

Montenegro

Executive Summary

In 2015, the Government of Montenegro made a commitment to expand pre-school coverage for three to six year old children from 52 per cent to 95 per cent by 2020. The commitment was informed by a 2014 study supported by UNICEF Montenegro that outlined alternative financing schemes for the expansion of a basic three-hour daily pre-school programme. The programme focuses on addressing the economic and regional disparity for the lowest quintile and poorest municipalities that have less than 10 per cent coverage compared to over 90 per cent coverage in the wealthiest municipalities.

On-going partnerships with child protection, education and justice sectors yielded results with increased inclusion of children with disabilities in school, and better protection of children who are in contact with the law as suspects, offenders, victims or witnesses of crime. During the reporting period, the first case of compliance of child-friendly interviewing and interview-recording led to a sentence of a child sex offender with minimum ordeal for the affected child. Public consultations for a new Family Law were held, and the final draft agreed with a commitment to outlaw all forms of corporal punishment against children. The draft will go to Parliament in early 2016.

Two major campaigns---the on-going “Every Child Needs a Family” to promote foster care, and the new “Pre-school For All” campaign promoting pre-school education in areas of poor demand---brought together high-level government leadership and coalitions including NGOs, local government, and cultural and artistic figures and organisations.

UNICEF Montenegro worked closely with the European Union Delegation on policy advocacy and in programme partnership on the continued reform of the social and child protection sector, including: restructuring the social and child protection system; enhancing accountability and competencies of professionals; introducing new forms of community-based services; deinstitutionalization of children; and further alignment of the legal and policy framework with international standards. The process was informed by the independent evaluation of the Social and Child Protection Programme in 2014 and consequent management responses in 2015. UNICEF Montenegro supported a study and assisted the development and launching of a youth advocacy group of young people who graduated from state care (care leavers). The study highlighted the complex challenges faced by young people who leave state care such as accessing healthcare and facing loneliness and insecure housing.

In the justice sector, UNICEF Montenegro supported the capacity development of Judiciary, Police and Prosecution, and Defence, on how to protect children who are suspects, offenders, victims or witnesses. The partnership was expanded to focus on civil and administrative proceedings involving children.

Two new programmes were launched in 2015. The first is part of the global “We Protect” campaign that promotes international collaboration and intelligence-led policing to tackle online abuse of children. It led to new partnerships with the forensic and cyber-crime units of the police

and enhanced collaboration with the UAE and UK embassies on the theme.

The second was a UNICEF Montenegro-led joint UN Programme on Youth including preparation to launch an Innovation Lab in February 2016, and collaborative work with UNDP and ILO on youth policy and employment. UNICEF Montenegro partnered with the University of Birmingham to develop character or social and emotional skills in mainstream education and in out-of-school settings.

Montenegro's first Small Group Home---a key component of the child welfare reform process---was opened in 2015 in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the United States Embassy, the European Union and UNICEF Montenegro. However, after several years of decreasing numbers of children in institutional care, in 2015 the number of children in institutional care did not fall.

Much of the legal framework of Montenegro is aligned with international standards, and capacity development of the professionals in children's services continues, the future focus is on better leadership and accountability, and thorough results-orientation in child service.

Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan

A focus in 2015 was the informed and publicly-accessible debate on the impact of violence, neglect and other forms of adversity on long-term human development and its lasting public health and economic costs for society. During the reporting period, UNICEF Montenegro contributed to the social, print and broadcast media discussion on adverse childhood experiences with a TedX Podgorica talk by the UNICEF Representative to Montenegro and media interviews and activities. Resources at the sub-regional level were negotiated to expand and increase victims' awareness of their rights; build reforms for better protection and response services; and reduce perpetrators' freedom to operate. UNICEF Montenegro also supported efforts to outlaw corporal punishment against children and for more robust intelligence-led policing resources to tackle online exploitation of children.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

BCP – Business Continuity Plan
CMT - Country Management Team
CO - Country Office
CPD - Country Programme Document
CRC - Committee on the Rights of the Child
CWD - Children with Disabilities
DCT - Direct Cash Transfer
ECD – Early Childhood Development
ECE - Early Childhood Education
EU - European Union
EWEA- Early Warning Early Action
GDP - Gross Domestic Product
HACT - Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer
HR - Human Resources
IB - Institutional Budget
ICT - Information and Communications Technology
ING – Global financial institution (bank services)
IMEP - Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

JCC - Joint Consultative Committee
KAP - Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice
LTA - Long Term Agreement
M&E - Monitoring and Evaluation
MICS - Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MOE - Ministry of Education
MOJ - Ministry of Justice
MOLSW - Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MTR - Mid-term Review
NPA – National Action Plan
OMT - Operations Management Team
RMP - Rolling Management Plan
SMT - Security Management Team
SWIS - Social Welfare Information System
TOR - Terms of References
UNCT - United Nations Country Team
UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
UNDAF - United Nations Development Action Framework
UNDSS - United Nations Department of Safety and Security

Capacity Development

UNICEF Montenegro supported evidence-based discussion on child rights with a series of public fora on early childhood development (ECD), education and child protection with international experts and harnessing evidence and research to develop public sector capacity and increase public understanding and demand.

Strengthening frontline social work services was a priority, underpinned by a review of the Directorate for Social and Child Protection Ministry ability to systematically prevent and respond to childhood adversity, abandonment and poverty in line with the new Law on Child and Social Care and in line with international human rights instruments.

A shift to a proactive, client-oriented approach to support families, girls and boys was proposed with clear benchmarks, professional performance targets, and strengthened structural capability for the directorate to lead the on-going child welfare reforms at the national level. This was supported by continued training of social workers for family outreach and casework.

Capacity development was critical in enabling the new Institute for Social and Child Protection to lead professional standards and knowledge within the sector.

While the emphasis was on prevention of institutionalisation in early childhood, UNICEF Montenegro supported an assessment of young adults who leave institutional care. The study revealed loneliness, vulnerability and the absence of basic support. UNICEF Montenegro supported and coached young adults who had been in state care to establish their own advocacy group.

UNICEF Montenegro supported the capacity development of teachers on social, emotional, or character skills, as part of a pilot in a cluster of 4th grade classes for possible expansion across the education system in 2017. Capacity development was provided to police and other justice sector professionals on justice for children and intelligence-led policing to combat online child abuse as part of the global “We Protect” programme.

Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

The major success in policy advocacy in 2015 was the agreement to commit to increase pre-school education coverage for three to six year olds from 52 per cent to 95 per cent by 2020. The advocacy effort was informed by a 2014 study supported by UNICEF Montenegro that highlighted alternative financing options to support the pre-school expansion.

Advocacy tools were developed by UNICEF Montenegro and presented by the UNICEF Representative to all of the major committees in the Parliament and the high-level Government Council for Structural Reforms and were adopted as government policy within the new Strategy on Early Childhood Education in November 2015.

Evidence-based Local Implementation Plans were developed in five municipalities as pilot models to overcome obstacles to preschool expansion specific for the regions.

Outreach services were launched in five vulnerable, northern municipalities with the lowest enrolment, taking into account the number of children, demographic trends and available resources. A “Preschool for All” Campaign, launched in those five municipalities, raised parents’ awareness on the importance of preschool education, which resulted in an increase of preschool attendance from 4.5 per cent to 25 per cent in targeted municipalities.

Innovative social media approaches strengthened public debate and worked to break the taboo on adverse childhood experiences and other child protection issues. This included a TedX Talk and Opinion Editorials in national newspapers by the Representative, compelling animations and social media, all based on evidence and research.

Partnerships

UNICEF Montenegro maintains a strong strategic partnership with the Government and the European Union, and regular dialogue and cooperation with the national institutions, local governments, the Parliament, Ombudsperson’s Office, civil society, media and private sector.

As a part of global initiative “We Protect” to combat child online sexual abuse, UNICEF Montenegro supported the Police Special Unit for Cyber-Crime to build capacity for intelligence-led policing for prevention of and protection from online child sexual abuse and integration into international networks for tracking and forensic analysis. This initiative includes awareness-raising among children, teachers and parents and the development of a mobile application to enable children to access information about different forms of online sexual abuse and the best ways to protect and report.

A new strategic partnership was established with Telenor Montenegro that will facilitate the functioning of a mobile application for child protection in collaboration with the Ministry for Information Society. UNICEF Montenegro facilitated the establishment of long-term cooperation between Police Cyber-Crime Unit and UK National Crime Agency who provided initial trainings for the use of Child Protection System and Encase software necessary for proper investigation, forensic analyses, data collection and information sharing through Interpol.

Another strategic partnership was established with Italian National Institute for Babies and Mothers who will help the Ministry of Health conduct the assessment of the quality of perinatal care system in Montenegro. Leading experts who developed the ‘Assessment Tool for Quality in

Maternal and New Born Care in Hospitals' used by WHO, will come to Montenegro in the spirit of the long term cooperation between the two national health care systems.

External Communication and Public Advocacy

UNICEF Montenegro's strategy is to engage in the national discourse on child development, parenting and human rights on a daily basis, and to contribute evidence, analysis and articulation of child rights' principles to the discussion with social, broadcast and print media. This strategy is particularly important with new, emerging and previously un-discussed issues in the society such as child sex abuse, adolescent brain development and fostering.

UNICEF Montenegro was visible, featured in broadcast or print media 770 times during the reporting period and received 45,000 visits to the website and 25,000 to YouTube channel. A national survey on local and international institutions placed UNICEF amongst the most visible and trusted organization: 94 per cent of citizens heard of UNICEF Montenegro and 86 per cent had a positive opinion of UNICEF Montenegro work. A TedX talk on Adverse Childhood Experiences by UNICEF Montenegro was the most viewed TedX Podgorica talk ever.

The "Preschool for All" and "Every Child Needs a Family" campaigns were promoted by National Goodwill Ambassador Antonije Pusic and British actor Nicholas Lyndhurst respectively.

Nationally, representative surveys to chart attitudinal changes with UNICEF campaigns revealed that 76 per cent of citizens accepted that a child with a disability could attend the same class with their child, up from 35 per cent in 2010. In addition, 69 per cent of citizens think that fostering is a better solution for children without parental care than placement in an institution, an increase from 58 per cent in 2012. Finally, a campaign promoting preschool education encouraged 43 per cent of parents in areas of low enrolment to enrol their children in preschool according to pre and post campaign public surveys

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

Montenegro shared knowledge on child welfare reform and child protection issues with the neighbouring countries of Serbia and Croatia. In particular, this included developing case management practice in social work and in establishing family outreach services to prevent child abandonment and prevent violence in the family.

Identification Promotion of Innovation

Montenegro incorporated the latest knowledge on adolescent brain development by strengthening character education in schools and non-school settings. Neuroscience demonstrated that IQ does not grow during adolescence, but social and emotional skills and character can be strengthened during this period of brain development due to "neuro-plasticity". Studies show that character skills such as curiosity, motivation, optimism, self-control, resilience, growth mind-set and integrity are as crucial to life success and education performance as IQ. They are also crucial to build autonomy and self-esteem of those children whose lives are ravaged by adversity, to enable them to make better choices and avoid the life-changing risks of adolescence to which they are uniquely vulnerable.

Character education was piloted in four primary schools to expand across the system in 2017. Character education was being developed with young people affected by adverse childhood experiences such as young people from state care backgrounds, Roma and others.

These groups will also be supported by the Innovation Lab as part of the global partnership on adolescence with ING. Staff were recruited for the lab, UPSHIFT training and partnership with an Innovation Lab in Kosovo is underway. Recognising that “youth are the best teachers for young people” the Innovation Lab fostered collaboration between marginalized adolescents and young, successful civic activists, empowering adolescent girls and boys to make informed decisions about their lives and to become civically engaged for society as a whole.

Support to Integration and cross-sectoral linkages

A major development during the reporting period was the revitalization of the inter-ministerial Child Rights Committee under the leadership of the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare and agreement that inter-ministerial talks under the leadership of the Deputy Prime Minister to strengthen collaboration to prevent and respond to childhood adversity would take place in the first few weeks of 2016.

Discussions were held with the Ministry of Finance to create the fiscal space to increase expenditure on pre-school education as a percentage of GDP in line with European Union (EU), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and neighbouring country enrolment averages, and also with the Ministry of Health on utilizing health posts in remote rural areas for outreach pre-school activities.

UNICEF Montenegro collaborated with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) & World Health Organization (WHO) to support inter-ministerial outreach teams on prevention of family violence with on-going capacity development and the development of a national strategy on family violence.

Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

As defined in the Mid-Term Review finalized in 2015, the Country Programme (CP) systematically aligned national legislation, norms and strategies with international standards. However, the norms are not yet routinely embedded in public sector planning and performance or civil service and social behaviour. Additional efforts were required to build public demand and public sector accountability for actual promotion, protection and fulfilment of the rights of boys and girls.

In 2015, UNICEF Montenegro’s support to national partners focused on remaining Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) concluding observations and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations in the following key areas:

1. Up to 25 per cent expansion of pre-schools in the poorest municipalities
2. Break the public taboo on adverse childhood experiences and equity impact with more public discussion
3. Pilot culturally relevant approaches with impact to increase demand for social inclusion by Roma minority
4. Establish the first multi-sectoral team to collaborate on prevention of child begging, early marriage and trafficking
5. Strengthen front line social work systems and interventions
6. Raise awareness and capacity to address extreme inequities faced by young people leaving state care

7. On-going expansion and professionalization of the network of Day Care Centres for children with disability. Up from 1 in 2010 to 10 establishment the first ever Small Group Home for children without parental care and
8. Revise Family Law including drafting, public discussion and preparation for parliamentary approval in early 2016. Includes banning corporal punishment of children (amendments are introduced into Family Law).

Gender Mainstreaming and Equality

UNICEF Montenegro does not have a designated gender specialist, however a child protection specialist was the gender focal point and recently participated in the “UN Training of Trainers in Europe and Central Asia: Mainstreaming Gender in UN Common Country Programming” in the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The gender focal point works with colleagues to strengthen gender mainstreaming within the new draft Country Programme Document (CPD) and the United Nations Development Action Framework (UNDAF) and advises the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) on gender mainstreaming issues.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) highlighted in Montenegro and the southeast European region inequity between Roma and mainstream populations on prevalence of gender-based violence and female acceptance of gender-based violence as part of everyday life. This community is more vulnerable to trafficking, early marriage and other issues, particularly health, that disproportionately affect girls. Two staff members are providing 25 per cent of their time to supporting an initiative with a local women’s rights NGO to support awareness, improved shared expectations and better demand for protection from violence. The programme was initiated in the autumn of 2015 and results will be presented in the 2016 Annual Report.

Environmental Sustainability

Given the nature of the programme in Montenegro, there was limited opportunity to advance environmental sustainability during the reporting period. However, the UNICEF Montenegro “Knowledge Attitudes and Practice Survey on Children and Climate Change” (UNICEF, 2011) was regularly cited during advocacy events.

UNICEF Montenegro collaborated with other agencies in the UN-supported Post-2015 consultations in Montenegro that involved more than 8,000 people and proved that “the environment is being recognized as one of the country’s top strengths and opportunities.”

Within the EU accession process, the Chapter 27 – Environment was deemed one of the most complex and demanding and would require significant financial investments. It’s expected that the chapter will be opened for negotiations in 2016. It will require Montenegro to adjust to the EU’s environment and climate policies that aim to promote sustainable development, low-carbon economy, efficient resource management and the protection of the environment for future generations. There are four areas in the Chapter 27 where Montenegro lags behind that require particular attention and investment: waste management, climate change, water quality, and environment protection.

In the new UNDAF 2017-2021 Framework, the environment is defined as one of four key pillars of future collaboration between UN system and the Government of Montenegro.

Effective Leadership

The Country Management Team (CMT) met eight times to decide on programme implementation, performance indicators and priorities from the Rolling Management Plan (RMP). The following issues were prioritized by the CMT: office performance management reports; implementation status of 2012-2016 CPD/ Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP); finalization of Mid-Term Review and preparation of new CPD and Integrated UN Programme. The CO continued to closely monitor the status of Direct Cash Transfers (DCTs) ensuring there were no DCTs over six months at 2015 year-end. The CO also reviewed, improved and streamlined work processes by focusing on major bottlenecks and reviews of applicable rules and regulations, and incorporating the latest changes and updates of internal forms for full compliance and accountability for the new management systems.

The monthly programme meetings: provided updates on emerging programme issues; reviewed work plan implementation, UN Integrated Programme, performance indicators; discussed programme and operations bottlenecks. The monthly programme meetings were for sharing information among the sections and agreeing on cross-sectoral approaches.

Donor reports were submitted on time and strong oversight on Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) implementation was maintained. Weekly meetings of all staff enabled sharing relevant programme and operations information. The various office oversight committees had clear Terms of References (TORs) and strong staff participation, ensuring a quality review of documents and adherence to guidelines. Value for money was considered in resource approval decisions. UNICEF Montenegro adopted the HACT action plan and all staff members were trained on revised HACT guidance. The Business Continuity Plan (BCP) was periodically reviewed and updated.

Financial Resources Management

Key performance indicators were monitored at CMT and Programme meetings. Budget control, fund utilization against grants, ageing of DCTs and single source versus competitive selection of contractors were reviewed. Bank balances were reconciled monthly and CO had no reconciling items at the end 2015.

The total budget allocation in 2015 was US\$ 1,615,508. The utilized amount was US\$ 1,615,321 out of which US\$ 957,498 from regular resources and US\$ 657,823 from other resources. Operating expenses amounted to US\$ 136,427 (included cross-cutting staff salaries, travel and operating costs).

The UNICEF Montenegro Support Budget of US\$ 96,750, managed locally, mainly covered expenditures related to operating expenses, travel and co-sharing of security arrangements for common premises. The implementation rate for the Institutional Budget (IB) non-post cost was 100 per cent.

UNICEF Montenegro worked on the common services within the Operations Management Team (OMT) and with UNCT endorsement. There was significant progress in widening the range of common services. Throughout the year, the office benefited from long-term arrangements for series of common services.

UNICEF Montenegro followed all accounting instructions related to the interim and year-end closure of accounts in order to ensure International Public Sector Accounting Standards

(IPSAS) compliance, which resulted in all schedules submitted on time. The CO made effective use of bank optimization and cash forecasting tools.

UNICEF Montenegro started implementing Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) in 2008, and the required HACT provisions were in the previous and current CP action plans. The risk assessments and assurance activities were aligned with revised 2015 HACT guidelines. The office developed an assurance plan of micro-assessments, programmatic monitoring and spot-checks, and its implementation was regularly followed, thus the CO ensured no outstanding DCTs of more than six months at 2015 year-end.

Fund-raising and Donor Relations

The CMT monitored the submission of donor reports using the available management reports. All donor reports were checked for quality by the Programme Specialist and the Representative; the report for the European Commission was also checked by the UNICEF Brussels office. In 2015, three progress and utilisation reports were submitted: to the European Commission, the Swedish Committee for UNICEF and the United Kingdom Government.

The total budget allocation in 2015 was US\$ 1,615,508. The utilized amount was US\$ 1,615,321 out of which US\$ 957,498 from regular resources (RR) and US\$ 657,823 from other resources (OR).

Office management monitored the use of funds and the implementation of planned activities through regular programme and management meetings and established monitoring instruments. All grants were utilized before the expiry date.

In 2015, UNICEF Montenegro fund-raised a total of US\$ 877,478. The amount of US\$ 115,264 was mobilized to strengthen the employability of youth in Montenegro with the “Delivering Results Together” fund. US\$ 138,674 was raised for child online protection, the initiative which is a part of the global programme to tackle online child sexual exploitation funded by the United Kingdom Government. As part of the regional initiative titled “Protecting Children from Violence and Promoting Social Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Western Balkans and Turkey” funded by the European Commission, UNICEF Montenegro was approved US\$ 623,540. The funds will become available in 2016.

Regarding thematic funds, a total of US\$ 148,400 was approved for education initiatives in December 2015. Besides, a total of US\$ 362,356 was mobilized at the end of 2014 and allocated to 2015 for the areas of social inclusion, child protection and basic education. Two funding proposals of total value of US\$1.3 million were submitted in 2015 and are currently under review by the potential donors.

Evaluation

The Rolling Integrated Monitoring and Management plan (IMEP), Annual Management Plan (AMP) and Rolling Work Plan (RWP) for 2014-2015 were reference documents for the planning of evaluation of programme implementation. In 2015, the UNICEF Montenegro’s IMEP was gradually moved to the online platform PRIME, which will be used from 2016 onwards.

UNICEF Montenegro participated in the inter-agency Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in the implementation of the Integrated UN Programme and led a joint effort to revise and improve the M&E Framework of the Integrated UN Programme. The office has no M&E or Planning Officer.

M&E is performed by a staff appointed as focal point, and is embedded in daily work of all staff.

The management response to two major evaluations conducted in 2014 - Final Evaluation of the Justice for Children Initiative and Final Evaluation of the Child Care System Reform Project - were gradually implemented. Recommendations were duly taken and will be used for future programming. The Final Evaluation of the Child Care System Reform was rated as "Outstanding, best practice" and it was announced in 2015 that it was one of the four best evaluations globally in 2014.

In 2015, UNICEF Montenegro conducted an evaluation of a programme to promote disability inclusion by making audio-textbooks available, which was rated as 'highly satisfactory'. The evaluation was posted on the on UNICEF Evaluation and Research Database. Jointly with other UN agencies, UNICEF Montenegro provided substantial inputs and contributions in the preparation of the UN Montenegro Country Analysis, which was part of the preparation of new UNDAF 2017-2021.

UNICEF Montenegro provided inputs to the Regional Office (RO) for CEE/CIS for the Management Response to the Multi Country Evaluation of the Regional Key Leadership Agenda "Child's Right to a Family Environment".

Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

The Joint UN approach in operations and the scope of common services implemented was an efficient way to reduce the prices, the workload and transaction costs compared to biddings processed by each agency separately. The savings were greater when accounting for the unquantifiable reduction of staff time invested when each agency conducts its own procurement process. Although the market for services is oligopolistic (there are few service providers per specific supply in the Montenegrin market), a joint UN approach and higher volume of business led to significant cost savings.

Special consideration was given to Efficiency and Effectiveness (E&E) measures. Using video conferencing, Skype and Lync for internal communication with other UNICEF COs and the UNICEF Regional Office, communication costs were reduced. Substantial savings were made in 2015 since the CO moved to the Joint UN Eco premises in March 2014, with discontinuation of commercial rent and electricity costs. Communication costs were reduced by introducing a special package for business users among staff from all UN agencies, Internet leased line, etc.

The first cost-effectiveness analysis of the relocation shows that UNICEF Montenegro saved around US\$ 12,000 on the running costs. The figure represents a 20 per cent decrease in running costs compared to 2013 when UNICEF was located in commercial premises.

The Operations Management Team (OMT) continues to devise and implement activities based on economies of scale and reduction of transaction costs within the UN.

Supply Management

In 2015, the supply component amounted to US\$ 324,643 (20.09 per cent of total CP expenditure). It consisted of procurement of: printing services and production of promotional and communication materials and publications, various surveys and studies. As regards operational supplies, the CO procured IT equipment, office supplies and stationary.

UNICEF Montenegro 2015	Value in US\$
Programme supplies	2,338
Operational supplies	52,548
Services	269,757

The CO benefited from Long Term Agreements (LTAs) for common UN services and locally procured supplies in the framework of the UN Delivering As One in Montenegro.

LTAs with suppliers of the following common services and supplies were used: travel, seminars-conference services, fuel, car wash and car maintenance, taxi services, express courier services, simultaneous translation equipment (rental), office stationary and supplies, translation services, and English and MNE language editing. Tenders for these LTAs have been jointly conducted with other UN agencies in Montenegro while UNICEF Montenegro staff actively participated in the solicitation processes.

Security for Staff and Premises

UNICEF Montenegro actively participated in the Security Management Team (SMT) meetings and continued with security arrangements to ensure overall security for staff and premises of UNICEF Montenegro. SMT meetings were held in April and November. Four quarterly reports on the security situation in Montenegro were developed by the Country Security Focal Points and submitted to United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS). The UN Security Plan was updated in October 2015. Minimum Operating Security Standards, Minimum Operation Residential Security Standards and Security Risk Assessment were updated in April 2015. The Fire Safety Plan was tested in September 2015. The situation and the impact of the global economic and financial crisis was also the subject of on-going monitoring and regular reporting. The warden communication exercise was conducted in October 2015.

The BCP was updated with staff detail changes in 2015 but not tested.

Emergency preparedness was integrated in the RMP as one of the key annual management priorities as well as into the Rolling Work plan for 2014-2015 being the subject of regular monitoring and reporting on Early Warning Early Action (EWEA) site.

During the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) exercise conducted in May 2014, UNICEF Montenegro reviewed the Risk Control Self - Assessment focusing on areas of High and Medium risk. The CO identified three High risks and one Medium risk and for each risk developed an action plan with mitigation measures.

Human Resources

The current staffing structure is aligned to the needs of the 2012-2016 CP with slight changes informed by the Mid-Term Review (MTR) and strengthened capacity in education and youth programme. The CO increased engagement in quality education and youth participation as well as in the area of early learning and early childhood education. Two new OR posts were established: Education & Youth Officer and a– Early Childhood Development (NUNV-ECD). UNICEF Montenegro used short-term national and international consultants' and institutional contracts for various technical expertise. The Education and Youth Officer post was under recruitment; the Communication Assistant and NUNV-ECD posts were not filled.

All training requests were implemented, with two online courses completed by programme and operations staff members. UNICEF Montenegro supported participation of relevant staff members at sectoral meetings, workshops and seminars. One staff member took a three-month development assignment in Armenia Office.

A two-day staff retreat was organized in July 2015. The first day was devoted to career development, and a team-building training was held on the second day.

The CO successfully applied Human Resources policies on learning days, flexi-time and working from home. Ensuring staff well-being and maintaining high staff morale were priorities of the management and of the local Joint Consultative Committee (JCC).

Following the 2014 Global Staff Survey, UNICEF Montenegro developed the Office Improvement Plan.

2014 Performance Appraisal System (PAS) reports were finalized by end of March 2014. Staff members had their regular performance feedback discussions with respective supervisors throughout the year.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

The UNICEF Montenegro office was selected for the LIGHT project in the CEE/CIS region. The project reduced the need to maintain the server infrastructure in the office, especially for offices with good connectivity and no local IT support. In December 2015, the UNICEF Montenegro office successfully migrated to LIGHT infrastructure.

Programme Components from Results Assessment Module

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 By the end of 2016, Montenegro addresses disparities and gaps in access to quality social services for excluded and vulnerable boys, girls and families in line with UN standards

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Implementation of this programme component required multi-sectoral approach and supported global agenda in the areas of SPO 6 and 7, predominantly contributed to regional results in the area of RCLA 8 and supported RKLAs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 10.

The focus of the component was on horizontally and vertically multi-sectoral work to improve access to services for vulnerable children in holistic and effective way. Linking expertise and technical support was necessary in order to comprehensively address gaps in access to services for the most vulnerable.

UNICEF Montenegro support focused on development of infrastructure for quality services for children and families; capacity development, advocacy and strategic evidence collection.

As a result of efforts combining knowledge generation, policy dialogue, advocacy, and by fostering partnerships a wider development, processes were influenced at national level. Four

high level conferences on education gathered international experts, professionals, policy makers and children to discuss latest scientific/neuroscience researches on early childhood brain development and improving preschool education, quality and inclusion. An awareness raising campaign “Preschool for all” on inclusion of children in preschool education was conducted from February to June 2015. As a result of advocacy and policy dialogue, a new Strategy on Preschool Education (2016 - 2020) was adopted by the Government with the goal of 95 per cent increased coverage by 2020.

Systematic efforts on inclusion of children with disabilities (CWD) into mainstream education continued, as did production of audio textbooks adapted for children with visual impairments and combined disabilities. Evaluation of the programme was conducted and, building on Montenegro experience, UNICEF India is replicating the initiative. Support for early detection and orientation through cooperation was provided with two resource centres (transformed special schools) and with development and revision of individual and transitional plans for CWD.

Public debate was initiated around violence against children and adverse childhood experiences and new programme aiming to enhance character and soft skills development was developed and introduced.

In 2015, the CO started a programme to build adolescent and youth resilience and increase youth participation. Youth Innovation Lab was established jointly by UNICEF and the Government of Montenegro as a hub for social innovations, with a user-centred design through applying UNICEF UPSHIFT methodology.

Progress was achieved in this programme component and, with UNICEF support, further legislative framework and a set of quality standards for child protection services were developed. Strengthening the technical capacity of the Government continued to provide quality social work interventions. Functional analyses of the Ministry of Labour and Social Care was prepared to identify areas that need improvement in sector for child and social care. Family outreach work introduced through South South Cooperation on experience from Serbia continued and over 60 families benefited so far. Support to transformation of child-care institutions and development of alternative care for children was provided. UNICEF Montenegro supported the development of legal and cost benefit analyses on the professionalization of foster care and submitted it to the Government. Public awareness on the issue was raised with the campaign “Every Child Needs a Family” and with local events together with centres for social work.

Taking into account results from MTR process, UNICEF fostered multi-sectoral approach focusing also on public-private partnerships and civil sector strengthening.

OUTPUT 1 By the end of 2016, relevant state authorities ensure that professionals from social protection, health and education sectors effectively provide services at local level for vulnerable boys and girls in line with national standards

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Important results were achieved in strengthening services and the multi-sectoral approach to vulnerable children through education, social and childcare. Results contributed to RKLA 1 and RKLAs 3, 4.

UNICEF supported the Government in social and child-care system reform with focus on: better access to family and community-based services and deinstitutionalization; inter-sectoral collaboration; improving evidence collection; improving management and quality monitoring systems; capacity building; communication for development to support programmatic interventions on fostering. In the area of deinstitutionalization, the percentage of children in residential institutions reduced 19 per cent (from 214 to 173). Support was provided to centres for social welfare aimed at enhancing prevention through family outreach work – an innovative working method -- by strengthening management and monitoring systems. Multi-sectoral work on prevention of abandonment has been supported with emphasis on the health sector. With UNICEF support, a Small Group Home (SGH) was established with capacity building, equipping and revision of individual plans for children who are placed in SGH. The awareness raising campaign on fostering “Every Child Needs a Family” continued in 2015.

Evidence collection work was strengthened by development of Legal and Financial impact analyses including proposal to improve status of foster carers. Analyses on youth leaving care was developed with the aim to reveal legal and actual barriers and direct future work in this area.

UNICEF supported the Government in addressing poor educational outcomes and enhancing quality and inclusion including evidence collection, policy dialogue and C4D work. A study on investment in early childhood education was commissioned and massive advocacy work undertaken. This has resulted in the new Strategy for ECE developed in line with UNICEF recommendations. Massive awareness raising campaign “Preschool for all” was conducted in the north and results include increased preschool enrolment in Andrijevica (4 per cent) and Berane (25 per cent).

The first national dialogue on non-cognitive skill development was initiated including development and piloting of a character education programme in selected schools. In the area of inclusion, focus was placed on quality educational services through enhancement of individual and transitional plans for CWD and continuation of production of audio textbooks.

OUTPUT 2 By 2016, the Government strengthens prevention and response mechanisms to protect children from abuse and violence

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF Moldova cross-sectoral work on protection of children against violence contributed mainly to RKLA 8.

As a result of combined UNICEF technical support and advocacy, amendments to the Family Law were adopted banning corporal punishment against children. UNICEF office supported development of the new Strategy on family violence prevention as well as development of Guideline for uniform work of municipal Multidisciplinary teams (OMTs - established to provide holistic and quality support to children victims/witnesses of violence at local level). In parallel, knowledge and skills of professionals working in OMTs were enhanced through series of trainings. Work on peer violence prevention continued and in 2015 UNICEF supported Ministry of Education to produce guidelines for the implementation of School without violence programme by linking the programme with wider system response through national Protocol on prevention, action and protection from family violence.

Based on evidence collected through MICS5, UNICEF supported development of training package and a set of trainings for professionals on work related to early child marriages, begging and trafficking. Work with Roma communities on prevention of child marriages and school dropout has been conducted through partnership with NGO “Legal Centre” and with Red Cross Montenegro.

As a part of global initiative on protection of children from sexual violence on internet (funded through We Protect fund), CO embarked initiative aiming at strengthening national capacities to prevent and protect children from online sexual violence. Specialized trainings and equipment were provided to Cybercrime unit within Police directorate enabling integration of national data base in Interpol system. UNICEF facilitated establishment of cooperation between national institutions and UK National Crime Agency and set of trainings were provided to police officers, prosecutors and judges. Together with partner institutions, UNICEF initiated development of smart phone and computer Application that will provide children with information about internet safety and protection from online sexual abuse and also information where and how to report. Work on application includes public partnership with Telenor as well as with the Ministry of education, Ministry for information society and telecommunications.

While legal framework for protection and prevention of violence against children has been aligned with international standards to the great extent, additional efforts are needed to ensure effective implementation and inter - sectoral collaboration in order to provide adequate urgent care for children victims or witness of violence.

OUTPUT 3 By 2016 children in conflict with the law are treated in line with international standards taking into account best-interest of the child

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The results achieved under this output mostly contributed to UNICEF Regional agenda within RKLA 2.

In 2015, UNICEF supported further alignment of Family law with CRC by introducing important novelties for children: ban on corporal punishment; establishment of institute of child trusted person (in family law related proceedings); expanding mandate of Child Support professional services from criminal to civil and administrative proceedings.

With the aim to expand reform focus towards broader children’s access to justice ensuring full protection of the rights of all children who participate in civil and administrative justice processes, UNICEF supported Ombudsman in conducting the Analyses on respect of the rights of the child in civil and administrative proceedings. The Analyses was made upon randomly selected cases from all courts and revealed the necessity for further improvements in this area. Building on the achieved results in justice reform, UNICEF support continued to centre implementation of the new Law on treatment of juveniles in criminal proceedings with emphasize on alternative measures. Continued support and knowledge exchange was provided to Mediation Centre for juveniles.

In order to ensure more comprehensive impact and full introduction of child friendly procedure in the overall justice system, a package of trainings has been developed for professionals dealing with children in civil and administrative matters. Trainings were delivered in cooperation with the

Judicial training centre, Barr association and MOLSW to civil law judges, social workers and lawyers.

Further efforts were made in improving data on juveniles in contact with the law. Despite of UNICEF technical, professional and financial investments in previous years, this requires additional attention and coordinated work including administrative and civil courts evidence collection.

OUTPUT 4 By the end of 2016 targeted excluded families access basic services and practice inclusion seeking behaviours

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Important results were achieved under this output contributing to RKLA 3/4 and RKLA 8. In 2014 and first half of 2015, evidence collection and C4D interventions aimed to raise demand and inclusive behaviours of vulnerable groups.

With evidence on the poor coverage of children by preschool education (a study on investing in early childhood education (ECE) and MICS 5) it became apparent that children from lower quintiles and children living in the north of the country were least covered by preschool education. According to MICS 5, the attendance rate of preschool education for poorest quintile is seven per cent and for richest 66 per cent. In the poorest municipalities, the coverage range from six per cent for three to six year olds, and 10 per cent for all under six years old. With regard to the importance of ECE and long-term better performance and social outcomes, UNICEF supported a financial model of universal preschool coverage free for all children in Montenegro, used as a basis for the Government Plan for ECE expansion. Under development in five municipalities, it will be tested in 2016.

UNICEF rolled out a C4D campaign “Preschool for all” which was implemented from April to June 2015 in municipalities with the lowest coverage. The campaign raised awareness on the importance of ECE; it also challenged the prejudices and stereotypes that harm women. The campaign increased preschool enrolment in Andrijevisa by four per cent and by 25 per cent in Berane.

With negative trends in the number of children placed in foster care, UNICEF Montenegro continued C4D activities at local level with the campaign “Every child needs a family”, including a series of local mobilization events with local centres for social welfare and with participation of the British actor Nicholas Lyndhurst.

OUTPUT 5 Quality Innovative learning and labour market skills-building for adolescent boys and girls, and youth-friendly services available and fully utilised

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Results under this output contributed to RKLA 10.

In 2015, UNICEF Montenegro embarked on "Youth programme", a global initiative funded by a partnership with ING (global financial institution). The aim of the programme is to empower adolescents and young people with innovative models for learning and to provide platforms for

them to influence developments and policies. The programme branding was finalized and the communication strategy under development.

The establishment of Youth Innovation Lab, in cooperation with the Directorate for Youth and Sport (Ministry of Education) was a hub for youth-led social innovations and user-centred policy design, applying UNICEF upshift methodology. The Lab was established with a partnership with the NGO “Digitalizuj.me”. The first round of upshift is organized for early in 2016.

To provide evidence for programme implementation, UNICEF commenced two surveys: *Study on youth and obstacles to employment - focus on recognition and development of social/emotional skills and key competences* and *Analysis of existing services and youth support programmes with particular focus on supporting employability*.

OUTCOME 2 By the end of 2016, Montenegro's legal and policy framework is harmonized with EU/UN standards, and policies related to child focused governance and social inclusion of children are implemented and monitored

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The goal of this programme component is that national legal framework pertaining to children is aligned with international standards. In 2015, results achieved contributed mainly to RKLA 2 and supported results under RKLA 3/4.

Focus of this programme component in 2015 was to align the Family Law with the CRC and with the recommendations made by Committee on the Rights of the Child.

In 2015 the prohibition of corporal punishment was introduced into the Montenegrin legal system as a result of UNICEF technical support, policy dialogue and advocacy. A new institution, a “child trusted person”, to provide support to children in family-related proceedings was established. To strengthen the multi-sectoral approach of children’s’ access to justice, the mandate of professional services was expanded from criminal to civil and administrative court proceedings. This will ensure a holistic and system approach and full protection of children in all court proceedings. However, implementation of the laws and policies will require close monitoring.

UNICEF Montenegro supported the development of the remaining by-laws needed for full implementation of the new Law on Social and Child Care. However, content of the bylaws was often amended to shorten procedures, and not always in line with UNICEF recommendations. Further political dialogue is needed to ensure that UNICEF comments are fully taken into account.

The CO collected information and child-related evidence parallel with advocacy and policy dialogue and ensured that child rights were recognized and included in Government and EU accession agenda.

Other highlights included the development of the strategy on ECE (fully taking into account UNICEF recommendations); the analyses and recommendations on the quality of ECE programmes; and maintaining a high profile in the national dialogue on inclusion and quality.

Concerning the implementation of the Action Plan for EU Chapter 23, UNICEF Montenegro kept close communication with EU Delegation and responsible ministries. Regular inputs were

provided to EU Delegation with progress report preparation and UNICEF used the momentum of the EU accession process to advance a child rights agenda, in particular through sectoral operational plans.

OUTPUT 1 Legislation harmonized with EU/UN stand.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF-supported legislative reform was mainly related to results under RKLAs 1 and contributed to RCLA 2 and RCLA 3/4.

A mile-stone legislation for social and child protection system reform came into force in 2013, followed by the development of bylaws and quality standards for child protection services in 2014 and 2015. Assistance was provided to develop four bylaws in 2014. In 2015, UNICEF supported development of additional three bylaws: the bylaw on minimum standards of counselling and therapeutic and socio-educational services, the bylaw on licensing of professionals and the bylaw on accreditation of programmes. To strengthen alternative child care, and in particular the system of professional kinship, UNICEF Montenegro provided cost benefit analyses on foster care and submitted to the Government.

Following the UNICEF-conducted study on investment in ECE, several cost-effective models were developed to increase coverage of preschool education in particular for the disadvantaged. The models ensuring equity were based on a cost free, three-hour programme offered to all children five days a week, 10 months per year. As a follow up, the Government working group developed a plan to expand ECE with UNICEF, and different models will be tested in five municipalities in 2016. The adoption of the new strategy on preschool education that introduced all UNICEF recommendations and proposed models for expansion was a main achievement. This was a result of combining efforts in evidence and knowledge collection, policy dialogue and advocacy including public campaign “Preschool for all”.

The analysis of the Family Law’s compliance with international standards was prepared and subsequent revision of the Family Law, including ban on corporal punishment.

The economic crisis, austerity measures and limited human resources hindered Government ability to ensure predictable and sustainable resources for fully effective implementation of laws and policies. UNICEF will continue supporting capacity building and evidence and knowledge generation through fiscal impact and cost benefit analysis along with development of new laws and policies.

OUTPUT 2 By 2016 evidence-based policies and strategies are implemented in line with international standards and practice

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The CO supported knowledge and evidence collection to increase capacity of the Government and other national stakeholders to adequately do programming, planning and budgeting the policies pertaining to children.

Child-related evidence collected in 2015 mostly contributed to RCLA 8 and supported results under RCLA 1 and RCLA 3/4.

The CO finalized the MTR process in 2015 based on consultations, evidence-collection and direct interviews with all stakeholders. To support the MTR process, a strategic assessment of

the situation of children and families in Montenegro was conducted. The assessment provided comprehensive analyses of the situation, identified priorities and UNICEF comparative advantages and gave a framework for future programme development. In 2015, Joint UN programme was finally evaluated and new UNDAF preparation initiated fully engaging Government partners in analyses and planning.

In January 2015, Social Welfare Information System (SWIS) was introduced with UNDP support. SWIS is an electronic system for processing, approval, payments, monitoring and audit of social benefits/transfers and it covers almost all social services business processes including introduction of the case management. It upgrades capacities of social welfare centres (22 offices across the country) and the Line Ministry and increases the poor and vulnerable access to social benefits and services. UNICEF Montenegro advocated that nationally-established child protection data (statistics and indicators) is fully integrated into SWIS. This requires further monitoring.

In the area of juvenile justice, policy-making was restrained by a lack of clear, accessible and reliable data in line with international standards, and with limited capacity of state actors to gather and interpret this data. In order to lay the foundation of an efficient and effective juvenile justice system, UNICEF Montenegro provided technical support to the Judicial Council, Office of the Supreme State Prosecutor and Police to develop and integrate a set of indicators on Juvenile Justice fully aligned with UNODC/UNICEF indicators. Twenty-two indicators were integrated into the judicial data-collection system. However, data filling and usage was sporadic and the challenge is to ensure full operationalization of both data basis.

Main achievements also included: finalization of the study on investing in ECE; KAP study on preschool education in support to policy dialogue and advocacy; a survey of teachers, parents and pupils on the values, virtues and skills that education system should nurture and develop; and analyses of policies, institutional framework and practice pertaining to youth leaving institutional care.

OUTCOME 3 By the end of 2016, national and local authorities systematically apply the principles and standards of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Copenhagen Criteria and facilitate independent monitoring

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The initiatives conducted under this outcome contributed to RKLA 8.

In order to improve capacities of national bodies to streamline and monitor the child rights agenda, UNICEF Montenegro broadened its partnerships and established permanent collaboration with the Parliament of Montenegro. To increase awareness on the issue of violence against children, its manifestations, frequency, associated stigma and social norms, UNICEF Montenegro presented number of global and nationally conducted surveys to the Parliamentary board on human rights and initiated the first ever discussion of the subject in the Parliament. Representatives of the Parliamentary Board on Education and Science were regularly contacted and participating in the highest events on quality of education and child development organized by UNICEF. In order to help inform policy dialogue around importance of ECE, UNICEF directly involved highest government officials and was given the opportunity to present findings to Government Committee for structural reforms.

Due attention was also given to Ombudsman institution and in particular to the issue of improving accessibility for children, a result being the steady increase in the number of

children's direct complaints to Ombudsman in 2015. The Ombudsman office capacity to monitor child rights was permanently supported. With UNICEF Montenegro assistance, the Ombudsman office conducted independent analyses on treatment of children and provided concrete set of recommendations to all involved institutions. Valuable evidence was collected with UNICEF-supported analyses on child rights in civil and administrative proceedings.

The staffing structure, capacity and financial resources of the CO were obstacles for better independent monitoring of child rights and for performing ex-officio responsibilities. The absence of public leadership on children's issue impedes the realization of child rights. The reporting process by UN Committee of Rights of the Child's in 2015 provides an opportunity for the Government to re-think the most effective modalities for inter-sectoral coordination, monitoring and streamlining child-related strategies and policies at national level.

OUTPUT 1 By 2016 Council on Child Rights coordinates cross-sectoral implementation of the National Plan of Action for Children

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The constrained results under this output contributed to RKLA 8.

UNICEF Montenegro provided technical assistance to the Government drafting the new National Action Plan (NPA) for children (2013-2017) and supported participation of children and NGO sector as well as wide national public consultation. The aim of this initiative was to establish functional national structure for implementation of CRC recommendations and other child-related policy priorities.

However, the structure that will coordinate and monitor implementation of the NPA was not established which seriously hindered the process of implementation. Strategic policy planning and monitoring of the child rights agenda needs capacity development and support. In spite of CRC recommendations, EU observations in progress reports, and continuous advocacy by UNICEF Montenegro, the Council for Child Rights was still not effective. Therefore, a mechanism to ensure strategic streamlining of child rights-related policy, planning, monitoring and implementation does not exist at country level.

OUTPUT 2 By 2016, Ombudsman office accessible to children and adequately equipped to investigate complaints of violations of child rights

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Results achieved under this output contributed RKLA 2 and RKLA 8.

Collaboration with the Ombudsman office addressed two main priorities: increasing accessibility of Ombudsman office for children and strengthening the oversight function of the Ombudsman office.

In order to provide independent monitoring of the child rights, the Ombudsman office was supported by UNICEF Montenegro to prepare the assessment of treatment of children in civil and administrative court proceedings. The assessment was made of randomly selected cases in all courts in Montenegro and provided a valuable source for future UNICEF work in this area.

In marking the International Child Rights Day, the Ombudsman office was supported to organize public debate about child participation, led by Ombudsman's "golden advisors" – children who are elected in their school parliaments.

Staffing structure and financial resources of the CO were not sufficient to fulfil its role of independent monitoring and in particular its "ex officio" responsibilities.

OUTCOME 4 Cross-sectoral

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Major achievements were the correct and timely processing and implementation of activities that enabled a smooth functioning of the CO. Those activities, as described below, included activities related to direct administrative/operational support for day-to-day functioning of the Podgorica office.

OUTPUT 1 Operating costs

Analytical Statement of Progress:

This fund contributed to efficient operation and administration of the CO. UNICEF Montenegro provided human resource support to contribute to the achievement of other outcomes of the programme component, or across programme components, in the CP of cooperation.

Other components included administrative support to programmes, support to organize events and other miscellaneous services (advertisements, taxi services, fuel, courier, communication costs, etc.), and the overall effective implementation of programmes.