In spite of a high child poverty rate (45 per cent) and strained socio-economic situation in the country, 2014 witnessed a favourable policy environment to advocate further the importance of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In addition to the Government reporting to the UN Committee on the Child Rights, a wide range of initiatives were organized for celebration of the 25th anniversary of the CRC (CRC@25) and the 20th anniversary of the Kyrgyzstan’s ratification of the CRC. Those events demonstrated the Government’s commitment on addressing child rights issues, openness for a dialogue and readiness to streamline further the overall policy compliance with the international standards and treaties ratified by Kyrgyzstan.

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan’s support to the Government was guided by the Regional Key Leadership Areas (RKLA) for children, aiming at accelerating the reduction of equity gaps. Evidence generation and policy advocacy for tackling the barriers hindering marginalised children’s and families access to social services were further intensified, and resulted in the major achievements highlighted below:

- Multiple-Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2014 findings demonstrate positive changes in the situation of children and women and reduction of equity gaps in health, early childhood development (ECD) and education, as per comparative analysis of 2006 and 2014 MICS data;
- The Action Plan for Education Development 2015-2017 was developed in 2014. UNICEF provided technical support to Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) together with donor partners. As a result, the plan reflects UNICEF recommendation with global education priorities, particularly ensuring universal school readiness and expanding access for young children, addressing quality and equity through multilingual education, strengthening teacher polices and improving monitoring systems;
- The State Programme on Justice for Children 2014-2018 and its Action Plan were approved in October, with the technical support of UNICEF. A Coordination Board to monitor implementation of the Programme was operationalized;

However, there were also certain areas that would need further attention:

- A partnership with European Union on the Optimisation Plan of Child Care Institutions Management and Financing for 2013-2016 did not give the expected results, due to lack of effective coordination among the concerned government partners and state agencies to effectively realise the optimisation plan;
- In spite of the continuous efforts UNICEF Kyrgyzstan made with its partners, there are social norms, practices and behaviours which may negatively impact on children’s well-being. More efforts are needed for making behavioural and social change a critical factor of programme implementation through mainstreaming communication for development (C4D) approaches within sectors and ministries.

In 2014, having reached the mid-point of implementation in the Government of Kyrgyz Republic and UNICEF Country Programme of Cooperation 2012-2016, a systematic and in-depth Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the Country Programme was organised jointly with the Government and
The MTR process applied the Theory of Change approach to reflect bottleneck analyses, new evidence, and the programmatic context to streamline the strategic direction of the Country Programme (CP) for progressive realization of children’s rights, in accordance with UNICEF Strategic Plan 2014-2017. This provided an opportunity to revisit the issue of equity gap reduction by UNICEF Kyrgyzstan CP and to identify strategic actions for addressing the bottlenecks in the realization of children’s rights. The MTR process will be concluded in mid-February 2015 with a high-level meeting.

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan continued productive partnership with major donors like the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and Governments of Japan and Russian Federation. Evidence generated by evaluations showed major improvements in the learning environment in rural remote areas, leading to increased access of most vulnerable children. Additional funds aimed to improve healthcare system as per national priorities were secured by funds from Governments of Japan. Due to success of the DFID-funded equity programme, UNICEF is likely to receive another grant targeting cross-border areas and northern provinces, which remain underfunded yet.

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan worked closely with key United Nations Country Team (UNCT) members to implement three peacebuilding projects (youth, education and social policy) supported by the UN Peace Building Fund. The programme enhanced the strategic partnership through the Joint Steering Committee made up of representatives from Parliament, the Presidential Administration, the Government, civil society organizations and UN agencies. Those projects were designed to support National Unity Concept 2013-2017 aiming at strengthening national capacities to address complex issues preventing the advancement of peacebuilding efforts. The interventions are actual in the light of continuous instability observed in the cross-border area with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in 2014 that affected women and children in terms of security and access to basic services.

**Humanitarian Assistance**

Kyrgyzstan remains highly prone to disaster and other potential threats. According to the Ministry of Emergencies of the Kyrgyz Republic there are 20 main natural hazards and processes that pose risks to children and their families. These include hydro-meteorological, geo-physical and biological hazards such as avalanches, droughts, floods, glacial lake outburst floods, earthquakes, land- and mudslides, epidemics, pests, crop diseases and river erosion. Some of these hazards (e.g. floods, landslides) are predominantly seasonal and occur on an annual basis, while other hazards (such as earthquakes) are rare events but potentially highly destructive. In 2014, an earthquake in the Northern Kyrgyzstan of 5.2 magnitude caused some damage to houses and schools.

Ongoing tensions along the Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan border, as well as competition over water and land resources along the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border leave the local population, especially children, increasingly vulnerable. In addition, the in-country tensions between different ethnic groups can greatly influence children and diminish the peace building and reconciliation work conducted in the south. Moreover, the ongoing withdrawal of international forces from Afghanistan may have a negative impact on the security situation in the region triggering a large refugee influx including into Kyrgyzstan.

Based on the above mentioned, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan has continued supporting the Government and other partners in enabling them to better understand the risk and vulnerabilities, Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) and humanitarian response
standards. Two emergency preparedness and response workshop for over 60 key government officials, humanitarian partners resulted in increased understanding on CCCs, needs assessment and accountabilities of the humanitarian actors and the Government towards affected population. As a result, it showed that the Government had a sufficient capacity to respond to small to medium scale natural disasters occurred in 2014, such as floods, mud flows in the northern and southern parts of the country.

A cross border simulation exercise initiated jointly by UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP), in cooperation with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) and other key humanitarian partners was led by the Ministry of Emergencies. It enabled over 140 representatives from the line ministries and humanitarian actors, including Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, ACTED, UN agencies and other international and local non-government organisations (NGOs), to test capacity for effective coordination in needs assessment, response and collaboration with the Government and other partners at the border areas between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

UNICEF also prioritised its support in ‘School Safety’ in the education sector with a range of school / pre-school based activities, such as introducing ‘Principles of Everyday Safety’ as a subject into a school curriculum for first to fifth primary grades. The school-based Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of communities, Government and partners, so as for them to cope with disasters, emergency situations and reduce the risk for children and their families. Significant efforts resulted in introducing the disaster risk reduction/safety education for more than 10,000 children, teachers and parents enabling them to be better prepared and have a capacity to cope with potential threats.

In addition, the ‘School Safety’ programme facilitated a nationwide baseline assessment in school and preschools, which was supported by the UNICEF Kyrgyzstan and the United States Agency for International Development’s Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID-OFDA) since 2011. It revealed that around 90 per cent of schools and preschools buildings do not meet safety criteria and need urgent action on retrofitting or reconstruction. Based on the assessment results and political will of the Government to ensure the safety of children while in educational institutions, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan has been supporting the Ministry of Education and other key government actors further develop state programme on schools, preschools buildings retrofitting, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Through those actions, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan supports the Government of Kyrgyz Republic to stand as an active international player to enhance further the overall disaster risk reduction scheme in the country and contribute to the global and regional DRR agenda. In this regard, in 2014, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan initiated its support to the Government of Kyrgyzstan to join the World Initiative for Safe Schools along with the preparation for the Kyrgyz Government’s high level participation at the forthcoming World Conference on DRR in Sendai, Japan in March 2015.

**Equity Case Study**

**Reduction of Equity Gaps: Case of the Kyrgyz Republic in Expanding Early Learning and School Readiness**

The Kyrgyz Republic has made remarkable progress towards reduction of an equity gap in provision of early learning and school readiness as demonstrated by comparative analysis of MICS data from 2006 and 2014. Enrolment among children aged three to five in the poorest quintile almost doubled: from seven per cent in 2006 to 13.1 per cent in 2014. The most
significant progress was achieved in school readiness, when measuring the number of children at first primary grade who attended preschool during the previous school year. In 2014 the percentage of rural children with school readiness increased to almost 40 per cent in comparison with nearly nine per cent in 2006; whereas the percentage of children from the poorest quintile reached 41 per cent in 2014 compared to zero per cent in 2006. This was largely thanks to the introduction of obligatory school readiness programme by the Government, supported by UNICEF Kyrgyzstan.

The number of preschool institutions and enrolment rates fell dramatically after the Independence of the Kyrgyz Republic in 1991. The political, economic and social transformation that the country underwent seriously impacted preschool education, resulting in closure of almost 80 per cent of preschool institutions in the 1990’s. In 2001, there were only 407 preschool institutions left out of 1,696 which used to operate in 1990. The preschool enrolment rate dropped from around 30 per cent in 1990 to almost six per cent in 2003.

MICS 2006 shed a light on disparities with regard to access to preschool education across the regions, but also within income structure of families. Forty seven per cent of children aged three to five years old from the richest quintile had access in 2006 versus only seven per cent from the poorest. Enrolment in rural area was at 9.8 per cent compared to 33.2 per cent for urban area. School readiness was 39.5 per cent in urban areas while only 8.8 per cent in rural areas. The striking disparity in school readiness was represented by the zero per cent of children from the poorest quintile compared to the 55.3 per cent of the richest having school readiness experience.

Recent MICS data shows an increase in enrolment of children in rural areas from 9.8 per cent in 2006 to 16 per cent in 2014. The equity gap regarding access of children from different socio-economic backgrounds has also been reduced: enrolment of children from the poorest quintile almost doubled (seven per cent in 2006 to 13.1 per cent in 2014) with stable enrolment in the richest (47 per cent in 2006 versus 44.7 per cent in 2014).

The significant progress in school readiness was made due to the Government’s recognition of the critical importance of early learning, which prioritised preschool education as a high policy agenda. This is confirmed by the increased funding allocated to preschool education. The Government expenditure on preschool education as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product almost doubled, from 0.30 per cent in 2005 to 0.58 per cent in 2011. Expenditure on preschool as a percentage of education budget also increased from 6.18 per cent in 2005 to 8.50 per cent in 2011.

A strong partnership among key stakeholders with the Government in preschool education also contributed to the achievement. UNICEF and development partners have been supporting the Government in system level changes, creating an enabling environment for early learning and school readiness. Adoption of the Preschool Education Law in 2009 is one of the examples of these efforts. The Law among other important aspects stipulated for universal school readiness programme and legitimised alternative provision through community-based kindergartens (CBK).

Documentation of the modelling of CBK that UNICEF and other agencies had undertaken was instrumental and used for evidence-based decision making. The UNICEF-supported shift model of CBK has proven itself relevant and cost-effective for reaching ‘hard to reach’ communities compared to the traditional kindergarten model. The concept of the shift system is based on international research, which suggest that duration (period in preschool in years) rather than just
intensity (hours in a day), is the key to successful outcomes (McLean and Orozova, 2008). This approach utilizes space better, which is critical considering the lack of suitable facilities. Rather than having two classrooms and two sleeping rooms designed in the traditional kindergartens, the sleeping rooms are converted into classrooms. Over the course of two shift sessions, the total capacity of a CBK can accommodate children four times more than that of the full day system (ibid.).

Further sustaining the Government’s aspirations to expand equitable access to quality preschool education, in 2012 UNICEF started a strategic partnership with the Roza Otunbayeva Foundation led by the ex-President of the Kyrgyz Republic. With the personal commitment of Ms. Otunbayeva for improving the lives of young children in the country, early learning and school readiness issues were placed high on a policy agenda. One of the milestone events was the Parliamentarian Hearings devoted to preschool education, which concluded with a number of key recommendations. These included the creation of a special commission under the Prosecutor’s Office on return of public kindergartens which were illegally privatized shortly after Independence in 1991, and the envisaged universal school readiness programme to be introduced by the Government as of 2016 with full coverage of teachers’ salary.

The Government’s commitment in further expansion of equitable preschool education is fully supported by international development partners. The third grant from Global Partnership for Education in the amount of US$12.7 million was allocated exclusively for preschool education. Kyrgyz Republic is the second country in the world after Moldova that made the decision to do this.

Despite the remarkable achievements made by the Kyrgyz Republic in the area of early learning and school readiness, significant challenges remain. The overall enrolment in preschool education is still very low, which mostly affects the most disadvantaged children, including those with special education needs. Issues with quality assurance in early learning and school readiness, including increased children’s participation, need closer and urgent attention of the Government and its partners, including parents and teachers.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

APAD Assurance Plan Activities Development
ARV Antiretroviral
BCP Business Continuity Plan
CBK Community-Based Kindergarten
CCC Core Commitments for Children in humanitarian action
CEDAW Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CEE/CIS Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States
CMT Country Management Team
CO Country Office
CP Country Programme
CPAP Country Programme Action Plan
CPD Country Programme Document
CPMP Country Programme Management Plan
CRC Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRC@25 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO Civil Society Organisation
C4D Communication for Development
DCT Direct Cash Transfer
DFID United Kingdom Department for International Development
DHS Demographic and Household survey
DRR Disaster Risk Reduction
ECD Early Childhood Development
ECE Early Childhood Education
EID Early Infant Diagnosis
ELDS Early Learning and Development Standards
EPC Effective Perinatal Care
ERP Enterprise Resource Planning
EU European Union
FTH – Family-type Home
GIZ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GPE Global Partnership on Education
HACT Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers
HRBAP Human Rights Based Approach to Programming
ICT Information and Communication Technology
IMEP Integrated Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Plan
IMCI Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
IPEN International Program Evaluation Network
IT Information Technology
IP Implementing Partner
LQAS Lot Quality Assurance Sampling
LSA Local Staff Association
LTA Long-Term Agreement
MCH Maternal and Child Health
MDG Millennium Development Goal
M&E Monitoring and Evaluation
MHM Menstrual Hygiene Management
MICS Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MLMY Ministry of Labour Migration and Youth
MoES Ministry of Education and Science
MoH Ministry of Health
MTR Mid-Term Review
MLE – Multilingual Education
NGO Non-Government Organisation
NO National Officer
NSC National Statistical Committee
OCHA Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
OHCHR Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OOSC Out of School Children
OPG Older People’s Groups
OR Other Resources
ORR Other Regular Resources
ORE Other Resources Emergency
PAS Performance Appraisal System
PBR Programme and Budget Review
PC Programme Component
PCA Project Cooperation Agreement
PMTCT Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV
Analysis shows that realisation of children’s rights is impeded by little knowledge among people and detrimental practices rooted in social norms, such as violence, stigma and discrimination against vulnerable population and harmful parenting practices.

In 2014, the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the UN Child Rights Convention became a key opportunity to advance community empowerment, addressing key bottlenecks in social practices. Priority was given to empower young people as an agent of social change for further protection of children’ rights in the society.

More than 2,000 young people from vulnerable communities were supported to build non-cognitive skills for better employability and socialisation. This contributed to a change of attitude among youth towards higher tolerance in inter-ethnic relations. Teachers and schoolchildren from 38 schools, who participated in the “School without Violence” Programme, gained knowledge on how to address violence issues in schools. Thanks to videos, popular in social media networks, more adolescents became aware about a success in life without violence. Parents also gained additional knowledge with tips of positive family interactions conducive to child development through TV programmes, such as “The Ladybird” Movie and “The Family Stories” Social Serial. Librarians and community leaders in 26 selected villages enhanced their commitment to promote family reading and now have materials to encourage parents to craft self-made toys.

Neglect of hand-washing and unsufficient knowledge of health related issues were addressed at a community level. The villagers in 50 selected municipalities acknowledged the problem of improper sanitation and established a social control by assessing sanitation facilities in households. The teachers have gained skills to teach hygiene, and children became aware of reasons for hand-washing. At the national level, schoolchildren participated in a website to identify improper sanitation facilities. In another 55 municipalities, the percentage of caregivers who know danger signs of pregnancy increased from 41 to 67 per cent.
Challenges still remain that the Government lacks capacity on communication for development. Only the Ministry of Health has a centre specialised at behavioural change. There is a need to mainstream communication for development with a systemic approach within other sectors.

**Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy**

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan continued its work with partners in generating evidence to monitor the situation of children and women in the country, to inform the country’s decision-making processes in a timely manner. In 2014 the Situation Analysis report was completed to identify the trend on progressive realization of child rights and remaining equity gaps. This work further contributed to the Mid-Term Review of the CP and enhanced UNICEF Kyrgyzstan Country Programme’s strategic directions.

The MICS was conducted jointly with the national statistics office, of which a Key Findings Report was produced. The MICS provided a statistically solid and internationally comparable ‘snapshot’ of the situation of children and women in Kyrgyzstan. In conjunction with previous MICS and Demographic and Household Survey (DHS) data, it revealed trends in child mortality, mother and child health, and other areas, which contributed to the MTR and provided critical information for the global UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG) reporting.

The assessment on antiretroviral (ARV) treatment of children born from HIV-positive mothers revealed that one-third of them died before the first birthday, largely due to respiratory infections. The lack of Early Infant Diagnosis (EID) did not allow the confirmation of their HIV status. EID is a critical intervention to provide timely and appropriate services to those children. A major progress was made with EID, increasing timely testing of newborns from 24 per cent (2013) to 78.5 per cent (2014).

The results of the baseline and impact surveys demonstrated effectiveness of home-based fortification programme supported by UNICEF, with a proven record of micronutrient deficiency reduction among young children. The findings were used to leverage financial resources and to advocate nutrition related laws at Parliament.

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan supported MoES to analyse the “Impact of Teacher Salary Reform on Availability and Quality of Teachers” in 2011. It revealed that shortage of qualified teachers reduced from 23 per cent to 13 per cent, despite that hourly based payment scheme, unfair distribution of teaching hours and misuse of the incentives component do not contribute to qualitative improvement of teaching force. Based on the assessment, a working group was established in MoES to modify the current salary scheme to improve the quality of teaching.

**Partnerships**

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan’s close cooperation with the Parliament continued to bring important legislative framework for the realization of children’s rights in 2014, such as State Programme on Justice for Children, amendments in Flour Fortification and Protection of Breastfeeding Laws.

The partnership with the Ombudsman’s Office effectively promoted ‘School without Violence Programme’, enhanced complaint mechanisms and monitoring of closed institutions.

The 25@CRC campaign united a wide circle of partners from children to political leaders, successfully raising awareness on children’s rights. Key partnership events included: a theatre performance organised in cooperation with local TV companies and theatre-art partners, and a
hot-air balloon event of ‘Flying High for Kids Project’ with a renowned adventurer, with the participation of the First Lady, Parliamentarians, high government officials, and children.

UNICEF took an active role as a lead facilitating agency in Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, to support the Government’s SUN focal point, the Ministry of Health, in coordinating key stakeholders inputs in Kyrgyzstan’s actions on nutrition. This partnership resulted in development of State Food Security and Nutrition Programme, creating an alliance of NGOs, and initiating steps for high-level multi-sectoral coordination to prevent micronutrient deficiency among vulnerable populations.

Kyrgyzstan’s health sector continued to enjoy the successful organization of Sector-Wide Approach which effectively coordinates development partners’ investment and assistance on implementation of “Den Sooluk” Health Reform Strategy. This significantly contributed to Kyrgyzstan’s participation in Global Child Survival Commitment and SUN Movement towards the achievement of MDG4.

The UN Peace Building Programme also has an important partnership forum in its Joint Steering Committee led by the Presidential Administration. UNICEF is one of the most significant contributors in the UN peacebuilding interventions, addressing needs of most vulnerable children and families.

The Development Partner’s Coordination Council is a well-established aid-effectiveness mechanism of donor coordination, in which UNICEF Kyrgyzstan undertakes a few important roles. UNICEF took its leadership chairing the Education and Social Protection working group respectively in 2014, while being a member of a number of other thematic working groups.

**External Communication and Public Advocacy**

By marking the CRC@25 campaign in 2014, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan intensified external communication and public advocacy on child rights by enhancing a wide range of partnerships. Several high government officials, parliamentarians, artists, a popular singer and a renowned adventurer made official statements on violation of children rights and donated their pro-bono contributions, such as: recording a local version of song ‘Imagine’, organising theatre performances, flying a hot-air balloon, for awareness raising on children’s rights. The recognised partnership with channels of universal broadcasting coverage such as ‘Balastan’ Children Channel and the Public Broadcasting Company contributed to reaching a large population with child rights promotion messages, thanks to a number of high quality edutainment products (cartoons, talk-shows, video spots, a movie and a social serial) developed with UNICEF technical consultation and support.

According to media monitoring reports, more than 350 UNICEF statements were picked up in local media throughout 2014 that ensured daily reference to child rights issues and UNICEF in media reporting. The CRC@25 campaign gained most popular media coverage, due to a creative symbiosis of entertaining and educational purposes of the events. Key child rights messages, which received most of the media attention, included violence against children, community based kindergartens, sanitation and hygiene, exclusive breastfeeding and prevention of anaemia, and child poverty.

UNICEF considerably increased its presence on social media platforms. The UNICEF Kyrgyzstan Facebook page, with more than 2,600 subscribers, rated as the second fastest-growing Facebook pages of non-profit non-governmental organisations in Kyrgyzstan. The
UNICEF Facebook page is now followed by 2,700 subscribers, triple that of 2013. This is approximately two per cent of all Facebook users in Kyrgyzstan (about 110,000 at the end of 2014). Each of the CRC@25 campaign events were followed by between 2,000 and 6,000 people on social media. The YouTube page, which was set up at the end of 2013, has about 300 subscribers and more than 150,700 viewers. New pages were opened on Twitter and Odnoklassniki in 2014 and gained around 300 subscribers each. Social media platforms became a strategic tool for interaction.

**South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation**

Positive experience exchanges with countries beyond the CEE/CIS region were marked in 2014. One of the unique partnerships was the visit of the Nepal Constitutional Assembly members to Kyrgyzstan, with the aim of learning from the Kyrgyz experience on child rights focused policy-making. The study tour was immensely useful as the countries have similar socio-economic backgrounds. Inspired by the achievements made so far by Kyrgyzstan, the Nepalese delegates initiated amendments to legislative documents in order to bring child rights legislation in line with international standards.

In addition, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan share experiences with Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia regarding the nationally scaled up home-based fortification programme, and contributed to a planning for their home fortification programmes. This was based on Kyrgyzstan’s promising results in decreasing anaemia among young children.

The UNICEF Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan offices intensified cross-border cooperation during 2014, and have an ambition to demonstrate a model of such cooperation in the region. Strengthening cross-border cooperation between the two countries suffering from unresolved border-related issues is crucially important for regional stability. If unaddressed, these not only hamper development progress in two countries but also affect regional security, thus potentially affecting well-being of children. UNICEF Kyrgyzstan promoted integration of youth and education related outputs for most vulnerable cross-border areas under the UN Peace Building Fund implementation. The two UNICEF offices also jointly facilitated an inter-governmental policy dialogue on social protection system reform. The Kyrgyzstan delegation shared its experience on evidence-driven and participatory elaboration of the social protection sector policy with the Government of Tajikistan. The Kyrgyzstan experience has been taken into account by the Tajik Government during elaboration of their Social Protection Strategy (2016-2020). Furthermore, with the support of UNICEF and WFP, the two countries organised a cross-border simulation exercise for emergency response in a scenario of an earthquake, with an aim of strengthening disaster response capacity.

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan organized a Regional Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in Schools Meeting, which brought together experts from six countries. This was the first WASH meeting in the region. Participants shared local experiences and worked together on adopting simple, scalable and sustainable solutions to their country contexts.

**Identification Promotion of Innovation**

A unique methodology of ‘Forum Theatre’ was one of the successful innovative approaches which UNICEF Kyrgyzstan continued in 2014. Theatre performance was used as a platform to address sensitive issues concerning inter-ethnic relations among young people. It mitigated direct tension in the inter-ethnic dialogues, but also provided an opportunity to recognise the use of a minority Uzbek language in the public space. Moreover, the theatre performance gave an opportunity for young people to address their concerns to Parliamentarians and the Government
officials. It effectively raised the awareness of policy makers on key issues, such as social deprivation of children left behind by migrant worker parents. As a result, the Vice Mayor of Bishkek City suggested to reflect such concerns in the national migration policy.

Another innovative approach applied in 2014 was the assessment of women’s awareness on danger signs of pregnancy and childhood diseases. The assessment used mobile-phone technology in data collection, instead of paper-based survey questionnaire. The assessment tool increased the quality of data collection with more reliable data inputs, and also significantly reduced the financial and time requirement for such an assessment. The easy data collection process made the assessment available to monitor the trend of awareness raising regularly, and also helped to review the role of Village Health Committees in information dissemination as well as their role in arranging the transportation for pregnant women to be delivered to healthcare facilities in time.

UNICEF jointly with the Ministry of Health developed an application for smartphones to increase adherence to ARV treatment among HIV positive children and women. The application improves antiretroviral therapy practices of children and women, through informing them of the time to take their ARVs taking in an interactive way, and providing access to modules with information on HIV, ARV regiments and interaction within clients group and doctors. In 2014, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan supplied 200 smartphones with applications for children and women on ARV treatment to pilot the project in southern Kyrgyzstan. In contrast to the traditional paper-based tools, the system allows a real-time monitoring of ARV treatment, generating reports and data for each client, and outreach to clients who are out of their treatment regimen.

**Support to Integration and cross-sectoral linkages**

Guided by the National Social Protection Strategy for 2012-2014, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan facilitated a policy dialogue among line ministries and local self-governance authorities aimed at streamlining outreach to the most vulnerable children and institutionalization of case management in protection of those most vulnerable from further deprivation.

In the dialogue, social deprivation of children and families was addressed from respective sector perspectives, such as health, education and social protection. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Development, this resulted in the elaboration of the Governmental Regulation stipulating role and responsibilities in case management. The Regulation was built on the results of a UNICEF-supported pilot project and aims to strengthen social protection provision in both cash benefits and social services, by enhancing the coordination among central and local governments, and service-providers. The World Bank and WFP participated in consultations to support implementation of the Regulation, through building skills on asset management and labour market participation.

One of the key bottlenecks to mitigate the social vulnerability of the most deprived is a lack of effective social service provision based on their actual needs. The identification of needs and risks concerning individuals at local level is not statutory regulated. Therefore, needs assessment is hampered, referrals are uncoordinated and support is fragmented. Case management has been proven to address these issues with all actors involved in a case - from problem identification to service delivery and monitoring - as duty-bearers to hold them accountable for their response to vulnerable children.

In UNICEF Kyrgyzstan, several programmes worked together to ensure cross-sectoral synergy and tangible child-level results. Conceptual and operational clarity are still to be reached among
different sectors, i.e. education/out of school children, social protection/poor children, and child protection. This accounts for the vertical and horizontal fragmentation within the government sectors, with gaps both in sectoral normative and institutional frameworks. An overall coordinating mechanism with sufficient authority and adequate human, technical and financial resources is required to ensure effective coordination of activities on children’s rights across all sectors and at national, regional and local levels, with particular focus on the most disadvantaged children and their families.

**Service Delivery**

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan continued to support the enhancement of cross-sectoral social service delivery to increase access of most vulnerable children, women and families to basic social services. Particularly in southern Kyrgyzstan, where inter-ethnic tensions continue in the areas bordering with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, it contributed to improving peace and stability, and mitigating inter-ethnic conflicts. In southern Kyrgyzstan in 2014, UNICEF undertook 28 interventions in 90 municipalities reaching 35,958 beneficiaries.

At least 40,000 children in schools/preschools and about 40,000 people in hospitals benefitted from new WASH facilities, whereas two and a half per cent of school-age children have improved hygiene behaviour.

Another 1000 out of school children (OOSC) were identified and engaged in a learning process responsive to their needs. Fifty three schools/preschools significantly improved learning environment for about 25,000 children.

More than 10,000 children from 93 schools/preschools were equipped with DRR knowledge and skills; and the schools now have improved emergency preparedness and risk reduction measures.

Four day care and rehabilitation centres for 78 children with disabilities and child victims of violence were established and fully operationalized. Rehabilitation, diversion and probation services were tested for over 300 children in conflict with the law. At least 6000 cases of children without birth registration were identified and supported during piloting of the regulation on identification and case management of children in difficult life circumstances.

The clinical skills of 1,660 health workers (86 per cent of workforce in target facilities) in 22 hospitals and 34 healthcare facilities were strengthened, as a result of intensive trainings on antenatal and perinatal care under the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) programme. A total of 53,546 pregnant women and 21,860 children under five benefitted from the improved health care practices. UNICEF supported the Government in conduction of Temperature Monitoring Study and implementation of nationwide standard operating procedures on cold chain maintenance at all levels of health system.

As a result of training of 1200 health workers (54 per cent of those country-wide) on newly introduced HIV integrated interventions, the coverage of early newborn’s diagnosis of HIV status tripled from 24.5 per cent in 2013 to 78.5 per cent in 2014. The percentage of transmission of HIV from mother to child reduced to 2.8 per cent in 2014.

**Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation**

Throughout 2014, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan’s country programme implementation was based on the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) with a focus on reducing equity gaps. A landmark event
was the Government’s CRC reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, supported by UNICEF. In May, the Kyrgyz Government delegation reported to the Committee on the implementation status of CRC. Civil society representatives and authors of the alternative CRC report observed the Government reporting. The concluding observations resulted from the reporting are informing the Kyrgyz Government on key issues which require their actions on enhancing child rights protection.

To enhance the realization of the rights of children in contact with law, the State Programme on Justice for Children was endorsed by the Parliament with UNICEF’s technical support. It sets forth a course of action on reforming the juvenile justice system in the country. Revisions are currently being drafted to bring the Child Code in compliance with international standards, treaties ratified by Kyrgyzstan and the CRC Committee’s concluding observations.

UNICEF and the Kyrgyz Government marked 2014 with the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the CRC and 20 years since the ratifications of the CRC by Kyrgyzstan. Awareness raising actions called for more protection of the children’s rights, through various UNICEF platforms of public events, including workshops, theatre performances, flash mobs at schools and media campaigns. The celebration culminated with the Flying High for Kids Balloon event.

On the child’s right to nutrition, another illustration of the HRBA was the development of the State Programme on Food Security and Nutrition. The programme articulates the importance of nutrition for child development in this first strategic document on nutrition in the country.

Towards enhancing the rights of national minorities, as part of the joint UN Peacebuilding Project, UNICEF supported the multilingual education initiative in partnership with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the High Commissioner for National Minorities, and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), promoting an awareness of the right of ethnic minorities to study in their mother tongue as well as their responsibilities to study in the state language. This focus on ethnic minority population contributed to reducing the equity gap among vulnerable children.

**Gender Mainstreaming and Equality**

One of the key gender-focused programmatic initiatives of UNICEF Kyrgyzstan was the support to the reproductive health services to marginalized women (drug users, sex workers, and socially vulnerable adolescents), with an aim of enhancing access to quality services, including the prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV (PMTCT). A joint network led by Ministry of Health was established, including family health centres, maternity wards, the Republican Narcology Centre and NGOs. Within the network activities, two clinical protocols and guidelines were developed on pregnancy management among the drug using women and treatment of withdrawal syndrome among newborns. Training for medical staff and outreach workers of involved partners were also conducted. As a result, five women revealed by network successfully delivered babies.

As a part of network activities, UNICEF supported training on ECD and danger signs of child diseases for drug-addicted women and their partners. The training sessions aimed to increase the parental skills of participants. A survey for the impact of these activities will be conducted in 2015.

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan is one of the 14 countries which participates in menstrual hygiene
management (MHM) interventions supported by the Canadian Government. The initiative aims at developing tools and recommendations for incorporating MHM in WASH in schools national programming. Kyrgyzstan is the only country in the CEE/CIS region participating in this project. The project is documenting current MHM practices and supporting duty bearers in tackling the stigma and gender marginalization related to menstruation, which will strengthen evidence-based advocacy and action for MHM. Funding was received at the end of 2014, with programme implementation to start early in 2015.

In cooperation with UN Women, UNICEF participated in the 16 days campaign on violence against women, particularly on promotion of child rights and protection of girls and boys against violence. One hundred and fifty children raised their awareness on their rights and received useful information on crisis centres, hot lines and organizations that can help children in difficult life situations and experiencing violence.

Environmental Sustainability

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan undertook the following multi-sectoral “environmental sustainability” initiatives during 2014.

The Youth Programme partnered with a youth NGO in conducting training of trainers on “climate change understanding and impacts” with a total of 700 beneficiaries at 23 youth centres. Another training of trainers for 80 young people was conducted with a focus on emergency preparedness and response, where climate change and environmental sustainability (pollution and animal/plant extinction) issues were also addressed. This initiative will be further expanded in 2015. Around US$18,000 was spent for these capacity development activities.

The WASH Programme implemented environmental sustainability initiatives during construction and renovation of 54 schools and 17 health centres through:

- Recycling of building materials removed from schools;
- Installation of thermal efficient windows and replacement of leaking and inefficient internal heating systems thus reducing coal and power consumption and associated emissions;
- Construction of new, ‘winter-proof’ water supply systems in schools resulting in saving of water resources. This prevents many taps from running on a 24 hour basis to prevent water pipes from freezing;
- Installation of energy efficient lighting, and;
- Maintaining strict environmental protection clauses in all construction contracts.

Nearly 25,000 children in schools and 20,000 mothers and children in hospital maternity wards benefitted from the UNICEF WASH programme in 2014. The estimated budget for these activities was US$800,000. Project partners included Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and civil society organisations.

The UNICEF operations unit coordinated standard environmental initiatives in both Osh and Bishkek offices at a minimal cost including:

- Double sided printing (default settings) and recycling all used paper;
- Replacement of office windows with thermally efficient alternatives, as part of UNICEF contribution to UN House maintenance (about US$8,000);
- Use of energy efficient light bulbs (about US$100 used to replace inefficient bulbs);
- Reducing carbon emission due to cargo consolidation and efficient route planning.
Effective Leadership

The UNICEF Kyrgyzstan Rolling Management Plan (RMP) for 2014-2015 outlines the management priorities for this period and serves as an action plan to achieve agreed results. Management priorities and objectives were regularly reviewed during Country Management Team (CMT) meetings, programme and operations meetings. The CMT meetings were held every two months to review the key performance indicators, such as the progress of programme implementation, resource management and mobilisation, human resource management, in-house committee management, and staff welfare issues. The CMT also served as a forum to follow up on the priority issues coming out of the Regional Management Team meetings.

Weekly staff meetings were dedicated to information sharing, coordination of the week ahead and determination of progress of short-term office priorities. During programme coordination meetings the performance indicators were reviewed, and during zone office team meetings, progress against zone office programme and management priorities outlined in the zone office management plan were reviewed.

The responsibilities of all staff members for achieving the objectives and priorities are reviewed during Performance Appraisal System (PAS) discussions.

The following formal governance mechanisms are in place: Country Management Team, Programme Coordination Team, Contract Review Committee, Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) Review Committee, Joint Consultative Committee, Local Property Survey Board, Central Review Body, Local Training Committee, Bid Opening Committee, Assurance Plan Activities Development group and the Gender Focal Team.

The Mid-Term Management Review (MTMR) process started in autumn 2014, following the MTR of the Country Programme. The MTMR aims at an internal examination of UNICEF programme management operations and performance, including annual planning and review processes, internal monitoring systems, management of partnerships, and the management of key inputs to the Country Programme (cash, supplies, knowledge, technical assistance, etc.) As a part of the MTMR process, the office management conducted a teambuilding retreat in December 2014. The main objectives of the team retreat were associated with defining the following:

- The strategic position of UNICEF in a rapidly changing policy environment;
- Accountability/division of roles and responsibilities: division of responsibilities between the management and section chiefs, between Bishkek office and the Osh zone office, among section chiefs across sections on the cross-sectoral issues, between programme and communication sections, between operations and programme sections;
- Delegation: effective delegation vs. micro-management, abdication vs. delegation, lack of coaching and guidance when tasks are delegated;
- Empowerment: effective means of empowerment, the empowerment of subordinate staff or zone office staff;
- Time management/work-life balance: how to mitigate ‘burn-out’ and ‘work related stress from workload’, whether staff-wellbeing is respected and appropriately ensured.

The teambuilding retreat resulted with better self-awareness of staff members, team’s reflection on the management culture, gaining skills in communication, better time-management and work-life balance.

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan enjoys a dynamic Local Staff Association (LSA). The LSA held general
staff meetings regularly to reflect staff concerns in a transparent way. The office management regularly meets the LSA executive committee members at Joint Consultative Committee meetings to discuss staff concerns and staff welfare issues in a constructive manner.

**Financial Resources Management**

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan has established mechanisms to improve contributions management, budget control and financial procedures, accounting and timely liquidation of cash assistance, and proper utilization of financial resources. The monthly monitor report issued by the Regional Office also served as an effective monitoring instrument. The report covers monitoring areas such as resource management, donor reporting, direct cash transfers, audit observations, and premises. The UNICEF Kyrgyzstan data reported in the monthly report were duly addressed by CMT, so that relevant follow up actions have been put in place.

According to the HACT framework, the Assurance Activities Implementation Plan is a practical tool to monitor and ensure that the funds transferred to implementing partners (IPs) are used for the appropriate purpose and in accordance with UNICEF Work Plans. As per the UNICEF Kyrgyzstan Assurance Plan for 2014, spot checks and audits of IPs were conducted with total value of US$1,167,993. As of December 2014, the office managed to complete seven audits of IPs with total value of US$1,141,281. In addition, the office scheduled micro-assessment of IPs with a total value of US$2,060,891.93. By the end of 2014, the office managed to complete micro-assessments of all 15 IPs with total value of US$2,060,891.93.

Monitoring of programme implementation improved through regular analysis during programme and CMT meetings. Funds were reviewed regularly against planned programme activities. In particular, the funds with ear-marked contributions from donors were closely monitored to meet the target goals with effective funds utilisation.

During 2014, the UNICEF Kyrgyzstan programme implementation was US$10.4 million.

As a follow up to audit recommendations, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan reviewed and verified the accuracy of transactions through conducting random checks of supporting documents of payments on a quarterly basis. In 2014, the random checks identified no deviations.

**Fund-raising and Donor Relations**

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan continued to raise funds to support the programme objectives in 2014.

Overall, the cumulative amount of the donor funds raised in three years since the beginning of Country Programme, has reached nearly US$30.9 million. A request for a new country programme ceiling for the Other Resources funds will be submitted as a part of the MTMR, as nearly 77.1 per cent of the existing funds (US$23.9 million) have been utilized by the end of 2014.

The office worked on maintaining, expanding and consolidating existing partnerships by accommodating donor visits, data and information sharing, ensuring a high quality of proposals and reporting. A new resource mobilisation strategy and respective action plan were developed in 2014. The strategy provided a good analysis of the donor environment, identified funding status of the programme components, and formulated a strategic plan to fill the funding gaps.

The office established mechanisms to track submission of donor reports in a timely manner and ensure their high quality. Monthly updates on donor reports due were circulated among
programme staff. Donor reporting was always a part of CMT and programme meetings. As a result, all the donor reports were sent on time. The office management closely monitored the use of funds and the implementation of planned activities through regular programme and CMT meetings, with a particular attention to expiring grants. As a result all grants were efficiently and fully utilized.

**Evaluation**

The Integrated Monitoring and Management Plan (IMEP) and Rolling Work Plans (RWP) for 2013-2014 were the key reference documents in planning for evaluation of programme implementation. In 2014, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan finalized two evaluations: (1) the Evaluation of Effective Perinatal Care programme; and (2) The Evaluation of the Joint UNICEF/DFID Equity Programme. Both reports received a highly satisfactory rating from the RO Evaluation Facility.

The Management Response for the Perinatal Care programme evaluation was developed and submitted to global tracking system. The Management Response for the Equity Programme evaluation is being discussed.

The evaluation findings and recommendations contributed to the Country Programme Mid-Term Review held in 2014. The evaluations were conducted by independent agencies/experts selected in a competitive procedure. The evaluation processes were participatory, involving all relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries. Recommendations are duly taken to improve Country Programme implementation.

In addition, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan participated in two multi-country evaluations conducted by Regional Office under Regional Knowledge and Leadership Areas Justice for Children and Early Childhood Development. The Management Response for the evaluations will be discussed and agreed with the RO and stakeholders.

The office continued its support to developing in-country capacity for quality evaluation. With UNICEF support, three governmental officials (from the Prime Minister’s office) responsible for M&E policy in governmental structures enhanced their skills and knowledge an evaluation conference in Dublin, Ireland. The office maintained a close relationship with the International Programme Evaluation Network (IPEN) which promotes evaluation activities and strengthens the community of professionals in the CEE/CIS region. With IPEN support, an international IPEN M&E conference was conducted out in Bishkek in 2014.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

UNICEF’s contribution to UN House Common and Shared Services in 2014 amounted to US$53,425.31, which was charged to Regular Resources, not to the Institutional Budget.

As a result of savings through 2014 common services and premises arrangements in Osh Zone Office (ZO), UNICEF received US$15,624 for reimbursement of costs from OHCHR for the period from January through August 2014.

The internal policy on limited access to colour printer usage introduced since 2010 enabled UNICEF Kyrgyzstan to save approximately US$2,000 in 2014.

Since 2012, the office has split the commitment of funds for cost of fuel to be used by programme and operations. In this regards, the transportation costs associated with field travel are charged to respective Outputs and grants. In 2014, the total cost of fuel comprised
US$38,114.77 out of which US$26,182.72 was charged to programme and US$11,932.05 to operations.

Taking into consideration that the use of economy class air travel is a standard practice in UNICEF Kyrgyzstan, approximately 66 trips (staff and consultants) that exceeded nine hours of travel were conducted by using economy class tickets rather than business class. The total cost of these economy tickets was US$60,103, whereas business class tickets would have cost US$150,258: a saving of approximately US$90,155 of UNICEF resources in 2014.

The shift to unlimited internet tariff with a fixed payment scheme resulted in a saving of approximately US$8,000. A video conference facility enabled successful discussions between Bishkek and Osh, with the Regional Office and other locations. This not only saved telecommunication costs, but also rationalised travel of staff members between Bishkek and Osh, resulting in a significant cost saving. According to the statistics from the Polycom DVC system, there were 192 videoconference sessions: 72 calls to the RO in Geneva and 120 calls between Bishkek and Osh in 2014.

Supply Management

In 2014, the total supplies delivered by UNICEF Kyrgyzstan accounted for US$1.2 million, with the 95 per cent being for programmes and five per cent for operational supplies. As additional US$1.5 million was spent for institutional services, of which 50 per cent was for renovations of facilities. The amount of offshore and local procurement were almost equal. The main categories of supplies included children’s books/text books and publications in local languages, medical and cold chain equipment, furniture, fire-protection equipment, ECD/recreational kits, IT and office equipment.

The annual supply plan was revised monthly and reported to the CMT. Due to an additional grant for emergency preparedness, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan replenished the contingency stock in the mid-year.

The main activities undertaken were associated with tendering, streamlining of low-value procurement and construction procedures, monitoring stocks, local shipments and stock distributions, strengthening the governmental cold chain with warehouse temperature monitoring system and suppliers' performance tracking. In 2014, 46 tenders and 20 Contract Review Committee meetings were conducted for the review of 38 contracts, including four cases cleared by the Contract Review Committee of the Regional Office.

In 2014, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan supported the Government and UN agencies for Procurement Services with the transactions of US$2.3 million. UNICEF Kyrgyzstan continued to support the Ministry of Health in supplying GAVI vaccines and accompanying stocks for US$1.33 million and food fortification supplies. Main areas of support were placement of orders, customs clearance and settlement of financial accounts.

Two warehouses were maintained in Bishkek and Osh. The total value of supplies managed by these warehouses in 2014 was US$1.25 million. An inventory count was conducted in both warehouses in the end of 2014, with a total value of US$0.48 million.

UNICEF participated in the joint activities of the UN Common Procurement Team to share long-term agreements and conducted joint tenders.
Security for Staff and Premises

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan’s security for staff and premises costs are managed through the UN Security Cost Shared Project and UN House Shared Services Premises budget. The total annual UNICEF’s contribution to the 2014 security budget was US$13,245.63. The security budget included activities related to the cost of Bishkek and Osh radio rooms’ personnel, telecommunication equipment such as rent of repeater sites, rent and utilities costs.

Security radio checks for UN personnel in Bishkek were performed once a week between radio holders of UN Agencies/Fund/Programmes and the Radio Room. The weekly radio checks are used to check radio equipment, to ensure communication can be transmitted and received between radios in the network, to identify weaknesses and take remedial actions. The radio checks for UN vehicles were also performed every week. In 2014, the Special Operational Procedures for radio checks were updated.

In 2014, the UN Designated Official, in consultation with the UN Security Management Team endorsed the following recommendations for further implementation:

1. Agency based Warden System to be established for all UN international and national personnel. The Security Management Team decided to change the international warden system from a zone-based to agency-based, which should help the warden system to work more efficiently based on timely information about staff movements within the respective agency;

2. Country Minimum Operating Residential Security Standards to be revised by adding a backup source of electricity capable to provide energy for emergency lights, panic button, home alarm system and emergency communications;

3. Each agency to assign a Fire Safety Focal Point and develop a Fire Safety Plan according Fire Safety Policy;

4. The United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) in cooperation with relevant agency staff to conduct mandatory Minimum Operating Security Standards self-assessments; Security Focal Points

5. Launch pilot Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments training programme.

In 2014, two day training for UN (SFP) was held. The main purpose of this training was to update SFPs on current UN Kyrgyzstan security arrangements, role and actions of SFPs in emergencies and different practical exercises and drills. In 2014, the UNDSS conducted training for UN agencies Wardens as well.

The total annual UNICEF contribution to 2014 Shared Services Premises budget was US$53,425.31. The budget includes building maintenance, capital investment costs, recurring operating expenses, recurring security costs and one-time security costs.

Human Resources

In 2014, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan was adequately staffed to maintain appropriate functions to support the effective and efficient implementation of Country Programme priorities. Based on the results of MTR, the country office plans to continue the Mid-Term Management Review, to further reviews the current structure to ensure that the office is appropriately structured to achieve its targets for the post-MTR period.
To complement staff capacity and to ensure cost-effectiveness, the office engaged local expertise whenever available, as well as international expertise by contracting consultants and research institutions, NGOs and the private sector. As part of knowledge networking, the office worked very closely with the Regional Office to identify technical experts and benefit from interagency and inter-country cooperation.

Following the results of Regional Staff Survey 2014, the office management and representatives of the LSA directly discussed on the issues which emerged. Those issues were transparently addressed and discussed with the help of an experienced external facilitator during all-staff teambuilding retreat in December, with the aim of building stronger and harmonious team-dynamics. The retreat encouraged staff members’ self-awareness, participatory section management, constructive feedback, transparent decision-making, and better interactions across sections.

Staff members were always encouraged to have Performance Appraisal discussions with a clear connection between results and individual objectives.

The UNICEF Kyrgyzstan Training Plan was carefully prepared to meet the requirements for the enhancement of staff skills and competencies. The Training Plan was successfully implemented, providing learning opportunities to staff members with an aim to add value to the organization by enhancing staff members’ capacity in a wide range of knowledge and skills to perform more effectively in their jobs. The Training Plan also included learning and development opportunities through E-learning, readings and webinars. The office management endorsed staff members to have learning days (up to 10 days) for individual development opportunities.

The UNICEF Kyrgyzstan Learning Plan 2014 comprised of the following group trainings:
1. New HACT Framework, PCA tools;
2. ICT Training;
3. UNICEF Branding;
4. Media training/public speaking skills in English and Russian;
5. Kyrgyz language courses.

The total estimated amount spent for training/learning needs in 2014 was US$56,912: comprised of US$2,680 for group trainings and US$54,232 for individual learning needs.

UNICEF is a member of UN Cares group in Kyrgyzstan. In 2014 the Joint United Nations Team on AIDS organized orientation training on HIV for newly recruited UN staff and their children. The topics of the training included basic information on HIV/AIDS, prevention of HIV, living with HIV and the UN legal policy.

In 2014, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan staff participated in a number of emergency preparedness events. It enabled staff and the partners to raise awareness on the CCC's, Humanitarian Performance Monitoring. A pre-simulation exercise training was conducted jointly with WFP and OCHA, where UNICEF facilitated sessions on CCC’s, sectors humanitarian action and Humanitarian Performance Monitoring. A cross-border simulation exercise conducted in the border area with Tajikistan helped actual preparedness of UNICEF staff.
Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

In 2014 a number of improvements were successfully made to the office’s ICT infrastructure, including:
1. Migration from Lotus Notes e-mail messaging to Outlook 2013;
2. Migration from Office 2010 to Office 2013;
3. Migration from existing office IT environment to Microsoft Cloud Office 365;
4. ICT Training related to existing IT infrastructure + Office 2013 was conducted for the Bishkek office and Osh zone office staff;
5. Internet bandwidth and tariffs were optimized due to increasing of international traffic upon migration to Office 365;
6. All in one (fax, scan to e-mail, copy) device installed for programme staff;
7. Multi-Functional Colour Printer (in order to check quality of UNICEF publications) installed;
8. Development of a dedicated Skype account with multi point connection possibility including online presentations.

The Bishkek country office and the Osh zone office are equipped with Polycom DVC system. Video Conference meetings were conducted regularly and successfully between Bishkek and Osh as well as with other country offices, the Regional Office and headquarters.

UNICEF in Kyrgyzstan increased its presence on social media platforms. UNICEF has 2,640 subscribers on Facebook, 296 subscribers and more than 150,774 viewers on UNICEF YouTube channel; and more subscribers are joining Twitter and Odnoklassniki pages of UNICEF. Through social media, UNICEF is switching from one-way to two-way communication with sharing opinions, comments raising questions and discussions. UNICEF’s campaigns conducted through social media raised awareness of readers and followers on immunization, breastfeeding rules, proper hygiene, sanitation norms, HIV information, amongst others. Posts on the social media pages were a source for journalists articles, new knowledge and tools for parents and caregivers for better parenting.

Programme Components from RAM

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 Equitable and Responsive Systems. Children and women have increased access to quality and responsive services, including social benefits.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
To address the critical bottlenecks on the provision of health services to the most vulnerable, UNICEF and partners in the health sector-wide approach (SWAp) improved access to life-saving services in primary health care and hospital facilities. The provision of PMTCT services increased from 40 per cent to 90 per cent in the country and mother-to-child transmission of HIV decreased by 3 per cent. Currently 95 per cent of pregnant women are tested for HIV as part of their antenatal care. Through the improved temperature management in the facilities, hypothermia in newborns was reduced by 18 per cent over the past year. In addition, due to better case management of deliveries and improved equipment, asphyxia in newborns decreased by 79 per cent in the past three years in five of the largest target maternities of Osh and Batken provincial centres. An estimated 61,000 newborns have benefitted from improved care in health care facilities that apply principles of Effective Perinatal Care based on WHO standards.
To close existing equity gaps and improve the quality of learning in pre-school education, UNICEF directed significant funds towards campaigning for better access to education and quality of early childhood education. In collaboration with the Roza Otunbaeva Foundation, UNICEF led a series of awareness-raising campaigns among Members of Parliament and government officials, advocating for better education opportunities and on barriers around access to quality preschool education. Similarly, the programme consolidated efforts from different stakeholders to promote early literacy and reading activities. On the supply side, the Global Partnership on Education (GPE) approval to allocate US$12.7 million to the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic ensures further expansion of access to early education programmes to adequately prepare children for the transition into primary education.

For the administration and delivery of social cash transfers, redress mechanisms were developed and endorsed by ministries. This provides clear guidance and contacts for complaints and additional information regarding access to and registration for social cash transfers.

UNICEF supported the active participation of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in its global commitments, including Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed and the Scaling Up Nutrition movement. UNICEF’s work to promote SUN resulted in a global grant from the SUN Committee.

**OUTPUT 1** Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Systems and Policies. The Ministry of Health manages and monitors the provision and performance of quality and responsive priority life-saving health services for children and mothers from poor and vulnerable families, including nutrition services and diagnostic, preventative and treatment interventions for HIV.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Kyrgyzstan is considered as a country on track to achieve MDG4 target. The MICS 2014 findings demonstrate positive changes in the situation of children and women and reduction of equity gaps in health sector as per comparison of MICS 2006 and 2014 data. UNICEF continued to play a leading role in MCH within Health SWAp.

Since 2013, the MDG Acceleration Framework has been applied to MDG 5 in the country with conduction of a bottleneck analysis and development of a joint Action Plan for the Government and development partners, both for maternal and child survival. Driven by UNICEF, the health-related activities of the MDG Acceleration Framework Action Plan with good quality indicators were integrated in the plans of the MCH group/SWAp and the progress was reviewed regularly. The package of evidence-based interventions to reduce child mortality is a core part of the National Strategic Plan in the Health Sector “Den-Sooluk”.

The mechanism for quality of care was strengthened by supporting the MoH Working Group to develop a training module on Quality Improvement for hospital managers and the course will be integrated in the curricula for the post-graduate medical studies. UNICEF also initiated an organization of a national workshop on quality of care with facilitation of international experts and UNICEF specialists from RO and headquarters, so as to equip national experts in the health system with a unified understanding of the quality assurance mechanism. The workshop will also contribute to improvement of the M&E system in the country.

In 2014, UNICEF strengthened the supervisory system in health facilities and initiated an integrated approach to supervision and monitoring of effective perinatal care (EPC) and IMCI. Nearly 95 per cent of medical workers in target maternities are currently trained on EPC.
services through UNICEF initiatives. To promote exclusive breastfeeding, UNICEF supported a MoH campaign during World Breastfeeding Week. Through a regional training, a new approach to young child wellbeing and early child development was introduced for the MoH. In addition, UNICEF initiated a dialogue with the MoH around improving services for children with disabilities.

The clinical skills of 1,660 health workers (86 per cent of workforce in target facilities) were strengthened and the work of 22 hospitals and 34 healthcare facilities improved as a result of intensive training on antenatal and perinatal care as well as IMCI. As a result, 53,546 pregnant women and 21,860 children under five benefitted from the improved health care practices. The percentage of child caregivers who know the danger signs of pregnancy has increased from 41 per cent to 67 per cent due to effective engagement of the Village Health Committees.

Due to changes in the structure of the CP, indicators for HIV and nutrition have been shifted to Outputs 3 and 4 respectively.

**OUTPUT 2** The MOES ensures increased equity in access to pre-school education, a better quality teaching and learning environment in basic education, and effective responses to the needs of out-of-school children.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
In its capacity of coordinating agency for the GPE, UNICEF participated in identifying strategic directions for improving existing secondary legislation and developing funding mechanisms with the aim to ensure sustainable expansion of different forms of early learning and school readiness including community based kindergartens.

The Inter-sectoral working group on early learning and development standards (ELDS) for children aged zero to three has produced a draft document, and the content validation of the standards was completed. Age validation will be undertaken in 2015. The MOES presented ELDS for three to seven year old children during regional meetings including key education decision makers, as well as a wider circle of local authorities beyond the education sector. Along with presenting the standards, the regional meetings enabled discussions on key challenges in implementing the 240-hours school readiness programme as well as the plan of the Government to start introduction of one year school readiness programme in 2015.

Twenty-six family reading corners were set up in remote communities to allow children and their families to enjoy learning environment and promote early literacy and reading activities. An inter-sectoral partnership was set up to promote public discourse on importance of early learning with the particular focus on reading to and with young children. In partnership with the US Embassy, UNICEF supported an international conference on reading, which served as a platform for discussion of the key achievements and lessons learnt in promoting family reading in the country as well as identification of key steps for further advancement of the area.

As a part of the reference group for the RKLA 3 UNICEF Kyrgyzstan provided inputs to multi-country evaluation Management Response document, and participated in the consultative process led by the RO on identifying strategic directions for the region.

**OUTPUT 3** Improved and equitable use of proven HIV prevention and treatment interventions by children, pregnant women and adolescents.
Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF supported the MoH in implementation of activities in PMTCT, paediatric AIDS, early infant diagnosis of HIV, and strengthening of infection control in MCH.

With the support of UNICEF, the MoH developed key documents: Guidelines on EID of HIV, and 22 standard operational procedures on infection control. As a result of conducted activities, 1,200 health workers (54 per cent countrywide) were covered by training on newly introduced and HIV integrated interventions, the coverage of early newborns diagnostics on HIV tripled (2013–24.5 per cent to 2014–78.5 per cent), and the percentage of vertical transmission of HIV reduced to 2.8 per cent in 2014.

OUTPUT 4 MCH Systems and Policies. The Ministry of Health manages and monitors the provision and performance of quality and responsive priority life-saving health services for children and mothers from poor and vulnerable families, including nutrition services and diagnostic, preventative and treatment interventions for HIV.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The State Food Security and Nutrition Programme (2015-2017) was finalised and submitted to the Prime Minister’s Office - the approval is pending. Amendments to the existing law on Mandatory Flour Fortification and Administrative Code to support implementation was developed, and passed the second Parliamentarian Hearings.

OUTPUT 5 Support inclusive and quality education through systematic and effective addressing the issue of OOSC, fostering multilingual and multicultural education policy, promoting the issue of teacher quality and availability, improving emergency preparedness of the sector and generating knowledge to advance the issue of quality and inclusiveness of basic education.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF continued to support the MoES to improve its data management in education at pre-school and school level. The OOSC Road Map and Monitoring Framework recommendations were put into a draft Government resolution initiated by the MoES. A methodological toolkit for education workers on how to work with out-of-school children was drafted, and is being piloted in 120 schools in the south along with other OOSC interventions.

New MICS 5 data provided a new and different profile to OOSC in Kyrgyzstan. The data indicates a shift in the OOSC population from rural to urban areas and a complex interaction between location and gender. With quite a high attendance rate in both primary and lower secondary schools and the urban/rural figures, it is increasingly likely that students with disabilities and internal migrants make up the highest proportion of children out of school.

The 2015-2017 Medium Term Education Action Plan includes indicators for multilingual education (MLE) thanks to advocacy and pilot initiatives of UNICEF and MoES.

A situation analysis of the effectiveness of the teacher salary reform in 2011 and its impact on quality of teaching was agreed with MoES and presented to donors. The most relevant Education in Emergency toolkit materials were translated, edited and laid out as per International Network on Education in Emergencies instructions.

OUTCOME 2 Child Welfare Policies and Systems. Significant progress in addressing key recommendations of international treaties, including the CRC.
OUTPUT 1 Child Protection and Justice for Children. Authorities prevent and respond effectively to cases of violence, abuse and neglect, separation of children from their families, ensure rights to birth registration, prevent and protect children in conflict with the law.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In the field of child protection, several key by-laws in the area of child protection were developed and approved: the Regulation on guardianship and trusteeship, Regulations on Commission on Children's Affairs and on Municipal Commission on social issues, the Regulation on repatriation of Kyrgyz children from others states, the Regulation on the provision of housing to orphans. The Regulation on identification and case management of children in difficult life situations was piloted twice in 42 UNICEF-supported municipalities. The results of piloting were analysed and the final version of the Regulation is currently being developed. An international expert supported UNICEF to develop model transformation plans for two residential institutions. A decree to transform infant homes was issued.

The first family type home (FTH) for eight children from the closed Pokrovka institution was established. The building was repaired and equipped. Training of staff is planned for the beginning of 2015.

The capacities of 2,235 child protection stakeholders were built on:
- Undertaking needs assessment of municipalities in social services for children and families in difficult life situations;
- Planning social services;
- Identification of children and families in difficult life situations;
- Case management;
- Registration and referral of identified children and families for family and social support;
- Organization of family support and follow up;
- Monitoring and closing cases after solving problems;
- Enhancing gatekeeping mechanisms and justice for children.

In addition to formal workshops, on the job training was provided to social workers and municipality leading specialists on social issues. As a result of enhanced capacities, 2,603 children in difficult life situations have been identified, were consulted by social workers, and 1,590 were provided with social services support.

The data collection system on juvenile justice was fully revised in line with 15 UN indicators, and the Working Group on data collection ended its work in November. As a result of its work, new reporting forms for all related ministries were introduced and approved by Government and the National Statistical Committee (NSC).

A replication of the model of Bishkek Child Support Centres in two municipalities was carried out. Two new Child Support Centres for child victims of abuse and violence were opened and operationalised. Furthermore, a schools without violence programme was implemented in 38 schools nationwide. Twenty one one-minute video spots were created by children on violence at homes and schools. A guide book on how to create child support centres was drafted. The National Communication Campaign to prevent child abuse and violence is on-going.

The national Coordination Board on juvenile justice was operationalised with UNICEF support. A State programme on justice for children approved by Government in July 2014 and
by Parliament in October 2014. Draft regulations on diversion and rehabilitation programmes were discussed and are being revised. Three hundred and fifty children in conflict with the law were provided with free legal support, social support, and probation services.

In October 2014, UNICEF hosted a high level official delegation from Nepal by their request. Achievements in the development of local legislation on child rights and child protection were learned by the delegation.

Amendments to the Law “On civic status” were developed and presented to the State Registration Services together with UNHCR on simplification of process obtaining birth certificates.

OUTPUT 2 Social Policy and Protection implements effective response policies, programmes and services that target child poverty, including an equitable social cash transfer system

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Progressive increase of the Guaranteed Minimum Income level was sustained reaching KGS 705 (US$11.50) in November. At the same time, the number of beneficiaries dropped to 313,000 [in October] against a forecast of 379,000 as a result of a one-sided focus on inclusion errors.

The changes introduced to the targeting have partially been effective, but concerns over the outcomes of its implementation have risen among Parliamentarians, local authorities and beneficiaries who have been excluded from accessing the benefit.

The focus on inclusion errors (household’s marginally not-poor receiving the benefit) partially takes the attention away from exclusion errors (poor households not accessing the benefit). To address exclusion error and re-balance policy measures, efforts were undertaken to legally consolidate outreach to the vulnerable children and their families, and institutionalise case management.

As a result of UNICEF-led advocacy and technical assistance, the Social Protection sectoral budget submission for 2015 and respective medium term budget framework 2015-2017 contains targets and increased funding for poverty-targeted benefit secured for the three-year period.

OUTCOME 3 Equitable Access to Quality Services by 2016 with the focus on the most vulnerable groups in specifically targeted areas: more women, girls and boys have access to and use a continuum of integrated social services, including sanitation services.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
An additional 14,000 children from low-income families were enrolled in the poverty-targeted social cash transfer scheme.

OUTPUT 1 By end 2016, in coordination with national Government, district and local authorities in at least 23 municipalities provide for a continuum of quality, basic and guaranteed social services and provide adequate support to implement local emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
At local level, UNICEF social policy efforts have helped to improve the development and implementation of municipalities’ strategic plans in six northern and 55 southern municipalities.
Through a more inclusive, participatory approach, local authorities plan and implement local strategies to address needs of the most vulnerable children and their families. This is an important measure to build understanding between people (and between the people and the local authorities) through the identification and agreement of child-sensitive development issues to be addressed. This approach also seeks to strengthen local authorities’ capacities to better and more responsively serve the needs of people. However, there are some challenges particularly in the implementation of over-ambitious strategic plans.

UNICEF worked with 30 community-based older people’s groups (OPGs) to identify vulnerable and poor families with children, and use their honoured position in society to contribute to social cohesion and promote peacebuilding in the deprived, conflict-affected and conflict prone areas. The decision to work with OPGs indicates a willingness to engage the community as a whole for the benefit of vulnerable children and their families. To enhance sustainability of the community-driven interventions eight OPGs in 10 municipalities established in 2012 have begun to develop income-generating activities.

OUTPUT 2 Local authorities and communities in selected municipalities promote the increased use of priority life-saving health services for vulnerable children and women, better access to adequate sanitation in primary health care centres and in schools, and the adoption of good hygiene practices by school children, women and families.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The health sector has conducted a variety of activities to promote the improvement of maternal and infant health, as well as on the improvement of the quality of health services for most vulnerable and most at-risk women and children. UNICEF has strengthened the clinical skills of health workers and has built capacities of healthcare facilities through the provision of evidence-based materials/manuals and trainings on antenatal, perinatal and paediatric care; regular on-the-spot supervisory visits and procuring cost-effective life-saving medical equipment.

The UNICEF health section provided materials/manuals and 48 training sessions on antenatal, perinatal and IMCI in 22 hospitals and 34 health facilities of primary health care level for 1660 health workers (86 per cent of health workers in pilot health facilities). Twelve hospitals were provided with life-saving equipment. As a result of the training and equipment, 53,546 pregnant women, newborns (46 per cent of all births in the Kyrgyz Republic) and more than 21,860 children under 5 (48 per cent) in 22 maternity and children wards (32 per cent) received health care based on evidence-based medicine. In 13 out of 22 hospitals (60 per cent) in pilot districts a playroom was established thus creating a supportive space for children in hospital. UNICEF provided materials and methodology on Effective Perinatal Care and Neonatal resuscitation approved by Government to health education systems.

According to the external evaluation, UNICEF’s contribution to newborn survival in target maternities through EPC has halved the number of newborns in the intensive care unit. In addition, the improved capacity of the hospital management has made service provision more effective. The rationalized use of medicines, improved teamwork and optimization of the space in the wards are good examples of the new mindset deriving from effective perinatal technologies. As the EPC has decreased expenditure on medicines and human resources, health facilities are now able to allocate more funds to infrastructure, equipment and consumables. Ninety five per cent of medical workers have the capacity to deliver EPC services, covering over 63,600 parturient women and newborns per annum in the target area.

At the community level, UNICEF worked with Village Health Committees to raise awareness on
danger signs of childhood illness and complications during pregnancy. The percentage of caregivers who know the danger signs of pregnancy increased by 65 per cent (from 41 per cent before intervention to 67 per cent after) and the knowledge on danger signs of child diseases from 80 per cent to 82 per cent. This data was received through household survey based on mobile technologies and a locally developed tool.

Due to changes in the structure of the CP, indicators for Education and WASH are shifted to Output 3 and 7 below, respectively.

OUTPUT 3

In targeted municipalities, local authorities in cooperation with civil society organizations promote positive behavioural outcomes among communities and mobilise increased demand for quality early education and child protection services; and selected municipalities in the south promote demand for 'safe and tolerant schools'.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Capacity building of teachers in target CBKs was undertaken to ensure quality improvement in early learning. The capacity building efforts were built on the lessons learnt from the classroom observation exercise which pointed out to the progress made by target CBKs in different domains of quality, as well as the gaps areas for improvement.

Forty target communities have been chosen to pilot an ECD component within nutrition interventions on home fortification (sprinkles - Gulazyk). Village health committees of the target communities were trained on the critical importance of early childhood development and early years of life both for immediate child wellbeing and future life, and were sensitized on the advantages of ensuring synergies in health and nutrition interventions with early learning and developmental aspects of a child. Supplies handed over to village health committees in the target communities will ensure availability of quality early learning and development materials during parenting sessions. ECD kits were distributed and were supplemented by guidance on importance of creating stimulating early learning environment in households using locally available and culturally appropriate materials.

Parents also gained additional knowledge with tips of positive family interactions conducive to child development through TV programmes, such as "The Ladybird" Movie and "The Family Stories" Social Serial. Librarians and community leaders in 26 selected villages enhanced their commitment to promote family reading and now have materials to encourage parents to craft self-made toys.

More than 2000 children in 125 school communities of 14 municipalities were identified as out of school or at risk of dropout. They are being supported to be better engaged in the learning process. School management and social pedagogues have been trained on how to deal with OOSC and partner with other social actors.

Prerequisites for piloting of multilingual education in 30 schools and 5 preschools have been established and experts trained. State language levels were adopted, training modules developed and 77 state language teachers are being trained from 35 schools/preschools and nine youth centres.

OUTPUT 4

Improved peace and stability and a lessening of ethnic tension in the conflict affected areas of Southern Kyrgyzstan through raising of living standards, increased
employment opportunities and reduced frustration and alienation among the poorest children, youth and families in the programme target areas.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Post conflict recovery and reduction of interethnic tension requires strong bottom-up governance that is responsive to local needs. The decentralisation reform that was introduced throughout Kyrgyzstan calls for the improved provision and effectiveness of public and municipal services, the allocation of resources, and the transparency and accountability at the local level. The reform also gives citizens the instruments needed to influence the decisions that affect their communities. The enforcement of these legal and policy provisions should improve interethnic confidence and social coherence. However, in reality, implementation has been unreliable and there is still a great number of the population, particularly from disadvantaged and poor households, that faces multiple deprivations, increasing their potential of becoming conflict participants. This is particularly relevant for the rural youth.

UNICEF supported interventions during the reporting period continued to address those issues by improving the delivery of essential social services, reaching out to the most vulnerable and strengthening the capacity of local authorities to improve the welfare of their communities. Local authorities were equipped with the skills and tools necessary for transparent and participatory planning, through coaching and on-the-job technical assistance. Through the provision of services such as Community Based Kindergartens and youth outreach networks, local authorities aim at better serving their constituencies and addressing existing and emerging needs. The capacity of right-holders was also improved in order for them to have meaningful participation in local decision-making; they received information on their rights and available redress mechanisms. Local initiatives and mechanisms such as local activists groups, Village Health Committees, youth networks and outreach teams were enhanced and institutionalised to maximise the potential of equitable and accountable local governance. Funding from DFID along with UNICEF solid programming to improve access and quality of public and municipal services also contributed to the levelling of socio-economic disparities faced by the selected municipalities.

Implementation of evidence-based intervention packages such as Effective Perinatal Care and Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses in the target health facilities resulted in rationalised care practices and improved levels of management. The institutionalisation of these services has already delivered economic savings. For example, Suzak Territorial Hospital and Jalalabad Province Hospital have reported reductions of up to 50 per cent and 30 per cent in health care spending, respectively, after the introduction of IMCI in paediatric wards. The savings were largely attributed to the rational use of treatment, such as reduced doses of antibiotics and an encouraged effort to eradicate the distribution of ineffective vitamins. Improved care practices. This has contributed to greater child survival, with the level of neonatal mortality dropped by 16 per cent between autumn 2013 and autumn 2014.

In the sphere of youth, since the beginning of the Equity Programme, over 8,640 young people have attended its language and computer courses. Of those who have attended such courses, over half are female with almost 22 per cent representing minority groups. Meanwhile, over 19,300 young persons have attended courses relating to civic education and life skills, with 6,820 young people benefitting from projects which help to improve employability skills and encourage income generation. In terms of the latter, the project entitled “Income generation activities for youth centres” was successfully piloted during the first half of 2014, with four out of five of the youth-led businesses involved managing to produce a cash flow.
In the youth centres the number of girls attending (57 per cent) is higher than boys. At the beginning of the youth centre project, challenges were encountered regarding the involvement and participation of girls from Uzbekistan. Traditionally, Uzbek families do not allow females to participate in any outside activities beyond basic schooling. By working closely with parents and young girls, youth centres were able to explain volunteerism and peace building efforts and how youth centre participation could improve the lives of Uzbekistan girls. The outreach work helped to gain the trust of the targeted communities which resulted in an increase in participation among Uzbekistan girls.

Within the sphere of child protection, birth certificates remain a very basic but crucial problem. Entitlement to benefits and basic services and the ability to obtain a passport and be able to work abroad all depend on birth registration. Many children in the target communities do not have birth certificates for a variety of reasons: lack of parental citizenship or marriage documents; refugee status; isolation in border areas where boundaries have shifted; ethnic discrimination; or simply due to a lack of funds. UNICEF continued to work with local authorities to improve this particular situation; since obtaining birth certificates enables the most vulnerable to have access to social services thus narrowing the equity gaps and reducing feelings of alienation and frustration. Through coordinated efforts of local child protection stakeholders 2,015 children in target communities received birth certificates. Of these, 1,506 were amongst children identified in the baseline study. The other 509 whilst from vulnerable families who were not included in the baseline as they have been born since then. The proportion of children in the target communities (identified in baseline survey) receiving birth certificates is 93.7 per cent with 1,325 being female.

OUTPUT 5 By end 2016, in coordination with national Government, district and local authorities in at least 23 municipalities provide for a continuum of quality, basic and guaranteed social services.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In the area of child/social protection, interventions on strengthening gatekeeping and developing alternative social services are in progress. Interventions on effective planning and delivery of quality social services were undertaken by UNICEF in collaboration with implementing partners in all 79 target municipalities in south and north of the country. The Regulation on identification and case management of children and families in difficult life situation was piloted in 79 target municipalities. Support was provided for the training of 1200 specialists in the area of child protection on methods of providing support to vulnerable families in difficult life situations, basics of social services and gatekeeping mechanisms, on how to plan and deliver quality social and child protection services for vulnerable children and their families and juvenile justice. In addition to formal workshops, on the job training was provided to social workers and municipality leading specialists on social issues. Awareness raising among local communities on the rights of children to birth registration was carried out in order to decrease the number of children without birth certificates and ultimately improve their access to social services. The posters and brochures have been developed and printed jointly by UNICEF and UNHCR in the Kyrgyz Republic. As such, 4,050 posters and 5,900 brochures in Russian and Kyrgyz languages were printed and disseminated in all 30 municipalities.

Good progress was made on the identification of “invisible” children without birth certificates (over 6,000 cases), which is being addressed to the State registration service.

In addition to formal workshops, on the job training was provided to social workers and
municipality leading specialists on social issues. As a result of enhanced capacities, over 5,000 children in difficult life situation have been identified, and provided with consultations by leading specialists and social workers. Of these, over 1,600 children were provided with services support.

**OUTPUT 6** By end 2016, in coordination with national Government, district and local authorities in at least 23 municipalities provide adequate support to implement local emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The Ministry of Education and Science has taken a lead in finalization of the State Programme on school, preschool rehabilitation, repair and reconstruction and intends to finalize the State Programme and submit to the Government’s review early next year. The school safety information system is now linked with the Ministry of Education database, the basic information on schools and preschools is being updated in two systems, as well as being used by various government and other partners.

Over 100 CBKs and target school teachers in the south provinces have upgraded their knowledge and skills on safety and child-focused disaster risk reduction through training on the principles of everyday safety. This enabled them to transfer knowledge and develop skills on children in more structured and efficient manner. Ninety-three schools (66 from the south and 27 from the north) have been equipped with the DRR tools to support emergency preparedness and risk reduction work.

The modelling work on the disaster risk analysis has resulted in two municipalities in Naryn and Issyk-Kul provinces gain a better understanding of their risks and vulnerabilities through collecting information and analysing data. Based on this, a concrete DRR action plan with clear priorities was developed. The work conducted by the local working groups with the support of experts enabled the local authorities to have a better risk informed strategic planning and supported the needs based budget allocations for the disaster risk reduction measures.

**OUTPUT 7** Local authorities and communities in selected municipalities promote the increased use of priority life-saving health services for vulnerable children and women, better access to adequate sanitation in primary health care centres and in schools, and the adoption of good hygiene practices by school children, women and families.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF successfully conducted teacher training on hygiene education, and the UNICEF guidebook and promotion materials are now used at 109 educational institutions. Projects addressed gaps in hygiene awareness and behaviour, and as a result, 40,000 schoolchildren benefit from regular hygiene education activities. Heating systems were installed at five Community Based Kindergartens located in remote areas.

UNICEF supported civil construction and renovation of 54 schools including roofs, heating systems, structural, water supply, latrine construction, floors and windows and sundry works. UNICEF improved WASH facilities at 2.5 per cent of all Kyrgyzstan schools benefitting 26,000 pupils. UNICEF also improved WASH facilities in 17 hospitals including toilets, showers, external water supplies and elevated storage vessels, on site sewerage systems, hot water in surgery’s and maternity wards and windows and internal renovations. The approximate number of beneficiaries are 40,000 (mothers and children) per annum.
A national hygiene promotion communication campaign was completed raising the profile and importance of WASH in the Kyrgyz Republic. This campaign included launch and promotion of a website aiming at increasing public engagement in demanding better water and sanitation services for children and families. Children can take and upload pictures of their facilities to the website and share their pride or concern with other peers. The website also maintains sector knowledge providing visitors access to latest WASH standards and norms, education and promotion materials, research information and statistics.

Important and informative research on the annual WASH cost per student was undertaken this year. The research report compared the funds needed versus those actually allocated for WASH in schools. The report was presented and discussed in a series of round table meetings and raised significant interest among stakeholders and UNICEF offices in the region. The findings of the report inspired parents committees and local municipalities to establish WASH committees and take concrete actions on improving learning environment for their children and increasing the accountability of school administrations.

Kyrgyzstan was selected by the UNICEF HQ for a research project on menstrual hygiene management. The research will inform the government and other interested parties about existing practices and issues related to WASH in Schools for Girls. It will also identify ways of increasing awareness about MHM and taking actions on improving school environment for girls’ education. Funding was received and work is underway on mobilising the support of the Ministry of Education and identifying partnerships to carry out the research.

UNICEF and WASH sector partners continued working together on introducing changes to national construction and sanitary regulations making them more child friendly as well as more enforceable. Sector partners pro-actively shared their findings and information in various fora to coordinate efforts in improving the legal framework.

In July, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan initiated and organized a Regional WASH in Schools Meeting, which brought together experts and practitioners from six countries of the region. This was the first WASH meeting of its kind in this region. There were key WASH in Schools partners including representatives from relevant government departments (education, health, social protection), NGOs, academia and UNICEF. Participants shared local experiences and worked together on adopting simple, scalable and sustainable solutions to their country context.

UNICEF maintained plans and supplies (in-country) as a contingency for possible emergencies (for 10,000 persons).

**OUTCOME 4** By 2016, an alliance consisting of government, NGOs and communities, contribute to the increased and sustainable civic engagement of partnerships for Child Rights.

**OUTPUT 1** By end 2016, national and local authorities in targeted areas, as well as alliances for children, involving the private sector, CSOs and the media facilitate a secure enabling environment for the active engagement and participation of adolescents and youth in activities promoting social cohesion, peace building and reconciliation.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF-supported youth centres provided an opportunity for more than 11,520 young people, including around 6,320 girls, to develop their potential and enlarge networks for employment opportunities through language and computer courses and livelihood trainings. At least 1,480 come from groups identified as at-risk.
The multiculturalism course was launched in December 2013 and uses existing modules developed by GiZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH). The course consists of a 12-lesson package with an adolescent friendly design and layout that uses a peer-to-peer approach. Through a balanced combination of theory and practice the course guides youth through some key peacebuilding concepts such as peace, conflicts, and diversity management. The learning methodology facilitates development of critical thinking and analysis skills, and other life skills such as conflict prevention, leadership, communication, career planning, and entrepreneurship. The multiculturalism courses have gained popularity among participants, and each centre is now delivering the course at least twice a week. The interim evaluation found multicultural education and life skills are highly valued by young participants: 92 per cent of them considered the training as very important. Moreover, most of the respondents stated that they had used the skills gained through the multiculturalism courses in their day-to-day life in order to regulate existing tensions with schoolteachers or to intervene into verbal and/or physical clashes among school children.

UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Labour Migration and Youth (MLMY) and the local NGO “SBDC-consult” to identify the best sustainability strategy and institutional development scenario for the youth centres and the services around them. Scenarios developed so far include direct hand-over to the local self-governance institutions, creation of an institution subordinate to the MLMY and creation of a Public Fund. There are both strong advantages and vulnerabilities associated with those scenarios which will be further analysed and the most suitable one will be identified. Based on this, the capacity development package will be delivered in the coming months. An assumed framework of sustainability will consider all levels of their responsibility including checks and balances, defining mechanisms for preventing abuses for the sake of personal and/or political interests.

UNICEF received funding from UN Peace Building Fund for development of professionalism in the area of youth work. UNICEF has signed a memorandum of understanding with GiZ and an agreement with the NGO “Institute for Youth Development” for a partnership in this area. The professionalization project aims to increase access to civic education and explain to youth what civic values entail. The concept of youth work under this particular project focuses on the provision of so-called non-cognitive skills, which help young people in safe transition to adulthood and encourage participation in the community affairs as equal partners. The youth work curricula, which is now being launched, includes modules on civic participation, diversity, inclusiveness, and gender equality. It is delivered in a series of separate Training of Trainers - type workshops for youth activists from formal and non-formal civil society institutions (youth leaders). Two four-day rounds of the workshops are being delivered during the course of 7 months for youth leaders in the 14 target communities. Praxis intervals between workshops allow participants to put the skills into practice in their youth work and other youth-related activities, and return to the next workshop with practical applications, hands-on tips, and specific obstacles faced. Based on what they learn from the curricula, the youth workers develop and implement comprehensive youth programmes in the communities where they live.

The programme supported seven youth projects including professional orientation, cross-border and cross community sport activities, and health promotion campaigns. Youth workers started introducing new services for their peers in target communities with the financial support of local authorities and communities. Five services were supported that will become part of the Youth Development Strategies. Around 50 per cent of participants of the professionalization of the youth work programme are young women. The project works on improving the content of the youth work curricula in terms of gender sensitivity, and for raising the profile of young women
and girls when providing youth services. While it is early to report on the results, it is important to note that most project stakeholders in communities and authorities accepted the project approach of strengthening professional youth work and encouraged direct participation of youth in local development planning. They believe that such youth participation may contribute to better governance and service delivery. Evidence of collaboration across communities in designing and planning projects can already be seen. However, some of the projects are purely aimed for improving interethnic and cross-border relations. More robust data on the progress in involving youth in peace building will be provided within the next annual report.

UNICEF continued working on development of the youth forum theatres in the 15 multi-ethnic conflict prone communities in the south of the county. All forum theatre groups were trained on the basics of conflicts and conflict sensitivity and how it can be applied through the forum theatres. They improved their skills on conflict analysis which has been key to development of scripts throughout the projects. They had an opportunity to analyse such issues as access to water and land, quality education, bride kidnapping, and violence against children. They also learnt the basics of dramatics and psycho-social support for adolescents and their adult partners involved in forum theatres. School teachers and youth in the forum theatres delivered series of trainings on the Convention of Child Rights in their schools and communities. Forum theatre leaders met with the Association of Forum theatres operating in the north of the country and discussed the legal frameworks of the entity and developed a plan for joining it. Theatre clubs organized 95 performances with the overall audience of over 6,330 people. A performance was held at the parliamentary off-site session which involved discussions on issues including violence at schools, quality of education, and youth and migration with the Members of Parliament.

There is evidence that the forum theatre methodology was recognized in the education sector. The Ministry of Education and Science instructed its regional representatives to promote the methodology in schools and hold them accountable for this. The Chair of the Parliamentary Committee for Education and the vice-speaker of the Parliament recommended that forum theatre methodology becomes a mandatory part of the extracurricular activities at schools.

UNICEF is in process of drafting a memorandum of understanding with the Kyrgyz Academy for Education which particularly will prescribe their role in promoting forum theatre methodology as an extra-curricular activity recommended to schools. There is also a larger recognition of the forum theatres in other sectors as a viable mean for youth development and participation. Local Police Departments for Juvenile Delinquency, religious leaders, none-governmental organizations and district state administrations invite youth theatres to perform when they want to attract public attention to specific issues. Forum theatres have continued serving as a shared space where different languages can be equally used, especially Kyrgyz and Uzbek.

OUTPUT 2 Data collection, monitoring, analysing and evaluation systems inform policy making and budgeting around issues related to youth and children, including child rights.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF continued work with partners to generate more evidence to monitor situation of children and women in the country, to track progress according to plans and objectives, to timely inform decision-making processes.

In 2014 this work was additionally targeted at contributing to the MTR process. The MTR was carried out between March and December. Recent data, reports, studies and evaluations relevant for the situation of children were analysed and a Situation Analysis of the Rights of
Children in Kyrgyzstan (to be published in 2015) was commissioned. A key feature of the MTR process was the Theory of Change exercise, in which the progress made in the current CP was reviewed through the prism of the thematic theories of change covering the entire Country Programme. It enabled UNICEF Kyrgyzstan to demonstrate the system changes that UNICEF intends to support (in order to realise child rights and reduce respective equity gaps) and critically review programme strategies, approaches, and principles. Sectoral consultations took place in July-August with the engagement of the government counterparts, civil society organisations and international development partners.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey was conducted jointly with the national statistics office, and a Key Findings Report produced. The MICS provided a statistically solid and internationally comparable ‘snapshot’ of the situation of children and women in Kyrgyzstan. In conjunction with previous MICS and DHS data it allowed revealing trends in child mortality, mother and child health, child protection and other areas, which were used to feed MTR and provided critical information for the global UN MDG reporting.

Results of the earlier conducted baseline and impact surveys demonstrated the effectiveness of home-based fortification program supported by UNICEF. The findings were used to leverage financial resources and to advocate nutrition issues at Parliament. Classroom observations provided data on quality of services in kindergartens.

A Cost Benefit Analysis and Evaluation of Equity Programme in the Southern Kyrgyzstan examined programme effectiveness and provided insights to revisit the equity dimension of UNICEF programmes.

UNICEF continued the work on raising national capacity in M&E: technical support was provided to the NSC to conduct next round of MICS in Kyrgyzstan. Technical assistance to NSC was provided to monitor child wellbeing and to support the regional Trans-MONEE programme. An international M&E workshop was conducted jointly with the International Programme Evaluation Network in Bishkek. With UNICEF technical and financial assistance, the EMIS is being developed by the Ministry of Education.

OUTCOME 5 Cross-sectoral

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Support costs that cut across multiple programme components in the CPD are included under this Outcome. This includes staff costs, office equipment costs, communication and travel for the implementation of cross-cutting programme functions such as Communication for Development, Monitoring and Evaluation, Knowledge Management and Gender.

OUTPUT 1 Advocacy and Communication

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In 2014, a new Comprehensive Country Office Strategy for Communication 2014-2017 was developed for sharpening understanding of communication work in UNICEF Kyrgyzstan. It helped to focus advocacy, C4D, and external communication objectives of the office for better promotion of children rights.

An analysis on children rights, completed by UNICEF with partners, shows that realisation of children’s rights is impeded by little knowledge of child rights and harmful behaviours rooted on such social norms and practices as institutionalisation of children, neglect of hand-washing,
violence, stigma and discrimination against vulnerable population and harmful parenting.

The one of key events to highlight child rights issues was the CRC@25 campaign. As a result, key officials including the First Lady made public statements acknowledging child rights violations. Major concerns of children became heard in communities and at decision-making level thanks to inter-generation dialogues and a wide media coverage of youth-led activities. More children and parents now know about children’s rights thanks to flash-mobs, public lectures, theatre performances, “Flying High for Kids” Event, talk-shows and cartoons.

The campaign also aimed at community empowerment and addressing some of the identified harmful practices. More than 2,000 young people from vulnerable communities now have non-cognitive skills and attitudes to help them for better employability and socialisation. This contributed to a change of attitude toward youth and higher tolerance across ethnic lines.

Teachers and schoolchildren from 38 schools involved in the “School without Violence” Programme now know how to speak out about violence and address it. Thanks to videos which became popular in social media and sport networks, more adolescents were encouraged to become successful without violence. Parents learnt tips about positive family interactions conducive to child development through “The Ladybird” Movie and 20-series “The Family Stories” Social Serial. Librarians and community leaders in 26 selected villages committed to promote family reading and have samples of development materials to encourage parents to craft self-made toys.

Neglect of hand-washing and unsufficient knowledge of health related issues were addressed at a community level. The villagers in 50 selected municipalities acknowledged there was a problem of improper sanitation and established a social control by assessing sanitation facilities in households. The teachers have skills to teach hygiene, and children know reasons for hand-washing. At the national level, schoolchildren can use www.taptaza.kg website to ‘name and shame’ improper sanitation facilities. In another 55 municipalities, the percentage of caregivers who know danger signs of pregnancy increased from 41 per cent to 67 per cent. The general public learnt information about immunisation from the first Kyrgyz documentary on this topic.

Operationally, most of the child-centred communication for development efforts are driven by UNICEF. The Ministry of Health is the only government agency that has a centre specialising at behaviour change. There is still a need to mainstream communication for development approaches and make it more systematic within other sectors and ministries.

Within the office Communication Strategy, partnership building is one of the external communication priorities. Several Members of Parliament and Ministers, artists, and a popular signer and a renowned adventurer made official statements on violation of children rights and donated their pro-bona contributions (such as: recording a local version of Imagine song, organising theatre performances, flying an air balloon) to raising awareness on children’s rights as a result of partnership building efforts. The ‘Balastan’ Children Channel and the Public Broadcasting Company, with almost 100 per cent geographical coverage, named UNICEF among its key strategic partners thanks to a number of high quality edutainment products (cartoons, talk-shows, video spots, a movie and a social serial) developed with UNICEF technical consultation and support.

In media, UNICEF was recognised as a reliable resource on child-related issues. According to the media monitoring reports, more than 350 UNICEF statements were picked up in local media that ensured daily reference to UNICEF in media. The CRC@25 campaign gained the widest
media coverage thanks to a creative symbiosis of entertaining and educational purposes of the events organised. Following the child rights discourse, other public advocacy issues, which received most of media attention included violence against children, community based kindergartens, sanitation and hygiene, inclusive breastfeeding and prevention of anaemia, youth activities, and child poverty.

UNICEF considerably increased its presence on social media platforms. The UNICEF Kyrgyzstan Facebook page with more than 2,600 subscribers rated the second among the fastest growing Facebook pages of non-profit non-governmental organisations in Kyrgyzstan. Approximately two per cent of all Facebook users in Kyrgyzstan (about 110,000) now follow UNICEF. Each of the CRC@25 Campaign events were followed by between 2,000 to 6,000 social media participants. The YouTube page has 296 subscribers and more than 150,774 have become an important strategic tool for interaction with public and raising awareness.

OUTPUT 2 Operational costs Bishkek country office.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The country programme implementation was regularly monitored by sections, senior management and M&E officer. RKLA and the IMEP were regularly updated and monitored. The M&E team led and facilitated the Monitoring of Results for Equity System (MoRES) determinant analysis across sections, as well as annual planning and reporting processes. A series of bilateral RWP meetings was carried out with sections to update/adjust respective RWPs.

The M&E team maintained and coordinated the system and processes in VISION to ensure that all staff members adhered to requirements and procedures. The office’s monitoring system is in place and key country programme performance indicators were tracked/analysed and provided regularly to the CMT to guide programme and management decisions.

UNICEF provided inputs for the UN Resident Coordinator’s annual report and the UNDAF annual review. The UNDAF evaluation and monitoring for UN sister agencies was organized jointly with the UN Resident Coordinator’s office.

OUTPUT 3 Operational costs Bishkek country office

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The Country Office managed the operational budget activities as per the Country Programme Action Plan, the Rolling Management Plan (RMP) and the operations work plan. The proper utilization of funds was controlled and monitored by the operations manager and the M&E Officer through SAP and management dashboard reports. The output implementation rate was regularly presented and reviewed by the Country Management Team (CMT).

OUTPUT 4 Operational costs Bishkek country office

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In response to the then prevailing emergency situation, the Osh Zone Office was established in January 2010 reporting to the Bishkek office for an initial period of two years. This was followed by an approved extension until the end of 2013. In the March 2011 PBR, it was indicated that “The status of the Zone Office to be reviewed before the end of 2013”. Therefore, taking into consideration 2012-2016 CPD and effective resource mobilization strategy, the office requested the extension of Osh ZO until the end of 2015 based on programmatic needs and availability of funding.
The UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Director endorsed the recommendation of the PBR for the extension of Osh ZO. The Osh ZO is responsible for the implementation of key elements of Programme Component 2.

OUTPUT 5 Operational costs Bishkek country office

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Given the effective resource mobilization strategy, where applicable the operations unit was receiving 10 per cent of funds allocated for administrative support services of Bishkek office and Osh ZO budgets. The office managed the OR-funded operational budget activities as per the Country Programme Action Plan, the RMP and the operations work plan. The Output funds were duly utilized to support programme/project activities that were in line with respective RWPs and in accordance with donors’ requirements. The proper utilization of funds had been controlled and monitored by the operations manager through SAP and management dashboard reports. The Output implementation rate was regularly presented and reviewed by the CMT.

OUTPUT 6 Gender Mainstreaming within UNICEF programmes and interventions.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are one of the central to the mandate of UNICEF. As a member of the UN Gender Thematic Group, UNICEF has made inputs in preparation of Report on Joint UNCT submission to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which includes issues related to child labour and education.

Also as one of the agencies involved in implementation of the gender mainstreaming approach, UNICEF provided support to the Thematic Group in reviewing the UNCT mainstreaming strategy to address current development and programming challenges, including post-2015, and the up-coming roll out of mid-term evaluation and new UNDAF cycle and providing support to Government in undertaking a comprehensive analysis of implementation of gender policy in Kyrgyzstan for the up-coming Beijing+20 review.

### Document Centre

**Evaluation**

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### Other Publication

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