appropriate, the procurement of services and supplies within programme cooperation agreements with partners was implemented by partners themselves, with UNICEF support through direct cash transfers. For example, partners procured equipment for probation offices and courthouses to support child-friendly rooms, safe waiting areas and separate entrances, CCTV, functioning recording technology and communication/testimonial aids. The Office maintained sufficient and functioning controls
over procurement, raising its value threshold for the contracts review committee from US$30,000 to US$50,000. It issued one invitation to bid and 10 requests for proposals. Nine cases were reviewed by the contracts review committee.

**Security for Staff and Premises**

In 2016 UNICEF Kazakhstan implemented security enhancement measures and addressed recommendations made by the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) in 2015 to improve the security at premises. New software to control and monitor office access points was installed, and the security for ingress at the rear of the building was strengthened. The Office’s allocation from the global security budget was utilised, in accordance with prior approval, for the procurement and installation of metal detector equipment for screening visitors at the entrance to the office premises.

In response to high-profile security incidents in Almaty and Aktobe oblasts, which led the Government to raise temporarily the level of national security alert, the front entrance door and security booth window were reinforced with bulletproof glass. In addition, the wireless alarm system and CCTV capability were upgraded and a more powerful searchlight was installed in the office parking area.

The building evacuation plan was updated and tested; the process revealed some weaknesses caused by another tenant’s security measures, for which corrective actions were taken. Two UNICEF warden drills were conducted during the year to test and verify revisions to the warden system.

The Office business continuity plan was updated and tested, including by testing critical staff ability to execute key functions through remote access using Citrix, One Drive for Business and by testing VHF connectivity.

New staff completed basic security in the field training and attended security briefings organized by UNDSS.

**Human Resources**

In 2016 seven recruitments were completed: five filled newly established posts, while two filled new vacancies. The Office twice recruited for the position of communication specialist, but could not identify a suitable candidate. In consultation with UNICEF’s Regional Office, a third recruitment effort was underway at year-end.

The local staff association developed an action plan to address recommendations arising from the global staff survey. The joint consultative committee was convened twice in 2016 to discuss implementation of the action plan, which was fully implemented.

In response to concern by UN staff associations over the continuing impact on staff resulting from the devaluation of Kazakhstan’s currency in 2015, the UN country team facilitated interim and full salary surveys for national and international staff, respectively. These processes resulted in a 28-to-35 per cent increase in salary for national staff, effective from March 2016.

The Office transitioned to ‘My HR’, a new HR suite for recruitment, performance appraisal, learning, administration and guidance on HR procedures and policy. E-recruitment was used effectively to systematize the selection of 19 staff, consultants and individual contractors (five cases were underway at end-year). The Office implemented “MyCase”, with all staff effectively using online HR self-service facilities. All staff finalized their performance plans for 2016 in ‘ACHIEVE’ by the deadline; UNICEF Kazakhstan was the second Office in the
Staff completed 60 per cent of individual learning activities which is considered positive given the high workload. Eighty per cent of group learning events took place, with some designed and delivered by staff. Staff undertook stretch assignments, including during the maternity leave of three national professional officers. Three staff also benefited from short-term assignments at another duty station. Seven staff exercised flexible working arrangements.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

The continued functioning of and accessibility by staff to ICT facilities and systems, including effective systems maintenance and user support, was prioritized in 2016. The primary internet service provider was changed and connectivity speed was increased from 22 to 40Mbps (and Wi-Fi from 4 to 20 Mbps), improving user experience and connectivity with cloud-based services of Office365 and business systems. There were no interruptions of connectivity during work-hours. The land line telephone connection was replaced by a cost-saving IP solution. Support was also provided to the RO outpost in Almaty (zone office location), including troubleshooting Internet connectivity, including increased Wi-Fi speed, configuration of mission control and the establishment of an uninterrupted power supply.

An ICT replacement plan was implemented: new laptops were procured and expired equipment was disposed of in accordance with UNICEF procedures. OneDrive for end-users was implemented; backup, Hyper-V hosts and antivirus systems were updated; PBX was upgraded, IP address were allocated; and new extension numbers were added. Steps were taken to systematically store electronic files on the server, including removal of duplicates; limit access rights when appropriate and revise in-house protocols for creating and modifying shared files; and ensure off-site back-up of essential records.

The fire alarm sensors and CCTV cameras were checked and upgraded and fire drills were conducted. The functioning of Cisco VPN/ Citrix for remote access was tested as part of the business continuity plan. The Office also signed an MOU with UNDP to support UNICEF ICT infrastructure in the absence of ICT staff. VHF allocated frequencies were extended.

In-house ICT training on OneDrive for Business was provided to all staff, and e-learning training resources (iLearn, Skill Soft, etc.) were demonstrated.

Programme Components from RAM

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 Outcome 1: Families with children, adolescents, and young people living close to or below the national subsistence minimum are more resilient (to economic and social deprivation, and stress) and they benefit more from equitable access to quality and inclusive social services and transfers

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The first year of implementation of the country programme of cooperation (2016-2020) between Kazakhstan and UNICEF took place against the backdrop of relatively unfavourable economic conditions: tightening fiscal budgets and flattened allocations to social reforms, including a moratorium on new publicaly funded social initiatives.

These conditions reinforced the urgency of enhancing the resilience of the most vulnerable children, their families and communities, and provided an opportunity for UNICEF
Kazakhstan to continue to demonstrate how this can be done cost-effectively at the local levels and to advocate for more effective and targeted social assistance.

However, the tightening economic situation impacted on the pace and orientation of some reforms, which could increase public spending in the short- to medium-term, including the revision of the subsistence minimum and incorporation of the social model on disability. The increased public spending may have generated a reluctance to make further investments on existing social commitments, such as in the development of alternatives to institutionalized care of children.

Despite the economic constraints, overall Kazakhstan achieved positive results for children in 2016. Important among these was the establishment of the country’s first Ombudsperson for Children’s Rights and the convening of an international conference on the Rights of the Child in Kazakhstan in November 2016, which established a national platform for dialogue between Government, civil society and the international community around CRC implementation. That the conference was convened as part of the 25th anniversary of Kazakhstan’s independence was significant, underlining that the wellbeing of the nation is tied to the wellbeing of its children. The conference also featured the presentation of the results of MICS 6, which provided an opportunity to reflect on trends in the situation of the most vulnerable children.

For UNICEF Kazakhstan, vulnerable children include those children living under or close to the national poverty line; with a disability; without parental care; victims of violence, abuse and neglect; or in contact with the justice system, as well as marginalized, stigmatized, and socially excluded children and adolescents. While situation data for 2016 was not readily available at the time of reporting, some changes in key statistics for children point to both opportunities and ongoing challenges for the country partnership to advancing progress against the outcome.

For example, while the survey shows a slight increase among the bottom wealth quintile (proportion of mothers or caregivers, caretakers, aged 15-49 years of children under five who recognise the two danger signs of pneumonia), there was a sharp drop among the top quintile. While the proportion of children under three years of age with a disability in state residential care decreased from 79 to 40, the number of children under three in residential care increased from 1,137 to 1,237. The rate of suicide among adolescents aged 15-to-19 years fell from 17.5 in 2011 to 14.9 in 2016, driven mainly by a decrease in suicide among girls. The underlying factors behind these and other indicators will be fully analysed in the forthcoming situational analysis.

The country partnership identified six necessary component outputs, which target specific changes in the behaviour of social systems to advance access by vulnerable children and their families to, and the effectiveness, of quality and inclusive healthcare, education, social protection services and transfers. The progress achieved towards these multi-year and multisectoral outputs will advance the overall outcome for children in a way that minimises unforeseen changes in the external social, economic and political environment. UNICEF has a distinct contribution to make (along with other international and national partners) to these multi-sectoral outputs, and in 2016 organized its contribution around a portfolio of programme inputs in advocacy, policy dialogue and advice, knowledge generation and child rights monitoring, convening partnerships and leveraging resources for children, capacity development of professionals and organizations, modelling and testing innovations and horizontal cooperation, including beyond borders.
OUTPUT 1 Output 1.1: The effectiveness of social assistance in reducing the vulnerability of children and their families is strengthened; the revised national subsistence minimum is equity-based and child-friendly; and the social model of disability is incorporated into relevant legislation.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In 2016 UNICEF Kazakhstan supported national authorities to identify and address gaps in targeting and eligibility approaches for targeted social assistance (TSA) programmes due to come into effect as of 2018. UNICEF assessed the impact of revised legislation on social transfers and services and documented the related processes and practices around administering benefits to vulnerable children and families in two regions. While the changes were intended to enhance protection for the poorest groups, the simulation demonstrated potentially negative effects on vulnerable children in low-income families (numbering over 550,000 individual recipients of such assistance in 2015). Opportunities to strengthen the knowledge and capacity of social benefit administrators were also noted. Policy recommendations arising from the work will be presented to the Government in early 2017 with the objective of reducing exclusion errors for TSA programs and mitigating potential negative effects on low-income and poor families with children.

UNICEF also supported initiatives to change the subsistence minimum standards in favour of low-income and poor families with children. With the MoHSD, UNICEF generated evidence to support the revision of the national food basket methodology. The study, now underway, compares the components of subsistence minimum and international standards on the nutritional needs of children and the cost of services. Potential revision of the subsistence minimum may change poverty measurement in the country, with significant policy and budgetary implications—including on eligibility for social assistance and poverty reduction approaches. UNICEF will continue to engage with the Government on these issues in 2017, including around a legal framework for revised TSA programmes.

UNICEF and the MoHSD continued to work towards incorporation of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) methodology (the ‘social model’ on disability) into national legislation and policy, including for the identification and measurement of disability in children and developing of a roadmap for its progressive adoption. Incorporation of the ICF methodology would likely increase the number of children recognised as having a disability and improve their access to social support and rehabilitation services. However, since adoption of the ICF methodology would require more social services than are currently available, the Government has been slow to adopt the framework. UNICEF continued to sensitise decision-makers on the differences and similarities between the models and the long-term benefits of adopting the ICF approach, including potential impact on children with medically registered disabilities.

UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Education to consider the ICF methodology in its ‘Concept on Inclusive Education in Kazakhstan’, which was amended to reflect the broader definition of child disability and to include children with special needs. UNICEF provided guidance and expert opinion (on methodology and the situation of children with disabilities) to the Graduate School of Education at Nazarbayev University in its review of inclusive education systems in Kazakhstan (on behalf of Government efforts to make 70 per cent of schools inclusive by 2019). The guidance highlighted some challenges to the introduction and application of the ICF methodology, including negative perceptions among teachers about the introduction of inclusive schools.
OUTPUT 2 Output 1.2: Improved legislation facilitates the better cohesion of the health, education and social protection services

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The absence of a comprehensive approach for defining standards and allocating responsibility for the provision of integrated services across sectors remains a key challenge to family support systems for vulnerable and poor families with children in Kazakhstan. Systemic barriers to progress include gaps in legislation, sector-based budgeting that excludes inter-sectoral needs, and the absence, or limited effectiveness, of cross-sector coordination mechanisms and initiatives. In 2016 UNICEF Kazakhstan started to address the absence of case management and cross-sector referral mechanisms at the community level, which also impede cohesion. Focusing its support at the sub-national level, UNICEF led the development of inter-sectoral protocols of cooperation between primary health care (PHC) services, social transfer administrators and other locally available social services in two areas. In support of targeted social assistance programmes, UNICEF assessed the capacity of integrated support systems to provide a continuum of social assistance and services to poor families, under a state-run conditional cash transfer scheme.

UNICEF identified a range of capacity needs among social work consultants, who coordinate the provision of social transfers and services for eligible families with children living below the subsistence minimum. UNICEF provided skills and methodology on family support services and case management and developed a training module for social work consultants, focusing on the transfer of essential knowledge and skills and including a component on inter-sectoral cooperation to support cohesion. Policy recommendations for enhancing legislation on social assistance programmes arising from the assessment are under review.

As part of the universal-progressive home-visiting services modelled in Kyzylorda region, UNICEF developed and tested inter-sectoral protocols of cooperation for patronage nurses at the PHC level. Patronage nurses will play a major role in ensuring that inter-sectoral services reach vulnerable families with children under five years of age. A comprehensive normative framework was also developed, providing for inter-sectoral cooperation and referral procedures between education, health and social protection agencies. The framework also provided for enhancing the functional profiles of patronage nurses, social workers and general practitioners at the PHC level, along with the clear identification of cross-disciplinary teams of specialists from different sectors to support vulnerable families, the design of continuous education programmes for home-visiting nurses and the development of performance indicators to monitor quality of services provided. A common inter-disciplinary tool for assessing risk and vulnerability was developed, representing a significant step toward facilitating cohesive social services; it will be tested in 2017. The components described above are now integral to universal-progressive home-visiting services and will be incorporated in the national scale-up of the model.

OUTPUT 3 Output 1.3: The patronage nursing system provides a comprehensive range of social and health home visiting services to children and their families, which meet international standards.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF continued to support authorities in Kyzylorda to model universal-progressive home-visiting services, providing a range of social and health assistance to vulnerable children under five, their families and pregnant women. Under the ‘progressive’ approach, the most vulnerable are prioritized (through data monitoring and risk assessment) to receive home visits.

Modelling was conducted at three district-level primary health care (PHC) clinics (PHC#1,
PHC#6 and PHC Zhanakorgan). While the model is grounded in a comprehensive baseline analysis of home visiting services, a decree from the department of health in Kyzylorda was critical in facilitating needed departmental changes to enable the broadening of the scope and effectiveness of the services provided by the home-visiting nurses who are central to the model.

UNICEF prepared a team of national experts to develop the capacity of nurses and social workers to apply international standards and provide new services, and also to work with vulnerable families. The team is now ready to roll out the training further in Kyzylorda and across other regions. Supportive on-the-job supervision for nurses, social workers and management were critical components.

UNICEF developed and tested inter-sectoral protocols of cooperation for patronage nurses. A comprehensive normative framework was also developed and applied, providing for inter-sectoral cooperation and referral procedures between education, health and social protection agencies. The framework also provided for enhancing the functional profiles of patronage nurses, social workers and general practitioners at the PHC level, along with the: clear identification of cross-disciplinary teams of specialists from different sectors to support vulnerable families, design of continuous education programs for home-visiting nurses, and development of performance indicators to monitor the quality of services provided.

UNICEF also supported the department of health to establish a Resource Centre for the patronage nurse system in Kyzylorda, to ensure an infrastructure and in-service curriculum for the continuous education of patronage nurses. A common, inter-disciplinary tool for assessing risk and vulnerability was also developed, with the national team of experts, representing a significant step in facilitating cohesive social services.

In addition, UNICEF Kazakhstan initiated the modernization of the data collection and reporting methods for home-visiting, and with the MoHSD will digitize risk assessment tools in 2017. The latter will increase opportunities for meaningful data analysis, including measuring the impact of home visits. In 2017 UNICEF will also support mobile solutions to gauge the quality of home visits.

UNICEF partnered with JAMK University, supporting a specialist working with MoHSD to develop curricula for medical colleges and universities to revise the professional competencies of the midwiferies and nurses and align them with international standards. The revisions were incorporated by MoHSD into vocational and higher education curricula.

The progress and experience of Kyzylorda in modelling the universal-progressive home-visiting approach was documented for use in evaluation, national scale-up and horizontal exchange. UNICEF Kazakhstan supported national experts to share the Kyzylorda experience with ECD experts at the 2016 ISSA Conference.

**OUTPUT 4** Output 1.4: A quality assurance system over social work, including case management, gate-keeping and referral is functioning and aligns international standards.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The availability and functioning of a quality assurance system for social work is a necessary condition for ensuring that vulnerable children and families can access social and child protection services and build resilience. However, UNICEF’s support to national partners in this area in 2016 revealed important challenges, leading to a re-assessment of early programme assumptions, including the pace of potential results achievement.

Social work is a relatively new profession in Kazakhstan, with the roles of social workers
often confused with those of psychologists and sociologists. Academic material is mostly outdated and pre-service preparation of social workers is highly limited. UNICEF identified partnerships with academia (e.g., Kazakhstan National University) to revise pre-service curricula in line with international standards (including the use of self-assessment tools) and, with NGOs, will seek opportunities to strengthen and systematize practical experience, during pre-service, working with children and families facing social exclusion and multiple deprivations.

Cross-sectoral linkages between social workers remain weak. Social work is sector-based, with differing job descriptions and performance expectations. Operating instructions do not provide for cross-sector referrals and case management; gatekeeping and referrals systems are weak. In their absence, there is limited Government demand for introducing cohesive social work and related quality assurance standards. In 2017 UNICEF will analyse gaps in relevant policies and standards and advocate for the improvement of cohesion of social work across the health, education and social welfare systems. Since capacity of social workers varies between sectors, improvement in quality may initially need to be sector-specific.

In multiple fora, including a Parliamentary meeting on social work development (advocated for by UNICEF), UNICEF repeatedly drew the attention of Government, NGOs, associations and academia to international approaches and key directions for social work involving children (e.g. around justice, domestic violence, children with special needs, social vulnerability, multiple deprivations).

UNICEF Kazakhstan helped generate demand from civil society to improve social services for children from socially vulnerable backgrounds and raised the need for legislative changes to clarify their role and the expected quality of service provision. On-the-ground coaching of social workers working with NGOs was provided by UNICEF with its support to three alternative justice centres in Kyzylorda, Mangistau and East Kazakhstan. Coaching focused on practical social work methodology, needs assessment and case management. Technical guides were developed, along with cross-sectoral protocols. In 2017 UNICEF will continue to support quality coaching and address skills gaps in working with children and parents and seek to involve academics in social work supervision. The Government is not yet ready to respond to this demand. In addition, revisions to national development programmes in health and education may delay some initiatives.

OUTPUT 5 Output 1.5: District-level authorities resource innovative approaches and policies to reduce the incidence of adolescent suicides; Youth Resource Centres (YRCs) provide outreach and awareness to vulnerable adolescents on the signs of depression, and promote help-seeking behaviour.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Kazakhstan experiences one of the highest rates of suicide among adolescents in the CEE/CIS region. In collaboration with the National Centre for Mental Health, UNICEF is supporting national authorities to reduce the incidence of adolescent suicide by piloting an innovative approach in schools and colleges in Kyzylorda and Mangistau oblasts, emphasising inter-sectoral cooperation in education and health. Over 60,000 adolescents (from 466 schools and colleges) were reached in 2016, more than 2,000 of whom were identified as at high risk of suicidal behaviour and referred to trained health professionals.

The model itself is thoroughly evidence based (and costed), and is unique in its innovative combination and field-testing of recognized approaches [see WHO (2014) and Lancet (2015)]. It consists of three components: raising awareness interactively with adolescents with lessons and programme communication material; promoting mental health and health seeking behaviour; and referral services. Equipping 700 school psychologists with tools
(psychometric instruments) and skills to identify and follow up on high-risk cases, and over 42,000 staff as gatekeepers. Referral and follow-up by medical and mental health specialists.

Sampling 15,000 adolescents in the two regions, an interim assessment found that training helped to reduce stigma and prejudice, which tended impede to health-seeking behaviour among adolescents and parents (use of the youth hotline increased five-fold); trust levels greatly increased between adolescents and school psychologists, now recognized by colleagues and parents to be key to suicide prevention; school psychologists counselled high-risk adolescents, who were systematically tracked by multidisciplinary teams (made up of psychologists, GPs and psychiatrists); and school staff now appreciate that suicide can be prevented and know what can be done to mitigate risk.

UNICEF’s experience is seen as authoritative, and it continued to advise the offices of the President, prime minister and ministries of health, education and interior in their accountability for suicide prevention programmes nationally. UNICEF was invited to review the Government roadmap and budget for suicide prevention programmes and to coach all regions to understand the UNICEF-supported approach, including preparing teams of experts to sustain it. Authorities in six more regions have now allocated sufficient budgets to start replicating the model.

Based on the theory that public services tailored towards young people make a positive difference to them and their communities, UNICEF Kazakhstan is working with local authorities to develop capacity to plan and conduct youth work at YRCs across Mangistau and Kyzylorda regions. An independent review confirmed that the intensive approach decreased YRC staff turnover, improved planning and increased outreach targeting vulnerable youth. Recent extremist incidents and protests prompted the Government to revisit youth-related programmes, revealing that the UNICEF-supported pilot was alone in targeting marginalized youth. UNICEF agreed to support the Scientific Research Centre for Youth, which is accountable for developing capacity among the 192 YRCs, to scale up the reform nationwide and leverage World Bank funding.

OUTPUT 6  Output 1.6: District-level authorities incorporate risk and vulnerability assessment into local planning methodologies to improve needs-focused services for the most vulnerable children and adolescents an families and to support resilience

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In prior years responsibility for key development tasks, including the provision of communal services and disaster risk management, was transferred to regional governments. However, many lack resources and, in some cases, the legal mandate to execute this responsibility. As a result, local development plans mostly ignore disaster risks due to a lack of awareness, skills and clear planning guidelines.

Therefore, in 2016 UNICEF worked with the Committee on Emergencies and local authorities in three regions (East Kazakhstan, Kyzylorda, and Mangistau) to roll out the methodology for and application of disaster risk and vulnerability analyses (DRA) for children and families living in disaster-prone areas. This effort built on the experience and lesson learned from a child-focused disaster risk analysis facilitated by UNICEF in Zyryanovsk district, Eastern Kazakhstan, in 2015.

The overall objective is to incorporate and mainstream DRA into regional planning practices, enabling better identification of disaster risks affecting the most at-risk children, and help in mitigating disaster risk, response preparation and strengthening resilience. It is also anticipated that the benefit of DRA – such as the identification and mapping of vulnerable
communities and their needs – will spill over to other sectors by strengthening resilience and development planning and improving targeted social investments overall by regional authorities. In Zyryanovsk district, disaster risk reduction actions were eventually incorporated into the 2016-2020 Eastern Kazakhstan Regional Territorial development programme. Lessons learnt from the application of DRA in Eastern Kazakhstan enabled UNICEF to adjust the DRA methodology. UNICEF also developed the capacity of local cross-sectoral teams (comprising emergency, education, health, social welfare, economy and infrastructure authorities) and governors of villages of Kyzylorda and Mangystau, and Syrdarya and Mangistau districts to apply the methodology.

The analyses found that children and adolescents, particularly those with disabilities and children aged zero-to-three are vulnerable to disaster risks from a range of natural hazards, including those caused by climate change. Many communities are geographically remote, and are affected by the malfunctioning or failure of key infrastructure, environmental degradation and erosion of traditional livelihoods. The analyses also found that many educational facilities have not undergone regular maintenance during the past 20 or more years. The probability and impact of disasters and the capacity of districts’ territorial entities to withstand the negative impact of severe weather conditions and emergencies were assessed; focus groups and interviews to analyse children’s vulnerabilities were conducted with authorities, teachers, residents and children themselves. The findings and recommendations will be presented at the local and national levels in March 2017.

Given their experience, representatives of the Kazakhstan emergency committee who were involved in piloting the methodology, along with a national expert on DRA, contributed to minimum standards for DRA to be used by countries in the region. In addition, UNICEF Kazakhstan supported the establishment of technical working groups to coordinate the DRA process and develop recommended actions for integration into territorial development programmes and plans of actions.

OUTCOME 2 Outcome 2: Children, especially those in difficult life circumstances, suffer, witness and practice less psychological and physical maltreatment, including all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation at home, in school, in care, in custody and in public spaces.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The first year of implementation of the country partnership of cooperation (2016-2020) between Kazakhstan and UNICEF took place against the backdrop of relatively unfavourable economic conditions, tightening fiscal budgets and flattened allocations to social reforms, including a moratorium on new publically funded social initiatives.

Despite the economic constraints, Kazakhstan achieved positive results overall for children in 2016. Important among these were the establishment of the country’s first Ombudsperson for Children’s Rights and the convening of an international conference on the Rights of the Child in Kazakhstan in November 2016. The conference established a national platform for dialogue between Government, civil society and the international community around implementation of the CRC. Establishment of the Ombudsperson’s Office opens an important avenue for advocating, reporting and monitoring child rights in Kazakhstan. While the institution is at its development stage, children and families have an opportunity to address their concerns directly to an institution specialising in children’s rights. UNICEF is supporting the Ombudsperson to perform its work, in line with international standards.

Data for 2016 were not yet available at the time of reporting, but some changes in key statistics for children point to both opportunities and ongoing challenges for the country
partnership to advance progress. For example, the MICS shows an overall increase in the percentage of children who experience violent discipline at home. Other evidence generated by UNICEF in 2016 suggests that family-based psychological and physical violence against children in Kazakhstan is rooted in social factors such as tolerance of violence, acceptance of corporal punishment and a culture of non-reporting. Adults whose parents used physical violence to discipline them in childhood were more likely to use mental and physical violence to discipline their own children, compared to those who did not experience physical violence from parents (71.6 and 48.2 per cent, respectively). Overall, key statistics on children in conflict with the law have changed only marginally against baselines over the past year, although key reforms are taking place and will progressively impact positively on these numbers. More information is now available on child safety and the impact of trauma and injury on children, with large numbers of children injured and killed in road accidents.

The country partnership identified six necessary component outputs for this outcome, targeting specific changes in the behaviour of social systems to achieve the goal that children – especially those in difficult life circumstances – suffer, witness and practice less psychological and physical maltreatment, including all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation at home, in school, in care, in custody and in public spaces. The combination of achieved progress towards these multi-year and multi-sectoral outputs will advance the overall outcome for children in a way that minimises unforeseen changes in the external social, economic and political environment. UNICEF has a distinct contribution to make (along with other international and national partners) to these multi-sectoral outputs, and in 2016 organized its contribution around a portfolio of programme inputs in advocacy, policy dialogue and advice, knowledge generation and child rights monitoring, convening partnerships and leveraging resources for children, capacity development of professionals and organizations, modelling and testing innovations and horizontal cooperation, including beyond borders.

**OUTPUT 1** Output 2.1: Greater awareness of the risks and long-term social and economic costs of VAC results in increased public demand for ‘zero tolerance’ policies, reporting of cases and enforcement of legislation protecting children from violence.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Due to severe cases of violence against children reported by media, the General Prosecutor’s Office (GPO) called for a unified state response to VAC, which resulted in the development of cross-sectoral roadmaps, supported by UNICEF (initiation and strategic directions), on protecting children from sexual violence and violence in the family. The GPO is an influential institution on both policy reform and monitoring the enforcement of legislation. The roadmaps present opportunities for introducing legislative changes, preventive measures for reducing violent crimes against children, rehabilitation and legal support to child victims of sexual and domestic violence, enhanced cross-sectoral collaboration, improved statistics and research and initiatives addressing social norms.

A coalition of Government, civil society and UN agencies were convened around the roadmaps, to make recommendations and to exchange information. Partners advocated primarily for changes to the Law on Domestic Violence and to policies covering VAC and violence against women. UNICEF supported a review of legislation (underway), which covers gaps in definitions of VAC; identification, reporting and referral procedures; competencies of state bodies; sanctions for perpetrators; remedy, rehabilitation and treatment of child victims; availability of a mechanism to monitor the enforcement of legislation (with gender focus and in compliance with CRC, its Optional protocols and
general comments). The review of legislation was extended into 2017 to allow for analysis of both divergence with international norms and law enforcement practices.

UNICEF also supported research to increase understanding of the extent to which negative social norms contribute to VAC in the family. A KAP was conducted in collaboration with the Human Rights Ombudsperson and the European Union. The research was the fourth major study by UNICEF on VAC and is a significant contribution to public policy dialogue, policy and programme development on the prevention and elimination of VAC. It will also enable mass communication initiatives to increase demand for 'zero tolerance' towards VAC.

The KAP survey gathered reliable baseline data (covering 10 regions, 2,400 households, and 2,000 children in schools and institutions; 100 child protection and justice specialists, policy makers and MPs) on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of children, adults, and professionals toward violence against children in families; child sexual abuse; parental use of violence at home; and children’s experiences with violence in the family. Survey findings included: 67 per cent of adults use violent discipline methods; 75 per cent of the general public support the use of corporal punishment; and over 95 per cent of the general public and child protection specialists believe that strangers are likely to sexually abuse children.

In 2017 UNICEF will support the design of a communication campaign on VAC with the GPO and Ministry of Information, with the objective of raising awareness about the long-term social and economic consequences of VAC and the need for effective preventive and response measures.

**OUTPUT 2** Output 2.2: Legislation, policies and protocols (including respective accountabilities) related to VAC are aligned across health, education and justice systems, legally enforced and regularly monitored.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Delay in the formation of the inter-sectorial working group on VA prevention, under the MoES, limited momentum toward alignment of legislation, policies and protocols around VAC across sectors. However, an alternative dialogue platform on VAC, established through the GPO, a new partner on VAC, called for legislative and policy changes, raised a need to analyse the variety of state methodologies and training programmes in schools. UNICEF supported the GPO in reviewing VAC-related laws, strengthening prevention training programmes and improving national standards. The GPO introduced roadmaps for the prevention of domestic violence and for addressing sexual violence against children. UNICEF supported a gap analysis of legislation related to violence prevention.

To inform and create demand for the harmonization of laws related to VAC, UNICEF supported the inter-sectoral Commission on Issues of Minors to scale up a model for reducing school-based violence to five regions (Aktobe, Kyzylorda, Manquistau, South Kazakhstan, and Almaty City), based on the positive results of the UNICEF-supported pilot in East Kazakhstan oblast. The methodology includes the formation of school safety teams to identify and respond cross-sectorally to cases of VAC. The national in-service teachers training institute ‘Orleu’ coordinated the scale-up to 20 schools, reaching over 27,000 children aged 7-18 and 100 professionals, including school management, police officers, school psychologists and teachers. However, the scale-up progressed slowly, requiring stronger coordination, monitoring and financing. Shortfalls were somewhat off-set by UNICEF’s mobilization of local academics to contribute to the programme and the provision of added supported to Orleu, including guidance on training module development and delivery and M&E. Costing of the model is underway, and in 2017 it is planned to review the results of the limited scale-up.
The design of cross-sectoral protocols for police in providing child-friendly support to child victims of violence was informed by UNICEF’s ongoing support to establishing child-friendly environments in juvenile courts, police and probation offices. Standards and guidelines for equipping child-friendly rooms, including for child victims and witnesses of crimes, will also inform the development in 2017 of cross-sectoral protocols and standard operating procedures to prevent secondary victimisation, create friendly and protective environment for victims of crimes and violence.

UNICEF supported the study tour of a delegation of parliamentarians, Government ministries and CSOs from Kazakhstan to Norway in 2016, including the Ombudsperson on Child Rights and representatives from the GPO. Participants were exposed to Norway’s experience in developing strategic documents on violence against children and victim-support services and procedures. A knowledge exchange relationship was facilitated by UNICEF between the Ombudsperson for Children’s Right in Norway and the NCCR in Kazakhstan, which will continue in 2017 to inform the development of child victim support protocols, standards and effective interventions.

OUTPUT 3 Output 2.3: National authorities endorse and resource the transformation of residential institutions, including schools for children with offending behaviour.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
High-level political will spurred Parliament to draft the Law on the Development of Alternative Social Services and Transformation of Schools for Children with Offending Behaviour. The new law provides for the development of alternatives to residential care and guides the transformation process, which will replace residential institutions with community-based, non-institutional services for socially vulnerable children and those in conflict with the law.

However, the law is not fully aligned with local-level advancement on transformation (supported by UNICEF), and it slowed momentum to endorse and resource local authorities’ plans for transforming residential institutions into resource centres for specialised social services. In addition, in the absence of alternative services and a related normative framework, regional authorities were unwilling to invest in transformation, delaying the planned transformation of infant homes, TSANs and schools for children with offending behaviour.

Through research, UNICEF supported Parliament and the MoES to set a baseline for the performance of the child care system, which informed the draft law and by-laws on the Development of Alternative Social Services and Transformation of Schools for Children with Offending Behaviour. The research highlighted barriers preventing a continuum of child protection services to socially vulnerable children in residential care. It found that fragmentation of the child protection system resulted in poor response and monitoring of open and closed cases. It also highlighted the need to develop social work to address family dysfunction and child neglect and for positive practices at local level were also noted, including good care practices. The study highlighted relevant international practices, and provided policy recommendations considering different scenarios for modernising services in selected regions of Kazakhstan. The research also found that transformation should consider the location, environment, infrastructure and human resources of residential facilities and their capacity to fully function as day-care/community-based family support centres. It also suggested that some residential facilities should transform into resource centres for child protection services, providing advice, training and coaching to other services.

Elsewhere, under the Office of National Commissioner for Children’s Rights and the MoES, a public movement was organised with civil society organizations and businesses for transforming residential care institutions for children not in parental care, which was supported by an advocacy campaign. The Law on Child Protection (April 2016) introduced
two new forms of alternative care for children visiting family and professional caregivers, which will help develop new family-based forms of care. MoHSD drafted new standards for infant homes with transformed roles in supporting families at risk of child abandonment. UNICEF supported the alignment of the standards with UN ‘Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children’. For budget reasons, the standards were not yet endorsed for implementation.

In 2017 UNICEF will continue to promote the incorporation of international experience and standards into the transformation agenda, including its budget. It will also continue to engage local authorities, selected municipalities and individual residential facilities to create demand for the transformation of institutions. Horizontal exchange (including study tours, field visits, and roundtables) will be facilitated between regions and countries on the development of alternative care solutions.

OUTPUT 4 Output 2.4: The quality and use by police and the judiciary of diversion, probation and rehabilitation schemes for children in justice processes is increased.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Parliament reviewed the draft Law on Probation, which introduced a four-stage probation system into the criminal justice system (pre-trial, conditional sentence, penitentiary, and post-penitentiary), including for children in conflict with the law. The benefits of community-based probation for children were demonstrated, with UNICEF support, in Astana (the capital) and East Kazakhstan, influencing the introduction of the new provisions in the law and helping to prepare CSOs to support the implementation of probation for children. UNICEF also supported the mainstreaming of international standards for probation into the draft legislation, highlighting with parliamentarians the need for specialized probation officers, specifically trained to work with children, and the merging of existing legislative acts on child justice into one document. The Law, adopted in January 2017, provides for instruments for implementing probation starting from the pre-trial stage and enhancing the quality of rehabilitation of children in conflict with the law.

A KAP survey on Justice for Children was completed, focusing on children in conflict with the law and victims and witnesses of crimes. Findings suggest that 64 per cent of surveyed child protection and justice specialists and 42 per cent of the population believe that detention of children should be used as a last resort, while 30 per cent of specialists believe that community-based rehabilitation is not dangerous, against 15 per cent of the population. Such findings indicate a need to further promulgate juvenile justice principles and combat negative social norms. Key findings will feed into policy reform and the formulation of communication messages. Overall, findings suggest the need to promote community-based support services for children and cross-sectoral services (by health, social service, police and justice sectors) to children in contact with the law, as well as strengthened coordination mechanisms.

The absence of a coordination mechanism on justice for children remains a key challenge. However, with UNICEF support a dialogue platform comprised of key stakeholders was established on this issue. In regions piloting justice for children programmes, coordination was maintained through the regional commissions on minors.

Alternative justice and services for children in conflict with the law and child victims and witnesses of crimes continued to be piloted at the sub-national level. Implementation guides for operating each pilot centre were developed in consultation with stakeholders, including on establishment, coordination, referral, intake, case management and monitoring.

UNICEF Kazakhstan supported trainings of trainers aimed at developing cross-sectoral
capacity of justice training institutes and professionals to advance the application of international and national norms and standards on justice for children. An in-service curriculum for police and the judiciary was also developed.

A study tour enhanced knowledge of high-level officials and CSOs on best practices of the Norwegian child protection system and independent monitoring mechanisms, and on progressive approaches to protecting victims and witnesses of crime through unified interviewing rooms, as well as the work of the Children’s Ombudsman in the protection of children from violence, abuse, neglect. The visit established a strong partnership with the Norwegian National Committee for UNICEF, the Office of the Ombudsperson for Child Rights in Norway and key partners in Kazakhstan.

**OUTPUT 5** Output 2.5: A system for data collection, monitoring reporting and analysis on the quality of care in closed institutions and schools is functioning; the Children's Ombudsperson and civil society independently monitor VAC in closed institutions and schools.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The establishment by Presidential Decree of the Office of the National Commissioner (or Ombudsperson) for Child Rights was a key result for the country programme, and responds to recommendations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its 4th periodic report on Kazakhstan (CRC/C/KAZ/CO/4). The NCCR maintains a high profile in the country and represents an important collaborative partnership for UNICEF and CSOs.

The mandate of the NCCR includes ensuring and protecting children’s rights and interests, and rehabilitation of infringed rights and freedoms. The Ombudsman may initiate legislative revisions and process complaints on behalf of children and access all types of children’s institutions. However, the NCCR does not receive public funds and lacks regional representation. UNICEF heavily supported its functioning in 2016 with technical, material and financial assistance. This support allowed the NCCR to quickly become functional, establishing a hotline taking calls from children and providing consultations by staff trained by UNICEF. Overall, UNICEF Kazakhstan support focuses on enabling the NCCR to function in line with international standards, and provides international peer support, including through the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children.

In November 2016, UNICEF, the Parliament, MoES and NCCR co-organized a two-day international conference entitled “A Child-Friendly Kazakhstan”, which facilitated comprehensive and inclusive discussions on children’s rights in Kazakhstan, and included participation by children, civil society and Government officials. Action plans for advancing CRC implementation over the next four years are under development. UNICEF is well-positioned to leverage the continued work and consensus established around results for children. In particular, the dialogue platform on independent child rights monitoring has potential to provide a basis for the continuous analysis on child rights up to 2021. The platform also will serve as a forum for experts in child rights monitoring to discuss methodology, timeframe, format and content of reporting by the NCCR.

Some institutions for children continued to be independently monitored under the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), overseen by the National Commissioner for Human Rights under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Considering available data, the overall number of visits to closed institutions by the NPM increased twofold in 2015 but the total number of visits to children’s social institutions, which include the Centres of Adaptation of Children and special schools, decreased compared to 2014. While significant progress was noted in reporting and analysis by the NPM on the quality of care for children in institutions, overall capacity of monitoring specialists remains a challenge.
In 2017 UNICEF will support further revision of legislation to enable wider coverage of children’s institutions (currently only a limited number are subject to NPM). The role of NCCR in the NPM will need to be identified. Toward this end, advocacy by UNICEF and CSOs prompted Parliament to draft legislation on optimising the work of organizations mandated for the protection of children’s rights.

OUTPUT 6: National authorities resource inter-sectoral initiatives to advance child safety and reduce mortality and disability from injuries in children

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF supported the development of a methodology for assessing school safety, and applied it in four regions and in Astana during 2016. Working closely with the MoES, the Committee of Emergency Situations and local authorities, the safety of 38 schools was assessed in accordance with the global school safety framework and the national inter-sectoral action plan to ensure the safety of children in schools. In the vast majority of the surveyed schools, including those recently built, the assessment identified vertical and inclined cracks in the foundations and bearing walls of the basements, caused mainly by periodic soaking of foundations.

A number of recommendations were developed by international and national experts with the objective of enhancing the safety of the assessed schools and the methodology of school safety assessment. For example, the MoES maintains an electronic database for all schools, updated annually before the start of the school year. The database is constantly being improved, with additional adjustments made periodically to improve data quality. It was recommended that an additional database subset be developed, containing information on the structural characteristics of school buildings which was often missing from record. Establishment of an archive of schools’ building designs was also recommended, along with a recommendation that the project documentation and structural details be maintained and available at in schools.

Assessment outcomes were discussed with national and local authorities (including staff responsible for education, emergency and construction) from pilot regions, where the schools were assessed. The participants developed recommendations on the need for a rapid, preliminary, comprehensive assessment of schools by trained experts using methodology adapted to the conditions of Kazakhstan. Also, it was recommended that regional governors consider allocating funds to strengthen the structure of educational facilities as part of the state program of modernization. UNICEF’s recommendations on enhancing the country’s school safety assessment system were shared with the Government and Parliament.

In cooperation with the Republican In-Service Teachers Training Institute, UNICEF also supported capacity development of 14 pilot schools and six kindergartens in Kyzylorda and Mangystau regions on disaster risk reduction (DRR). In 2017, UNICEF will support a national DRR conference to facilitate horizontal exchange of experience among educational facilities, including children.

Child injury is the third leading cause of child mortality. UNICEF Kazakhstan supported a number of action in this area, such as the facilitation of cross-sectoral initiatives, including convening an inter-sectoral review of implementation of the national action plan on Decreasing Child Mortality from Injuries and Accidents and on Prevention of Injuries in Children, which was previously endorsed by relevant ministries; the initiation of a situation analysis and a KAP study on child injury with the GPO and MoHSD; advocacy with the Republican E-health Centre to adjust the e-registry for inpatients in line with international
standards, adding the causes of injury; and supporting the Government to develop a draft road safety strategy and advocating about investments for injury prevention programmes with local authorities.

**OUTCOME 3** Outcome 3: The Government of Kazakhstan fosters opportunities for State institutions, civil society, private sector, academia, the media and the International community to mobilize support, capacity and resources to advance the rights of vulnerable children and adolescents, within and beyond the borders of Kazakhstan.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The first year of implementation of the country partnership of cooperation (2016-2020) between Kazakhstan and UNICEF took place against the backdrop of relatively unfavourable economic conditions, tightening fiscal budgets and flattened allocations for social reform, including a moratorium on new, publically funded social initiatives.

Nevertheless, the country partnership advanced considerably against its annual objectives under the outcome. The establishment by Presidential Decree of the Office of the National Commissioner (or Ombudsperson) for Child Rights, responded to recommendations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its fourth periodic report on Kazakhstan (CRC/C/KAZ/CO/4).

The country programme advanced in its objective to leverage the country’s capacity to promote children’s right domestically, regionally and globally, by facilitating beyond-border exchange of Kazakhstan’s knowledge. UNICEF established a framework for engaging in horizontal cooperation activities and began developing a strategy for systematic engagement with partners on HC.

The country programme took steps to mobilize Kazakhstan’s growing capacity in technology around results for children. New partnerships are providing new ways to identify technology-driven solutions to systemic issues affecting children with potential application beyond Kazakhstan. UNICEF’ first Innovations Lab in Kazakhstan (based on UNICEF innovation principles), will provide infrastructure to convene practitioners, academics, civil society, the private sector and authorities to collaborate around innovative, technology-driven ideas focused on results for children, and to incubate and transform those ideas into ‘market-ready’ products. New partnerships with civil society are enabling UNICEF to work in emerging areas of importance and to advance innovative approaches. Closer work with the private sector has revealed significant demand for UNICEF guidance on CSR/CRBP.

Four necessary component outputs target specific changes to foster opportunities for State institutions, civil society, private sector, academia, the media and the international community in order to mobilise support, capacity and resources to advance the rights of vulnerable children and adolescents, within and beyond the borders of Kazakhstan. Progress towards these multi-year and multi-sectoral outputs will advance the overall outcome for children in a way that minimises unforeseen changes in the external social, economic and political environment. UNICEF has a distinct contribution to make (along with other international and national partners) to these multi-sectoral outputs, and in 2016 organized its contribution around a portfolio of programme inputs in advocacy, policy dialogue and advice, knowledge generation and child rights monitoring, convening partnerships and leveraging resources for children, capacity development of professionals and organizations, modelling and testing innovations and horizontal cooperation, including beyond borders.
The results of the component outputs are detailed below.

**OUTPUT 1** Output 3.1: Innovative and sustainable platforms for beyond-border knowledge exchange are established within national systems in selected focus areas.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The country programme aims to leverage Kazakhstan’s capacity to promote children’s rights domestically, regionally and globally by facilitating beyond-border exchange of Kazakhstan’s knowledge, experience and lessons learned in selected areas where it has achieved significant results for children and/or is innovating to tackle emerging issues affecting children.

In 2016 UNICEF Kazakhstan established a framework for engaging in horizontal cooperation and began developing a strategy for engaging systematically with partners. In the case of the former, HC approaches and strategies prevailing in the UN System and used by other countries were mapped. Existing and potential partners were identified with common areas of interest and with which a suitable alliance for HC could be advanced. For example, with national partners, such as the Kazakh Academy of Nutrition (for HC on salt iodization), and alliances with international actors such as the Embassy of Canada in Kazakhstan (for HC and knowledge exchange on suicide prevention among adolescents) were also considered.

To systematise UNICEF’s engagement on HC, knowledge management practices were strengthened to ensure comprehensive content in the areas of knowledge exchange. UNICEF is developing a procedure for the regular collection of data for systematic monitoring of stakeholder engagement by the Country Office; the office is also establishing procedures to systematize follow-up on HC opportunities and activities.

Two areas of emerging programmatic importance led by UNICEF (preventing adolescent suicide and providing universal-progressive home-visiting services to vulnerable children and families) were selected for extensive documentation as case studies, with a view to establishing robust content ready for use in HC and knowledge exchange activities. While both programmes are underway as demonstration models in Kyzylorda and Mangistau regions, they represent inter-sectoral approaches that have emerged progressively from other initiatives over previous programme cycles. The programmes have generated significant interest in the country (adolescent suicide and social vulnerability and exclusion are highly sensitive matters in Kazakhstan) and have benefited from the contribution of global experts. The model on preventing adolescent suicide provides an innovative, comprehensive and evidence-based methodology for tackling suicide risk in a school setting, which is of great interest to other countries, including high-income countries with well-developed mental health systems. The universal-progressive home-visiting model extends the experience of the United Kingdom, and is of interest to countries seeking cost-effective, highly impactful and inter-sector approaches to reducing risk and increasing resilience and maternal and child health outcomes among vulnerable households.

In 2017, the case study methodology will be extended to other programmes identified as candidates for horizontal exchange. UNICEF Kazakhstan will progressively advance platforms for HC in 2017, including in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, foreign embassies in Kazakhstan where appropriate, the CEE/CIS Regional Office and UNICEF’s Public Partnerships Division.

**OUTPUT 2** Output 3.2: Strategies for ensuring that the 'best interests of the child' are considered in decisions on the distribution of ODA are adopted by KazAID.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The 2015 Law on Official Development Assistance (ODA) set out the conditions for establishing a national development agency with responsibility for identifying sources of and distributing the receipt of ODA. Given the working title of 'KazAid', the agency was, however, not established by law, and in 2016 responsibility for ODA remained with the Department of Economic Policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The absence of an agency with official responsibility limited the availability of resources for ODA and scope to determine its purpose.

The country partnership with UNICEF supports KazAID to explore effective strategies that advance results in child-focused priorities when directing ODA to the region and beyond. Kazakhstan publically renewed its support for this objective, committing to ensure that its official development aid includes a clear focus on the most vulnerable children around the world, promoting child-friendly investments that contribute to social development, sustainable economic growth and security, including in UNICEF-supported children’s programmes in neighbouring countries. However, delays in establishing the secondary legislation and a normative framework for KazAid (i.e. establishing terms of reference and work practices), which has been supported technically and financially by UNDP since 2015 (including in the provision of a secretariat), limited opportunities in 2016 for UNICEF-supported activities around the targeted transfer of resources to programmes for children, pushing some of these activities into 2017.

Nevertheless, UNICEF Kazakhstan initiated support for establishing a mechanism, (including methodology and guidance) to monitor the proportion of Kazakhstan’s ODA which is distributed for ‘child-friendly’ purposes, in a manner consistent with the core principle of the ‘best interest of the child’. This included the review (currently underway) of strategies used by other countries in the disbursement of ODA and of methodologies used to assess child-friendly investments, including the Early Childhood Information System and Public Expenditure Review approaches. In 2016, the Office also initiated a concept and strategy setting out its support to Government on child friendly ODA, which may have learning value for other UNICEF offices in upper-middle and high income countries with ODA strategies.

In 2016, the Office also advocated in favour of other opportunities for Kazakhstan to contribute to promulgating and leveraging policy actions in the best interest of the child. As a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, Kazakhstan is well positioned to help build consensus around the centrality of children to the SDGs. In 2017, through evidence-based advocacy, UNICEF will support Kazakhstan to use this important and highly influential platform for children throughout the world. UNICEF will also support Kazakhstan’s membership in the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, through which the country can also help prioritize a global focus on children in SDG progress reporting each year.

**OUTPUT 3**

Output 3.3: A framework for an integrated Child Rights Monitoring system is endorsed by relevant authorities at national and local levels and civil society; social sector indicators for children’s rights are aligned with international standards.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

The output comprises a number of interlinking components, central to which is enhancement of local authorities’ ability to monitor the wellbeing of their children. The process for establishing a central monitoring system over child wellbeing (based on a selection of critical indicators) was endorsed by local authorities in Kyzylorda and Mangystau; a special task force is assigned in each region to facilitate its implementation. While data collection and the introduction of the monitoring instrument were delayed for months in Kyzylorda, modelling progressed well in Mangystau despite a later start. The parallel implementation of the initiative in two regions allows for comparison of local authorities’ capacities in data collection
and analysis and reveals barriers faced by local authorities in monitoring the situation of children, especially the most vulnerable. UNICEF will continue to support the modelling in 2017.

Kazakhstan’s last national MICS was concluded in 2016. MICS continues to fill important gaps in national statistics and administrative data and be useful to decision-makers at the central and local level by providing reliable data and information disaggregated by rural/urban location, age, sex, wealth quantiles, ethnicity and level of education of the head of a household. The results were presented at the high-level international conference “A Child-Friendly Kazakhstan”, in November 2016. Government has expressed interest in carrying out a MICS 6 in 2019, including for SDG monitoring. The extent of national funding available for MICS 6 will be clarified by May 2017.

With UNICEF’s advocacy, a special inter-sectoral Government task force under the coordination of the National Statistics Committee was established to oversee the development of the Statistical Yearbook on Children of Kazakhstan. UNICEF supported the review and mapping of existing data on children in Kazakhstan and prepared recommendations for data collection and the calculation of new indicators by relevant ministries. The Yearbook’s template is currently being finalized. With UNICEF’s guidance, the task force identified priority indicators on children rights for inclusion in the Yearbook, and data collection and calculation methodologies were aligned with international standards. The National Statistics Committee, under the Ministry of National Economy, confirmed its commitment to produce the Statistical Yearbook on Children for Kazakhstan on an annual basis and at its own expense.

UNICEF supported 25 cities and districts participating in the CFCI to exchange experience and lessons learned on CFCI implementation: including on coordination, data collection, child participation in decision-making, and urban space planning. The experience on child participation fed into discussions contributing to a parliamentary initiative to develop legislation on social initiatives for children.

OUTPUT 4 Output 3.4: Innovative partnerships, initiated by Parliament, civil society, the corporate sector and the media engage the public in discourse on priority issues affecting children.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Kazakhstan initiated a significant reorientation and strengthening of a range of strategic partnerships in 2016: with Government (at both national and central levels, and including ministries, departments and agencies), with CSOs (across sectors and disciplines), with the private sector (including financial institutions and the hydrocarbon industry) and with influential individuals and international organizations, including UN agencies.

For example, the strategic importance of UNICEF’s collaboration with the Office of the Commissioner for Children’s Rights is indicative of the returns for children from well-placed investment in partners providing technical, material and financial assistance. Collaboration provided significant opportunities for advancing CRC implementation over the next four years through 13 national dialogue platforms, and expanded horizontal cooperation opportunities with Ombudspersons in other countries. Continued cooperation with the General Prosecutor’s Office will greatly facilitate UNICEF’s 2017 support for reducing the impact of negative social norms and practices and facilitating cross-sectoral collaboration on VAC. Close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Development (MoHSD) enabled UNICEF to advocate for a new movement to enhance flour fortification for better nutrition for children. Parliament continues to be a key partner, working with UNICEF on implementation of several legislative initiatives and raising children’s issues in public
discourse. Lessons from the previous country programme suggest that direct partnership with sub-national governments can yield greater collaboration and responsiveness to new initiatives.

New partnerships with academia and civil society are enabling UNICEF to work in emerging areas of importance and to advance innovative approaches, while working more closely with the private sector has revealed significant demand for UNICEF guidance on CSR and CBRP.

The country programme took steps to mobilize Kazakhstan’s growing capacity in technology around results for children. Partnership with the IITU engages faculty and students in ways to identify technology-driven solutions to systemic issues affecting children with potential application beyond Kazakhstan. The university is developing curricula to guide the identification and development of innovative solutions for children in a structured and sustainable manner.

Similarly, as of January 2017 UNICEF’s first Innovations Lab in Kazakhstan (based on global UNICEF innovation principles), and hosted by IITU, will provide infrastructure to convene practitioners, academia, civil society, the private sector and authorities to collaborate around innovative, technology-driven ideas focused on results for children and to incubate and transform those ideas into ‘market-ready’ products.

UNICEF will ensure the relevance of these initiatives for the country programme; share knowledge on relevant socio-economic and political realities shaping solutions; support product development; and help bring products to market through its network of partners.

With IITU, UNICEF’s first hackathon, “Innovate for Children”, attracted 160 participants comprised of 52 teams, with a winning mobile application connecting children at risk of suicide to confidential helpline support.

UNICEF is readying its participation at EXPO-2017 on "Future Energy" taking place in Astana in 2017, which holds significant opportunity for advocacy and public discourse on issues affecting children, including on climate change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Center</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**Evaluation and research**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sequence Number</th>
<th>Type of Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive Education in Kazakhstan</td>
<td>2016/007</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Assessment on Violence against Children</td>
<td>2016/006</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Assessment on Justice for Children</td>
<td>2016/005</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016 Kazakhstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)</td>
<td>2016/004</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documenting Family Support Services in East Kazakhstan Oblast</td>
<td>2016/003</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of the Existing Barriers to Developing the Continuum of Modernized Child Protection Services for Children in Difficult Life Situations and in Justice Processes and Development of Recommendations for Policy Improvement</td>
<td>2016/002</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence of anaemia, vitamin A and I in urine in East Kazakhstan oblast and Kyzylorda oblast</td>
<td>2016/001</td>
<td>Study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other publications**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Type/Category</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Learned</td>
<td>Lesson Learned: Engaging at sub-national levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Programme documents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Type</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference Documents</td>
<td>Partnership Framework for Development 2016-2020</td>
<td>KAZA UN PFD.pdf</td>
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</tbody>
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