Executive Summary

2014 included a mid-term review process (MTR) involving all stakeholders and partners. Through consultative meetings, interviews, thematic discussions and a final national conference, the relevance of UNICEF Montenegro’s current programme (CP 2012-2016) and its strategies was analysed. The MTR confirmed that the focus of the CP will continue to be the reform of social and justice sector, multi-sectoral cooperation in addressing equity and reaching the most vulnerable. The MTR process also highlighted an additional need – to strengthen systems for quality education from early childhood up to and including programmes on youth resilience and participation. UNICEF continued to play a strategically important and convening role in mobilising national stakeholders, initiating national dialogues, knowledge and evidence-generation and in addressing unfavourable social norms as they impact the vulnerable groups.

Work on two major Programme components generally progressed well in 2014. Collaboration with the European Union (EU) on reforming the social and justice sector resulted in significant achievements, in particular in further alignment of the legal and policy framework with human rights norms, modelling new community-based services and deinstitutionalisation and enhanced capacities of national professionals. This was documented in two final independent evaluations conducted in 2014. Collaboration with the EU was not limited to programme cooperation, but also included policy advocacy and dialogue to further embed children’s rights in the EU accession process.

In 2014 UNICEF supported a ground-breaking new dialogue on quality education and early childhood development (ECD). The dialogue was based on global evidence and the latest scientific knowledge on: impact of quality ECD for future individual development and success and the impact of non-cognitive skills on better educational outcomes. Country-relevant evidence was collected through MICS 5 and a study on investing in early childhood education. The dialogue gathered all national stakeholders and leading world experts on learning achievements, ECD and innovations. As a result, an innovative programme on character education was prepared, to be rolled out in 2015, as well as a plan for expansion of early childhood education from a current rate of 40 per cent to 90 per cent by 2020.

The year was also marked by strategic support to the Government to enhance data collection on children and its capacities to collect, interpret data and prepare statistical reports in line with internationally accepted standards. UNICEF’s strategic partnership with the National Statistics Office continues to provide better data and analysis on the situation of girls and boys in Montenegro. Major obstacles to fulfilling the rights of girls and boys continue to be underdeveloped knowledge and capacity, limited coordination and the absence of effective accountability measures.

In spite of some initial efforts made by UNICEF, a national coordinating body is still not operational. The Council for Child Rights, even though formally established, does not perform its function as a national coordinating body that would streamline child rights policies, overview implementation and enhance multi-sectoral and holistic approach. UNICEF will also have to
further strengthen cooperation with civil society and facilitate its strategic involvement in national debates and decision-making processes pertaining to children.

**Equity Case Study**

Children living in large-scale institutions are one of the most vulnerable groups of children in the society. Global research and evidence in various scientific fields shows that growing up deprived of a caring family environment has strikingly negative and damaging impacts on a child’s physical, emotional and social development. Children that grow up in large-scale residential institutions are more likely to suffer from equity issues throughout the entire lifecycle, particularly those who enter state care under the age of three.

To counter detrimental impacts of institutionalisation and ensure that every child grows up in a family environment, UNICEF promotes family-based alternatives (such as fostering) and community-based services (such as day care centres for children with disabilities) to large-scale institutional care.

This effort requires not only intensive system-level interventions that include setting up a new normative and policy framework, but also a significant mind-shift of both social protection professionals and the general public, especially given that in post-socialist countries institutionalisation is widely accepted and viewed as a beneficial form of protection for children without parental care. According to a UNICEF Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey from 2013: 1) more than half (58 per cent) of Montenegro’s citizens believe that placing a child without proper parental care in an institution is an adequate form of protection; 2) 37 per cent of citizens consider that a child growing up in an institution stands an equal chances for growth and development as a child growing up in a family and 3) Only about one-third of citizens (35 per cent) were familiar with foster care as a form of child protection for children without parental care.

During the reporting period, important achievements were made in Montenegro in increasing access to alternative family and community-based services for vulnerable children, children without parental care and children with disabilities, especially with regard to the development of foster care and community-based services.

The Strategy on the Development of Fostering was adopted in 2012, a massive awareness-raising campaign on foster care “Every Child Needs a Family” was implemented between September 2013 and January 2014. In direct partnership with the Prime Minister, the bylaw on foster care was adopted in April 2014, the Guide for Foster Carers was published in July 2014 and Guidelines for professionals were developed and shared with Centres for Social Welfare (CSWs) in autumn 2014. In parallel, there was intense capacity building of CSWs and key staff from children’s homes. As a result there is growing awareness, understanding and commitment to deinstitutionalisation at all levels.

The results of the reform process so far are impressive, and include:

1. The number of children in foster care (kinship and non-kinship) has increased by 15.5 per cent since 2012, and the number of foster families has increased by 11 per cent in the same reporting period
2. There was a three-fold increase in the number of children in non-kin foster care, as well as in the number of non-kin foster families
3. The number of children in residential care has dropped by 19 per cent since 2012
4. The number of day care centres (community-based services for children with disabilities) has doubled since 2012, when there were only four such services at the local level.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

Acronyms

AMP - Annual Management Plan
CMT - Country Management Team
CWD - Children with disabilities
CSW - Centre for Social Welfare
DAO - Delivering as One
DCT - Direct cash transfer
DRR - Disaster risk reduction
ECE - Early Childhood Education
EPR - Emergency Preparedness and Response
ERM - Enterprise Risk Management
HACT - Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfer
ICT - Information and Communications Technology
IMEP - Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
IPSAS - International Public Sector Accounting Standards
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
MORSS - Minimum Operating Residential Security Standards
MOSS - Minimum Operating Security Standards
MTR - Mid-term review
OMT - Operations Management Team
RCSA - Risk Control Self-assessment
RKLA - Regional Knowledge Leadership Area
RMP - Rolling Management Plan
RWP - Rolling Work Plan
SMT - Security Management Team
UNCT - United Nations Country Team

Capacity Development

Montenegro aspires to UN and EU standards of child protection, and has aligned much of its policy and legal framework with these aspirations; however, sometimes in practice the system falls short. Media coverage of children in state care had been routinely breaching both the privacy of children – who are often taken into care as victims of abuse or violence or abandonment – and promoting a negative stereotype of helplessness and dependency. For example, in December/January 2013/4 around 207 media stories with 55 camera images exposing the identity of children in state care appeared in broadcast and print media. In partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Care, a study was commissioned to review the Montenegrin coverage and compare it with a) the way young people in state care are protected from public media exposure in EU member states, b) the way the issue of children
being in state care is portrayed in the media. The study was launched by the Minister and the UNICEF Representative at a public roundtable with media and civil society in October 2014 and fundamentally transformed public and media attitudes about the issue. During the period one year later, there were no reports exposing children in state care and much more intelligent coverage on the impact of institutionalisation upon children’s overall lives. In addition to addressing the issues of dignity and privacy for children in state care, this also contributes to the broader national debate about the importance of family-based alternatives to large-scale institutions, which ultimately harm the physical and brain development of children.

**Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy**

Preschool enrolment rates of children aged 3-to-6 in Montenegro are very low (52 per cent); attendance rates stand at 40 per cent, but only 19 per cent for Roma and Egyptian children. There are also significant regional disparities in access to preschool education (88 per cent enrolment rate in the South compared to 52 per cent in the central region and only 27 per cent in the North), as well as socio-economic disparities. Children from the wealthiest quintile are 10 times more likely to attend some programme of preschool education than children from the poorest quintile. Based on the initial evidence generated and strong advocacy, in partnership with the Ministry of Education (MoE), a wider group of stakeholders and the general public (http://www.unicef.org/montenegro/media_26358.html), UNICEF commissioned a study on Investing in ECE in Montenegro (https://app.box.com/s/sxw8paw3td6lofse5soo). The study was supported by the MoE and conducted by international experts, including from Yale University. The study analyses financing scenarios for preschool education, with an emphasis on socially excluded and marginalised children. It proposes several feasible and cost-effective scenarios that ensure free coverage for children 3-to-6 years of age with three-hour quality preschool programme by 2020.

The study was presented at a high-level conference on education in July, opened by the Prime Minister. As a result of these programmatic and advocacy efforts, the Government has agreed to set the objective of increasing the coverage of 3-to-6 year olds with quality early childhood education from the current 40 per cent to 95 per cent by 2020, as well as expressed commitment to continue investing in preschool education. To ensure that the study will be used for future Government plans, UNICEF maintained ongoing dialogue with high-level decision-makers and professionals, as well as the wider public focusing on the importance of ECE, most prominently at a second high-profile conference “Quality Education – Importance of investing in ECE (http://www.unicef.org/montenegro/media_27108.html). Also, technical expertise has been provided to the MoE to develop a Plan of Expansion of ECE in Montenegro, based on the scenarios from the study (to be presented at the Government session in first quarter of 2015).

**Partnerships**

UNICEF maintained a strategic partnership with the European Union in 2014, in particular in the areas of justice for children and social and child protection system strengthening. As a result of this partnership, significant results were achieved and documented in two independent final evaluations conducted in 2014. Based on the quality and significance of the results, the EU secured additional funding for child welfare reform.

Collaboration with the EU was not only programmatic but also had a strategic policy dimension. As a result of continuous exchange, child rights are included in EU accession process negotiations for Montenegro and Government Action Plans for the accession.
Regular dialogue was maintained through 2014 with the Parliament, particularly the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms and the Committee on Education and Culture.

A strategic partnership was built with the National Statistics Office, through preparation of Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS 5); capacities at this lead national statistics institution were strengthened through the process.

UNICEF maintains dialogue with the media, aiming to encourage responsible reporting and improve the quality of reporting about children in state institutions, as in the past it was often counter-productive and failed to respect children’s privacy, dignity and wellbeing.

Partnerships with academic institutions – state and private universities – were strengthened; UNICEF maintained constant dialogue and provided continuous scientific exchange around quality of education and learning achievements and the role of early childhood education.

**External Communication and Public Advocacy**

UNICEF is the best known international agency in the country: 97 per cent of Montenegrin citizens have heard of it and 91 per cent have a positive opinion of it. UNICEF’s presence on social media is constantly growing with 46,192 website page views and 26,383 you-tube videos watched in 2014. Also, Facebook and Twitter fans’ number and UNICEF’s presence in print and electronic media increased significantly in 2014 (767 total media reports in 2014). As a result of multi-year public advocacy on inclusion, 60 per cent of citizens (19 per cent more than last year) find it acceptable that a child with disability is the best friend of their child and 78 per cent (8 per cent more than a year ago) support inclusive education. The percentage of citizens who mentioned fostering as one of the adequate forms of protection of children without parental care increased from 35 per cent in 2012 to 46 per cent in 2014, thanks to public advocacy on fostering during 2013 and 2014. Also, the percentage of citizens who disagree that placing a child without parental care in an institution is an adequate form of protection increased from 37 per cent in 2012 to 44 per cent in 2014.

**South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation**

UNICEF Montenegro supported the Government in the implementation of a comprehensive social and child welfare system reform and the reform of the justice system for children. A key focus was strengthening professional work with families at risk of breakdown and separation, which UNICEF found to be a critical area requiring additional attention.

Due to similarities in social, child protection and justice systems in Serbia and Montenegro, UNICEF decided to use experience from Serbia and to develop, within a South-South Initiative, a Family Outreach Worker service in Montenegro. The methodology developed by UNICEF Serbia and its partners was used, as well as the know-how, practical experience and expert knowledge from Serbia. The goal of the initiative was to build national resources that could constantly support biological families to develop their own capabilities to provide better conditions for children, to prevent child separation and to support the process of reintegration after a child has been temporarily placed into public or kinship care. The service of the Family Outreach Worker also addresses one of the major bottlenecks identified in the social welfare and child care systems related to limited capacities of CSW’s staff for direct work with families and very low mobility for outreach.

Following initial education, orientation and exchange of know-how among professionals from the two countries, the piloting of Family Outreach Worker service started in October 2014 in three
municipalities: Bijelo Polje, Podgorica and Herceg Novi. Professionals were trained to work as Family outreach workers and many families are now benefiting from the service. Centres for Social Work are actively involved in identifying families, developing individual plans of work, and generally supporting Family Outreach Workers in their work. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW) is in charge of coordination and monitoring of the overall process. UNICEF gathered positive initial feedback, and the process of establishing a permanent structure to continue with family outreach work is ongoing.

**Identification Promotion of Innovation**

Montenegro is committed to improve inclusive quality education. The situation of children with disability has improved considerably over the past few years, and to further advance the efforts there is a need for promotion of appropriate teaching methods and make learning material such as braille books more available (currently costly, traditional, difficult to use, deteriorate over time, etc.).

UNICEF, the Ministry of Education, the textbook publishing agency and the resource centre for children with a disability initiated the first-ever production of audio-visual textbooks in adapted format for children with visual impairments and children with learning difficulties in mainstream education. The initiative was implemented in partnership with the Drama Academy, whose acting students recorded the books on a voluntary basis.

For the price of Braille textbooks for only 20 children (US$20,000), all primary school children now have access to primary school mother-tongue textbooks for six grades in adapted audio format, with more in the pipeline. They are easily accessible, downloadable, adaptable and can be used on any PC, tablet or smart phone. The Resource Centre continues to work on making more textbooks accessible in adapted audio-visual format; the long-term goal is to have all grade books for all subjects available.

However, further challenges are linked to scaling-up the efforts, regular updates of the material and ensuring their effective use in classrooms. Therefore UNICEF initiated training of teachers, parents and supervisors on the pedagogical and technical aspects of the use of audio textbooks in classrooms. UNICEF is piloting the use of audio textbooks in 24 primary schools an evaluation will take place prior to scaling-up and potentially replicating elsewhere.

**Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation**

Knowledge management in children’s rights plays a critical role in fulfilling UNICEF’s knowledge mandate. To strengthen application of HRBA principles to programming, support the country’s efforts to fulfil UN CRC Concluding Observations and identify major inequities that prevent the most disadvantaged children and families from enjoying their rights, in June 2014 Montenegro launched the first full-fledged country household survey - Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey on the State of Children and Women in Montenegro (MICS 5). The survey was conducted by the National Statistical Office and provided disaggregated data on a range of topics affecting children’s survival, development and rights. The survey for the general population was conducted in parallel with the survey of Roma settlements and provides the most comprehensive collection of data on Roma and major inequities, contributing to the human rights-based approach. Roma populations throughout south-east Europe have much worse outcomes across all aspects of child wellbeing. The MICS survey has shown that progress has been made since 2005, however it also revealed gaps and disparities and areas that need improvement. The survey confirmed substantial differences between the general population and those living in Roma settlements across all indicators. Especially of concern was data indicating
that 69 per cent of children age 1-to-14 years experienced at least one form of psychological aggression or physical punishment during the month preceding the survey. Furthermore, 40 per cent of children age 36-to-59 months attend an organised early childhood education programme, while the same is true for only 19 per cent of Roma children. The primary school attendance ratio for children from the general population is 98 per cent, compared to 65 per cent for Roma children. Disparities in primary school completion rates are even more striking: 99 per cent for the general population and 29 per cent for Roma. Following the MICS survey, five thematic and three regional discussions were organised around the issues where major inequalities were documented to discuss causalities and how to address them. A set of recommendations and next steps were agreed.

**Gender Mainstreaming and Equality**

The UN System in Montenegro pays particular attention to gender mainstreaming in integrated programming and implementation. In 2014 the UN Country Team (UNCT) continued supporting the incorporation of gender equality in national planning processes. The joint UN Working Group on Gender and Human Rights provided continuous support to the UNCT and Pillar Groups in capacity development of UN staff in gender mainstreaming. UNICEF has a designated staff member in the group. During 2014 the group has not been assigned a specific budget for its functioning. However, it has supported the nation-wide campaign “16 days against violence”.

From 2012-2014 UNICEF has continuously provided technical support to the Judicial Council, Office of the State Prosecutor and Police for development and application of a set of gender-based and gender-disaggregated indicators in Juvenile Justice, developed on the basis of UNODC/UNICEF criteria. In 2014 the indicators and methodology for data collection and analysis were integrated into the existing Judicial Information System and contributed to the country’s efforts to further advance policy and practice in the area of juvenile justice using a gender-based approach. Three UNICEF staff members were actively involved in the implementation of this activity (CP Officer, J4C Officer and J4C Assistant) and €19,409 was spent for this purpose in 2014.

Similarly, one of the major bottlenecks identified in the child protection system was a weak culture of evidence-based programming, data collection and analysis. Therefore, setting up a functional national database on child protection with an integrated gender-based dimension was identified as one of the priorities for the reform process. With UNICEF support, the database was set up in 2013; throughout 2014 the 11 Centres for Social Work inputted 17,400 gender-disaggregated entries on children. The MOLSW is rolling out the Social Card system which will incorporate the child protection database. Three UNICEF staff members were actively involved in the implementation of this activity (two CP Officers and the Assistant in charge of Child Care System Reform). UNICEF invested around €6,160 in 2014 for regular maintenance of the database.

**Environmental Sustainability**

The UN supported the nation-wide, post-2015 consultations in Montenegro involving more than 8,000 people. During these consultations environmental sustainability was identified as one of eight most prominent concerns around which priorities for the future should be set.

As the second phase of these national consultations, in 2014 the UN System in Montenegro (including UNICEF) commissioned and facilitated preparation of a study on existing participatory monitoring mechanisms in the country (“Participatory Monitoring for Accountability”). The purpose of the second phase of post-2015 consultations in Montenegro, and of the report in
particular, was to engage the public in a fundamental dialogue about how to monitor the Government’s performance and foster responsive governance around a new set of goals in the context of the post-2015 framework, including monitoring of implementation of relevant national strategies and action plans in the area of environment sustainability and environment protection.

On several occasions in 2014 UNICEF Montenegro promoted the “Knowledge Attitudes and Practice Survey on Children and Climate Change” (UNICEF, 2011), as a good example of child participation and contribution to public discussion of climate change in the country.

Effective Leadership

UNICEF Montenegro’s priorities for 2014-2015 are detailed in the rolling work plan (RWP) and rolling management plan (RMP), and include: mid-term review (MTR) conducted in 2014, VISION implementation and International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) compliance, including training as needed; follow-up actions to close all audit recommendations, and moving the office to UN ECO premises. As regards the programme, priorities include: child care system reform, deinstitutionalisation and implementation of the Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (IPA) 2010 social inclusion and child care system reform initiative; antidiscrimination/equity and implementation of the EU-funded Justice for children initiative. Other priorities were the creation of a knowledge base on the situation of children and women; involvement in Delivering as One (DaO); human and financial resources; emergency preparedness and response (EPR) and disaster risk reduction (DRR), as well as mandatory trainings.

The country management team (CMT) met eight times during the year, addressing the main decisions to be made with regard to RWP implementation, regular review of management indicators and management priorities, communication strategy and monitoring of media coverage of UNICEF. Audit recommendations and follow-up of the agreed actions and VISION updates continued to be a standing item on the CMT agenda. Other issues addressed by the CMT included: implementation of VISION, office management reports, implementation of the 2012-2016 CPD/CPAP, the MTR and an Integrated UN Programme and resource mobilisation strategy. UNICEF continued to closely monitor the status of direct cash transfers (DCTs) which resulted in no outstanding DCT of more than six months in 2014.

All audit recommendations were closed in March 2014. UNICEF continued the practice of reviewing, improving and streamlining work processes by focusing on major bottlenecks, reviewing applicable rules and regulations, incorporating the latest changes and updating internal forms for full compliance with new management systems.

Monthly programme meetings were devoted to reviewing the RWP, sharing information among the sections and agreeing on cross-sectoral approaches. Donor reports were submitted on time and strong oversight on the harmonised approach to cash transfers (HACT) implementation was maintained. All staff weekly meetings enabled sharing of relevant Programme and Operations information. The monthly Programme meetings were used as forum to provide updates on emerging programme issues, review implementation of the RWP, DaO integrated programmes, programme performance and to resolve Programme and Operations bottlenecks. Key updates on the MTR process conducted in the second half of the year were regularly shared at CMT and JCC meetings and at all staff meetings. Potential changes in the country programming context were also discussed, allowing for modification of strategic approaches. The various oversight committees had clear TORs and strong staff participation, ensuring quality review of documents, adherence to guidelines, and consideration of value for money. UNICEF Montenegro adopted
the HACT action plan and all staff members were trained on revised HACT guidance. Enterprise risk management (ERM) was reviewed in May; three high and one medium-high risks were identified and strategies to systematically monitor and manage them were developed.

**Financial Resources Management**

UNICEF management consistently utilised the Managers Dashboard to check performance. Key performance indicators were monitored at CMT and Programme meetings where budgetary control, fund utilisation against grants, ageing of DCTs and single source versus competitive selection of contractors was analysed and discussed. Bank balances were reconciled monthly and without issue in 2014.

The Montenegro Office Support Budget (SB) of US$96,750, managed locally, mainly covered expenditures related to operating expenses, including a move to the new UN Eco building, travel and co-sharing of security arrangement for common premises. Implementation rate for the SB was 100 per cent.

UNICEF continued to work on UN common services within the Operations management team (OMT), and with UNCT endorsement. There was significant progress in further widening the range of common services. Throughout the year, UNICEF benefited from long-term arrangements (LTAs) for a series of common services.

UNICEF Montenegro closely followed all accounting instructions related to the interim and year-end closure of accounts to ensure compliance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards, which resulted in all schedules being submitted on time. UNICEF continues to make effective use of bank optimisation and cash forecasting tools.

UNICEF started implementing HACT in 2008, and the required HACT provisions were in the previous and current country programme action plans. Risk assessment and assurance activities were aligned with revised HACT guidelines.

An assurance plan comprised of micro-assessments, programmatic monitoring and spot-checks was developed, and its implementation was regularly followed up, ensuring the absence of outstanding DCTs of more than six months at 2014 year-end.

**Fund-raising and Donor Relations**

The CMT monitored timely and quality submission of donor reports using the available management reports. Donor reports prepared by programme were reviewed by the Programme Specialist, UNICEF Brussels Office and finally endorsed by the Representative. All donor reports were sent on time.

Management closely monitored the use of funds and implementation of planned activities through regular programme and management meetings and reviews and established monitoring instruments.

The total allocation for programme in 2014 was US$2,456,505. The utilised amount was US$2,419,686, of which US$1,033,884 were RR and US$1,289,052 OR. Operating expenses amounted to US$155,338 (including cross-cutting staff salaries, travel and operating costs).

All grants were fully utilised before expiry dates.
Guided by its 2013 resource mobilisation strategy, UNICEF Montenegro made a special effort to expand its fundraising base, with a focus on under-funded programme components in Education, ECD and Youth. It successfully mobilised US$1,346,000 in 2014. Of this amount, US$0.97 million was mobilised for the Youth programme for the next three years, while US$225,000 was mobilised for the ECD Investment case. The funds will become available in 2015.

**Evaluation**

The integrated monitoring and management plan (IMEP), annual management plan (AMP) and RWPs for 2014-2015 served as key reference documents for planning evaluations of programme implementation. UNICEF also participated actively in the inter-agency Monitoring and Evaluation group for implementation of the Integrated UN Programme, and led a joint effort to revise and improve the M&E Framework of the Integrated UN Programme.

UNICEF Montenegro has no M&E or Planning Officer; the M&E function is performed by a staff member appointed as the focal point. Also, as a cross-cutting issue, M&E is embedded in the daily work of both programme and operations staff.

As planned, two major strategic evaluations were conducted in 2014, in accordance with Evaluation Guidelines: final evaluations of the Justice for Children Initiative and the Child Care System Reform Project (both funded by the European Delegation). Both initiatives represent pillars of UNICEF’s engagement in Montenegro. Evaluations were conducted by independent agencies/experts selected through a competitive process. The evaluation processes were participatory, both in the phase of ToR development, as well as during the implementation phase, involving all relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries. Recommendations were duly noted and will be used for future programming.

The management responses are being prepared. Both evaluations were rated ‘Highly Satisfactory’, underlining that UNICEF Montenegro has significantly strengthened its evaluation capacity.

Another evaluation will be conducted in 2015: Evaluation of the Pilot Project “Using textbooks in Audio Format”. As an innovative and pioneering undertaking that aims to ensure the use of audio textbooks for children with disabilities in all primary schools in the country, this project has enormous potential for knowledge generation and compilation of lessons learned to be replicated elsewhere.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

To simplify processes and reduce transaction cost to maximise efficiency, while implementing appropriate risk-management measures, UNICEF adopted efficiency measures in regard to travel, solicitation processes and LTAs. Special consideration was given to efficiency and effectiveness measures by using video conferencing, Skype and Lync for internal communication with other UNICEF offices, communication costs were reduced. Substantial savings are expected in 2015, due to the move to Joint UN Eco premises in March 2014, with discontinuation of commercial rent and electricity costs, as well as reductions in communication costs through a special package for business users among staff from all UN agencies, leasing of an Internet line, etc. The first cost-effectiveness analysis of the relocation shows that UNICEF will be saving around US$20,000 annually on running costs. The figure represents a 33 per cent decrease in running costs compared to 2013, when UNICEF was located in commercial premises. The OMT continues to devise and implement activities aimed at reaching economies
of scale and further reduction of transaction costs within the UN. Through a joint UN approach in operations and a wide scope of common services implemented, this continued to be an efficient way to reduce prices, workload and transaction costs compared to bidding by each agency separately. The savings are even higher when the unquantifiable reduction of staff time that would have been invested if each agency had to conduct its own procurement process is taken into account. Even though the market for this type of services is oligopolistic (only a few service providers per specific supply are working in the Montenegrin market), a joint UN approach and higher volume of business led to significant cost savings. This was especially evident in preparation for the move, when the large procurement related to new joint premises was conducted.

Supply Management

The supply component was in support of the regular Country Programme, but the Montenegro programme does not have significant supply component. In 2014 it amounted to US$359,371 (14.85 per cent of total Country Programme expenditure) and consisted of local procurement of programme supplies for the Child Care System Reform and Justice for Children IPA-funded projects, for printing services and production of promotional and communication materials and publications. As regards operational supplies, UNICEF procured IT equipment, office supplies and stationary and made some improvements prior to and after the move to the new building.

UNICEF continued to benefit from LTAs for common UN services and locally procured supplies, in the framework of the DaO UN in Montenegro.

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

Security for Staff and Premises

During the move to UN Eco House, special attention was paid to security of the premises and for staff. Special purpose funds received from HQ were used to improve overall security of the building.

Comprehensive security of UN House was secured by end February, prior to the move. Building security by a security company is round the clock. A security fence was procured and installed, for which the UN system mobilised funds jointly.

UNICEF has actively participated in Security Management Team meetings and continued with security arrangements to ensure overall security for both the staff and premises of UNICEF Montenegro. Two security management team meetings were held, in April and November. Four quarterly reports on the security situation in Montenegro were developed by the Country Security focal person and submitted to UNDSS. The UN Security Plan was updated in November 2014, along with minimum operating security standards (MOSS) and minimum operating residential security standards (MORSS) accordingly. Upon the move to UN Eco House, a fire safety plan was developed and tested and a building entry policy endorsed by the UNCT. The security situation and the impact of the global economic and financial crisis was also
the subject of ongoing monitoring and regular reporting.

The Business Continuity Plan was updated in light of staff changes in 2014; no testing of the plan was conducted in 2014.

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, as the subject of regular monitoring and reporting on the early warning early action site.

During the Enterprise Risk Management exercise conducted in May 2014, UNICEF Montenegro reviewed risk control self-assessment (RCSA), focusing on risk areas considered high and medium-high. UNICEF Montenegro also looked at the impact of the action taken in the likelihood of the risk and whether or not the rating and the risk level needed adjustment. Three high and one medium-high risks were identified; for all identified risks action plans and mitigation measures were planned.

## Human Resources

UNICEF Montenegro completed all recruitments related to the new CP on time, and in 2014 had only one vacant post (Communication Assistant) that became vacant in April 2014, upon the resignation of a staff member. In accordance with guidelines sent by UNICEF HQ in November 2013, the post was frozen, and will remain vacant until funding is ensured.

UNICEF continued to use short-term national and international consultants’ and institutional contracts for various technical expertise. The Local Training Committee played an active role in defining key priorities for training, preparation and monitoring of plan implementation in 2014. Almost 90 per cent of training requests were implemented, with seven online courses completed by programme and operations staff. UNICEF has continued to support participation of relevant staff members at sectoral meetings, workshops and seminars. One staff member was on a one-month development assignment at UNICEF Armenia, one was on a six week assignment in the Geneva Office and one was supporting UNICEF Rwanda for six weeks. All staff have completed UN Cares HIV in the workplace training.

A two-day staff retreat was organised in April 2014, jointly with the UNDP and Regional Coordinator’s office, with the first day devoted to NESTA training, showcasing the innovation toolkit, while a team-building exercise was held on the second day.

UNICEF Montenegro successfully applied HR policies on learning days, flexi-time and working from home. Ensuring staff well-being and maintaining high staff morale are constant priorities of the management and of the local Joint Consultative Committee (JCC).

Results of the CEE/CIS Regional Staff Survey for UNICEF Montenegro conducted in October 2014 were very positive in many respects – workload, organisation of work, flow of information (both vertical and horizontal) and overall relations between colleagues. It is worth mentioning that staff satisfaction with the workload distribution has improved significantly since the last Staff Survey. Global Staff Survey results are not yet available; depending on the results, an action plan will be devised.

The 2013 PAS reports were finalised by end of March 2014, and staff members had their regular performance feedback discussions with respective supervisors throughout the year.
Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

The ICT function was managed in coordination with the CEE/CIS Regional Office and neighbouring countries as UNICEF Montenegro does not have a dedicated ICT staff, but rather an ICT focal point. Support for business processes was provided by the RO, while support for hardware issues was delegated to a locally contracted company. Access to office services was arranged using global guidelines. The ICT Assistant from UNICEF Albania provided remote support in various fixes and upgrades for which local support is not allowed by UNICEF ICT policies. Relocation of the office provided better infrastructure in Information Technology. Internet connectivity speed was increased and the switch to Office 365 was done smoothly for all users. Implementation of the Office 365 suite allowed the staff and consultants easier access to business resources, such as e-mail from web-based Outlook, documents stored in Sharepoint and communication between local and international staff through Lync, regardless of the location or type of Internet access and devices used. This increased efficiency by allowing staff to respond and act quickly to different needs. Team-viewer software implemented in all office computers allowed easier remote access for ICT staff to attend to users’ problems and periodically administer servers. This reduced the cost of trips for solving and following-up issues that can be achieved without a physical presence. UNICEF Montenegro is fully engaged in and has an increasing social media presence, with active accounts with Facebook, Twitter and YouTube that are also linked to its own local website. By following a thorough selection process with other UN agencies, UNICEF identified service providers for an Internet leased line and landline telephony.

Programme Components from RAM

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:

The focus of the component was on horizontal and vertical multi-sectoral work aiming to improve access to services for vulnerable children in a holistic and effective way drawing on expertise in the areas of education and social inclusion. UNICEF support was focused on development of infrastructure for quality services for vulnerable children and families, capacity development and strategic evidence collection. Particular focus in the implementation of this programme component was given to inter-sectoral collaboration, needed for a comprehensive and holistic approach to addressing gaps in access to services for most vulnerable groups.

Progress was achieved in all main elements of this programme component; with UNICEF support a set of quality standards for child protection services were developed. Further decentralisation of child protection services resulted in the first small group home and new day care centre in Podgorica. A new coordination and quality assurance mechanism – Institute for Social Welfare – became operational and a Protocol on inter-sectoral cooperation for prevention of child abandonment was signed by the ministries of Labour and Social Welfare, Health and Education in April 2014. C4D work followed programmatic interventions, promoting the right of a child to live in a family environment – a campaign “Every child needs a family” was carried out, which resulted in a massive shift in public opinion. Before the campaign, 58 per cent of
Montenegrin citizens were of the opinion that placing a child in an institution was an adequate solution for children without parental care; after the campaign four out of five people in Montenegro thought that it was better for a child without parental care to be placed in a foster family rather than an institution.

UNICEF assisted the Government to increase capacities for providing quality social work interventions and besides continuing addition to several training sessions on family counselling and case management, family outreach work was introduced in three municipalities, through South/South cooperation and based on experience from Serbia. The effort aims to address one of the main bottleneck in social sector work – lack of mobility and preventive family support.

Systematic efforts on inclusion of children with disabilities (CWD) in mainstream education continued, with a focus on quality inclusion. For the first time audio textbooks adapted for children with visual impairments and combined disabilities were produced and a partnership established between relevant national stakeholders aimed at increasing access to teaching materials for CWD. Trainings were provided to teachers and parents and a baseline was set for the planned evaluation in 2015. UNICEF provided support to Kindergartens in the areas of early detection and orientation, and to primary and secondary school professionals in development of individual and transition plans for children with disabilities. In 2014 policy and national dialogue was initiated on education quality, innovations and early childhood education. Two high-level conferences were organised by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education, gathering leading global experts in child development and organisations such as World Bank and OECD. Innovations in education were discussed at the ‘Activate’ talks organised on the margins of the conference. As a follow-up the Government established a national body to improve the quality of education; a plan for expanding the coverage of early childhood education is under preparation and a character education programme will be introduced in classrooms in 2015 as an innovative approach to increasing children’s resilience and performance.

Noteworthy results were achieved in the area of Justice for Children, in particular in the increased application of mediation and diversion measures involving juveniles in conflict with the law. The first steps were initiated to address children’s access to justice in civil and administrative proceedings as one of the remaining bottleneck in children’s full access to justice. UNICEF supported Ministry of Health in development of four clinical guidelines on perinatal care (addressing one of the major gaps in the health sector identified by a UNICEF-supported assessment of the perinatal care system in Montenegro).

Insufficient sectoral capacities, lack of strategic planning and use of data and evidence and unsustainable financing of the reform process by the Government were the main obstacles to even more efficient undertakings.

**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:**
Under this output important results were achieved regarding the right of a child to live in a family environment. UNICEF continued to support the Government in pursuing social and child care system reform during 2014 with a focus on: enhanced access to family and community-based services and deinstitutionalisation, strengthening of inter-sectoral collaboration; improving evidence collection and the child protection database, improving management and quality monitoring systems in the social sector through operationalization of the Institute for Social
Welfare, capacity building and C4D in support of programmatic interventions on fostering.

In the area of deinstitutionalisation positive trends continued and the number of children in residential institutions declined by 17.24 per cent from December 2013 to September 2014, while the number of young children (aged 0-to-3) decreased by 73.33 per cent. As a result of UNICEF advocacy and programmatic interventions, the children’s pavilion in an institution for persons with intellectual disabilities was closed. Support was provided to Centres for Social Welfare, to enhance working methods by introducing case management, family counselling work and by strengthening management and monitoring systems. UNICEF supported the introduction of CSW family outreach work in three municipalities, addressing one of the major problems in social work: lack of mobility and preventive support to families.

To increase access to alternative family and community-based services for vulnerable children the awareness-raising campaign on foster care “Every Child Needs a Family” was carried out with UNICEF support between September 2013 and January 2014 addressing major bottlenecks in social norms (58 per cent of Montenegro’s citizens believed that placing a child without proper parental care in an institution is an adequate form of protection). As a result of combined efforts, positive changes in attitudes and knowledge about foster care were documented in a 2014 KAP survey: http://www.unicef.org/montenegro/KAP_Survey_on_fostering_in_MontenegroFebruary2014

Increased numbers of children were in foster care, and most importantly in non-kinship care, from 26 in December 2013 to 42 in December 2014.

UNICEF initiated a nationwide dialogue around quality of education, innovations and early childhood development. A high-level conference was organised in July 2014 gathering all relevant national stakeholders and leading global experts. As a follow-up, UNICEF supported an initiative on introducing a ‘character education’ programme, which is increasingly recognised as integral to school performance and life success. Systematic interventions in support of expanding early childhood education coverage is being provided to the MoE through a study on investment in early childhood education, with a focus on most marginalised children. The study is being used as the basis for developing a plan for expanding preschool education coverage. In the area of inclusion, focus was placed on quality educational services through enhancement of individual and transition plans for CWD, as well as production of first ever audio textbooks adapted for children with disabilities. As a support to early detection and orientation of CWD, UNICEF implemented an early intervention programme with the Resource Centre, as an attempt to develop a multi-sectoral approach to early intervention and orientation of CWD and support Resource Centres’ efforts to increase the capacity of Kindergartens to detect and provide early intervention.

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

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Operational multidisciplinary teams for protecting children from violence, abuse and neglect were established with UNICEF support in 10 municipalities to improve inter-sectoral collaboration in providing immediate, coordinated and efficient support to children at the local level. In 2014 UNICEF engaged a team of four international experts to support development of a Protocol on OMT’s work, with the aim of defining uniform standards and working practices for dealing with child victims or witnesses of violence. In parallel, the knowledge and skills of professionals working with children in criminal, civil and misdemeanour proceedings were enhanced through a series of trainings developed and delivered with UNICEF support and in
cooperation with the Judicial training centre. With the aim of supporting work to prevent peer violence in schools, and following publication of the School Without Violence Handbook, in 2014 UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education to work with 25 primary schools on defining responsibilities and procedures in cases of violence, and with 10 secondary schools, where a programme on peaceful conflict resolution was implemented. Due attention was given to linking the programmes with the national Protocol on Prevention, Action and Protection of Family Violence.

While the legal framework for protection and prevention of violence against children has for the most part been aligned with international standards, additional efforts are needed to ensure effective implementation and inter-sectoral collaboration in the provision of adequate urgent care for child victims or witnesses of violence.

With the aim of deepening understanding of knowledge, attitudes and practices related to violence, UNICEF conducted a survey revealing a lack of awareness among the general population regarding some forms of violence, in particular those that are still hidden and associated with stigma. In relation to sexual abuse, almost one of 10 adult citizens claimed to know a child or adult who was a victim of sexual abuse in childhood. In light of growing evidence of the negative impact of adverse childhood experiences on brain development, behavioural and health outcomes and individual wellbeing, UNICEF will continue to provide systematic support in this area, with a focus on awareness-raising, prevention and immediate response.

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:
UNICEF support in 2014 was centred around implementation of the new law on treatment of juveniles in criminal proceedings. Continuous support was provided to police officers, judges, prosecutors, lawyers and social workers through the joint “Justice for Children” initiative financed by the EU and implemented by UNICEF and the Ministry of Justice. Specialised know-how was delivered to all designated professionals in criminal proceedings, including selected future national trainers. In order to ensure more a comprehensive impact and full introduction of child-friendly procedures in the overall justice system, a training package was developed for professionals dealing with children in civil and administrative matters. Training was delivered in cooperation with the Judicial Training Centre, Bar Association and the MOLSW to civil law judges, social workers and lawyers. To support child-friendly hearings, 35 per cent of court and 60 per cent of prosecutors’ offices were equipped with audio-visual equipment.

Important improvement was made in gathering and analysing data on juveniles in conflict with the law. UNICEF supported the Juvenile Justice Data Collection System, which has been harmonised with internationally recognised indicators and integrated into the existing Judicial Informational System. Relevant staff in courts and prosecutors’ offices were trained on preparing statistical reports.

In 2014 special attention was placed on improving capacities and collaboration with the social services sector; more than 100 social workers completed training. Guidelines for social workers in juvenile justice proceedings were developed. Close attention was paid to monitoring the application of educational orders and provision of social assistance through juvenile justice proceedings.

To enhance the monitoring capacities of non-governmental human rights bodies UNICEF
supported the Ombudsman’s Office to conduct an assessment of the treatment of children in police stations and provide specific recommendations. Particular attention was given to establishing long-term partnerships between justice institutions and NGOs in implementation of prevention and rehabilitation programmes through child participation in sport, cultural and educational activities in local communities. Initiatives were implemented by 10 NGOs, involving 112 children in conflict with the law. Individual rehabilitation and reintegration plans for children placed in the semi-open Centre for Children and Youth were reviewed and a new methodology developed. 

Noteworthy results were achieved in the application of Victim/Offender Mediation for juveniles. The percentage of prosecuted children diverted to alternative measures increased to 47 per cent in 2013 from 25 per cent in 2012. However, additional work is still required to ensure that other diversion measures are equally implemented and valued. The focus of reform should be expanded to broadening children’s access to justice and ensuring full protection of the rights of all children involved in civil and administrative justice processes.

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

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

In 2014 special attention was placed on evidence collection and C4D interventions aiming to raise demand and inclusion-seeking behaviours of vulnerable groups.

After collecting evidence on the poor coverage of children by preschool education (Study on investing in ECE and MICS 5), it became apparent to UNICEF that children from lower quintiles and children living in the north of the country are those least covered by preschool education. According to MICS 5, the attendance rate of preschool education for the poorest quintile is 7 per cent and for the richest 66 per cent. At the same time, in the poorest municipalities coverage ranges from 6 per cent for 3-to-6 year-olds and 10 per cent for 0-to-6-year-olds. Considering the growing body of evidence on the importance of early childhood education, and its correlation with longer-term positive learning performance and social outcomes, UNICEF supported development of a financial model for universal preschool coverage free for all children in Montenegro. The model is now being used as a basis for developing a Government plan for ECE expansion. In addition, UNICEF initiated preparations for a C4D campaign “All children in preschool”, which will be implemented from March to May 2015 in municipalities with the lowest coverage. The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness on the importance of early childhood education as well as to combat prejudices linked with stereotypes around women’s roles in patriarchal society. A questionnaire for the initial KAP survey and the scenario for the campaign have been developed.

In September 2013 to January 31, 2104 a mass C4D campaign “Every child needs a family” – promoting fostering – was launched by UNICEF, the Prime Minister and the EU Head of Delegation. The aim of the campaign was to promote the fundamental right of every child to live in a loving family environment, to decrease the number of children in residential institutions and to increase the number of foster parents, especially non-kin fostering. The campaign followed intensive legislative and advocacy work, including” adoption of the new law on social and child welfare (banning placement of children under three years in institutions), Strategy on Fostering and several bylaws. As a result of the campaign the number of children in non-kinship foster care increased from 26 in December 2013 to 42 in April 2014. Positive changes in attitudes were documented through KAP survey:
OUTCOME 2 By the end of 2016, Montenegro's legal and policy framework is harmonised 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 the many national laws and bylaws pertaining to children are aligned with international standards. Harmonising legislation with international standards required a multi-sectoral approach; UNICEF’s expertise and knowledge of the education and social protection sectors contributed to the results.

The focus of this programme component was on: developing laws and bylaws needed for full implementation of the new law on Social and Child Protection and Child Care and the law on treatment of juveniles in criminal proceedings; strategic knowledge and child-related evidence-generation; improving national capacities for evidence-based policy planning and ensuring that child rights are recognised and included on the Government and EU accession agenda.

Highlights included development of four bylaws for the law on social and child protection; installation of a child protection data base; development of a juvenile justice data collection system; finalisation of MICS 5; finalisation of the study on investment in early childhood education; initiating the first nationwide dialogue on quality of education.

For implementation of the action plan for EU Chapter 23, UNICEF maintained close communication with the EU Delegation and responsible ministries. Regular inputs were provided to the delegation through progress reports and UNICEF successfully used the momentum of the EU accession process to advance a child rights agenda, in particular through action plans for implementation of EU Chapters 23 and 24.

OUTPUT 1 Legislation harmonised with EU/UN standards.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Milestone 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. Assistance was provided to develop four bylaws that standardise: the quality of newly established services at the local level, minimum standards for foster care services, standards for accommodation services in shelters and emergency reception units, minimum standards of residential care services for children and youth and minimum standards for community-based services. During the reporting period UNICEF supported the Government in adopting the remaining policies needed for full implementation of the law on treatment of juveniles in criminal matters. Separate guidelines were developed for police officers and social workers working with children.

An analysis of Family Law compliance with international standards was prepared to ensure that Montenegro’s law is fully harmonised with the UNCRC and related international and regional instruments. The Ministry of Justice made revision of the Family Law a priority action in the Judicial Reform Strategy 2014-2018.

Following a UNICEF-conducted study on investment in early childhood education, several cost-effective models were developed, aiming at increasing coverage of children with preschool education...
education, in particular the most disadvantaged. All the models ensuring equity are based on the assumption that a free three-hour programme can be offered to all children five days a week, 10 months per year. As a follow-up the Government working group has started developing a plan for expansion of early childhood education, with UNICEF.

The economic crisis, austerity measures and limited human resources are still hindering the Government's 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:
Knowledge and evidence was strengthened, aiming to support the Government and other national stakeholders to adequately carry out programming, planning and budgeting for policies pertaining to children’s rights.

In 2014 work on the MICS 5 was completed, data was processed and key findings and full reports were published, in partnership with National Statistical Office. In parallel with MICS for general population, a separate MICS for Roma was carried out, constituting the most comprehensive collection of data about Roma ever conducted in Montenegro. National consultations around the identified priorities were organised in the last quarter of 2014, the main inequities and priority areas were identified together with national partners.

The national system for child-related data collection was also improved by UNICEF support for the first Child Protection database, networking the responsible Ministry with each local Centre for Social Work. The database became fully operational in January 2014 and represents the most comprehensive tool for better planning and monitoring of the reform outcomes, by enabling case monitoring of children in contact with social welfare system. The child protection database will be used as a basis for creation of an expanded database that will cover adult beneficiaries (within a UNDP-led project on the social card system).

In the area of juvenile justice, policymaking was constrained 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. To lay the foundation for an efficient and effective juvenile justice system UNICEF 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 existing judicial data collection system.

Also important are the improved capacities of the National Statistics Office and judicial staff to collect evidence in accordance with internationally accepted methodologies and to prepare relevant statistical reports.

To fill the gaps in strategic knowledge on children and women in Montenegro, a strategic analysis of policies and practices related to children and women in Montenegro was conducted as a part of the MTR process.
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:
To improve capacities of national bodies to streamline and monitor the child rights agenda UNICEF broadened its partnerships and established permanent collaboration with the Parliament of Montenegro. With the aim of increasing awareness on the issue of violence against children, its manifestations, frequency, associated stigma and social norms, UNICEF presented a number of global and nationally conducted surveys to the Parliamentary Board on Human Rights and initiated the first-ever discussion on the subject in the Parliament. Representatives of the Parliamentary Board on Education and Science were regularly contacted and participated actively in events on education quality and child development organised by UNICEF.

Due attention was also given to the Ombudsman institution, in particular to the issue of improving accessibility for children. A concrete result is the steady increase in the number of children’s direct complaints to the Ombudsman in 2014. Capacities of the Ombudsman Office to monitor child rights were permanently supported. With UNICEF assistance, the office conducted a few independent analyses on treatment of children and provided a concrete set of recommendations to all involved institutions. Unfortunately, the Ombudsman Office still has limited capacity to maintain regular oversight and mainstream child rights agenda in the country and there is no other body to do so.

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

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Montenegro provided technical assistance to the Government in the drafting of the new National Action Plan for children (2013-2017) and supported participation by children and NGOs, as well as wide national public consultations. The aim of this initiative was to establish a 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 has not yet been established, which seriously hinder implementation. Lack of political commitment, limited administrative capacities, absence of supporting structures and poor monitoring affect the work of the Council, and it has failed to achieve recognition as a leading child rights agency in Montenegro.

Strategic policy planning and monitoring of the child rights agenda needs extensive capacity development and support. In spite of CRC recommendations, observations made by EU in several progress reports and continuous advocacy by UNICEF, the Council for Child Rights is still not effective and operational. Therefore, a national mechanism for ensuring strategic streamlining of child-rights related policy, planning, monitoring and implementation, does not yet exist.

OUTPUT 2 By 2016 Ombudsman Office accessible to children and adequately equipped to investigate complaints of violations of child rights
Analytical Statement of Progress:
Collaboration with the Ombudsman’s Office continued to address two main priorities: increasing accessibility of the institution for children and strengthening its oversight function. With support from a human rights NGO, a campaign “Children write to Ombudsman” was implemented throughout all primary schools in Montenegro. Children were informed about the Ombudsman and invited to write about violations of their rights. A comic book was prepared as a collection of the most frequently reported cases of violence, together with Ombudsman recommendations. The comic was approved as a provisional teaching tool by the Ministry of Education and disseminated in schools. Guides for teachers were developed in 2014. The increase in number of submissions by children was monitored: 83 cases in 2012 and 91 in 2013; data for 2014 were not available at this writing.

To increase capacities of the Ombudsman’s Office to provide independent monitoring of child rights, the institution was supported by UNICEF to prepare analyses of police conduct in cases involving children. The Deputy Ombudsman for children visited all police stations without prior notice and collected evidence, including from children. On the basis of this evidence, the analysis was finalised, with specific recommendations for each police station. Findings were used during the development of regulations for police officers on treatment of children in criminal matters within the ‘Justice for Children’ initiative.

UNICEF also supported the Ombudsman’s Office to conduct analysis and make recommendations in relation to child care system reform, particularly with regard to the work of CSWs and children without parental care placed in child care institutions.

UNICEF Montenegro’s staffing structure and financial resources are still not sufficient to fulfil its role of independent monitoring.

OUTPUT 3 By 2016 municipalities use evidence for assessing, planning, budgeting and implementing integrated policies and strategies for boys and girls in line with national standards

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The target was achieved, with 10 local action plans for children developed. Local authorities were provided with skills and knowledge about how to continue developing LPAs in a participatory process and coordinate their implementation.

Through a disaster risk reduction initiative in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the Directorate for Emergencies/Ministry of the Interior, risk assessments and corresponding preparedness and prevention plans were developed for five primary schools. An interdisciplinary curriculum for DRR was developed and approved by the National Curriculum Council, followed by a series of teacher trainings. A Guide for Preparedness in Emergencies was published and distributed to all schools.

In line with UNICEF’s focus on social vulnerability and strengthening resilience for the most vulnerable children, the DRR initiative in 2014 focused on educational institutions where children live on a residential basis (three resource centres: for children with autism, children with hearing impairments and children with visual or physical impairments), the Home for Children Without Parental Care, as well as the municipality of Berane, with particular emphasis on the Roma settlement. Risk assessments and DRR plans were developed for all four institutions and the local municipality.

OUTCOME 4 Cross-sectoral
Analytical Statement of Progress:
The major achievement was the correct and timely processing and implementation of activities enabling a smooth functioning of UNICEF Montenegro. Those activities, as described below, include Human Resources, and other administrative-operational tasks to in support of smooth office functioning and performance.

OUTPUT 1 Staff costs

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Funds were used to fund the salary of an Executive Assistant and 25 per cent of the salary of a Communication Officer (as a cross-cutting function).

OUTPUT 2 Travel

Analytical Statement of Progress:
This was used for travel by staff whose salary was funded by this Output. All travel by the Communication Officer was charged to relevant programme output.

OUTPUT 3 Operating costs

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The Funds utilised under this output contributed to efficient operation and administration of the UNICEF office. UNICEF provided human resource support through this output, with funds utilised mainly to help the organisation contribute to the achievement of other outputs within the programme component, or across programme components of the CP.

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

OUTCOME 5 Premises and Security

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Special-purpose security funds were allotted upon request for UNICEF Montenegro for improvement of security measures for UNICEF personnel and the new premises.

OUTPUT 1 Premises and Security

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Montenegro applied for funds from the global fund for local premises and security improvements and received US$20,000 for installing a security fence around the new UN Eco building.

OUTCOME 6 Programme Support

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The major was the correct and timely processing and implementation of activities, enabling a smooth functioning of UNICEF Montenegro. These activities include: Human Resources to
support the office, administrative/operational tasks to support office functioning and provision of office supplies, services and knowledge required to perform administrative tasks.

OUTPUT 1 Development Effectiveness

Analytical Statement of Progress:
This output relates to governance structures and systems that are necessary to adequately manage risks and achieve programme results.

UNICEF Montenegro had defined appropriate management indicators, regularly monitored performance against these indicators and took corrective action as appropriate. It established an appropriate supervisory structure, consisting of a country management team, programme coordination group, contract review committee and other advisory teams and committees. They functioned as planned, with clear terms of reference. Recommendations from their meetings were adequately documented, monitored and implemented.

UNICEF Montenegro had defined appropriate programme and management priorities in its RMP plan for 2014-2015, which were clearly communicated to staff. Progress in achieving these priorities was systematically and regularly monitored by the CMT. UNICEF also reviewed a RCSA and action plans to manage identified risks.

UNICEF provided human resource support, with integrated budget (IB) allotments managed centrally by DFAM as of 1 January 2013.

Funds utilised under the travel component were mainly used for regional meetings, advocacy events with the EU and learning and knowledge exchange initiatives. The Representative attended two Regional Management Team meetings (Geneva and Yerevan), one event with the European Union in Brussels, as well as participating in a study visit to Northern Ireland with high-level representatives from Montenegro (MOLSW and MOH). The Representative also participated in the learning programme on Equity, Quality and Leadership in Education in Boston, USA. This was followed by a visit to NYHQ to meet colleagues in communications, education, protection, disability and innovations and also to give a presentation/brown bag on “Every child needs a family” in the context of transformed engagement. The Ops Manager participated in a training on contracting of corporate/institutional services in Copenhagen in March 2014 and in an operations cluster meeting/training (Chisinau, Moldova); provided assistance to UNICEF Rwanda on HR issues; and assisted UNICEF Albania (Tirana) to recruit one Operations staff person. The Operations Assistant attended a Sustainable Procurement workshop in Copenhagen and travelled to Sarajevo to assist in accounting issues and year-end closure activities of UNICEF Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Risk assessment mechanisms and business continuity plans are in place. During an ERM exercise three high and one medium-high risks were identified. For all identified risks respective action plans with mitigation measures were developed.

OUTPUT 2 Financial Resources and Stewardship

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF provided human resource support; funds were utilised mainly to help the organisation contribute to the achievement of other outcomes within the programme component, or across Programme components (Staff costs – post of Operations Officer, Operations Finance/HR
Funds utilised under the operating expenses component of this output contributed to the overall achievement of CP goals through the provision of facilities to enable adequate office functioning. Those costs included the maintenance of office space, commercial rent for office premises (quarter one), IT equipment and maintenance of the vehicle fleet, as well as the provision of office supplies and other administrative costs. In addition, since UNICEF moved to UN ECO premises on 3 March 2014, various security related arrangements and improvements and other set-up costs were covered along with Special Purpose funds received from HQ to improve office security.

OUTPUT 3 Human Capacity

Analytical Statement of Progress:

This particular output, as set by default for the integrated budget, was not utilised by HQ Payroll Unit for the payroll processing. Country Office had no influence on that distribution of activities through IRs for payroll/salaries. To address key gaps in expertise and capacity, the Local Training Committee diligently pursued Staff Learning. All staff members participated in fire training organised for all UN staff at the UN ECO building in June 2014.

OUTPUT 4 Human Resources

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Further to the global decision to freeze all vacant positions until end-September 2014, UNICEF did not advertise for the vacant post of Communications Assistant, following his resignation in April. As an OR-funded post, it will remain vacant until UNICEF Montenegro receives relevant funding. UNICEF continued to use short-term national and international consultants’ and institutional contracts to meet various needs for technical expertise. The Local Training Committee played an active role in defining key priorities for training, preparation and monitoring of plan implementation in 2014. UNICEF continued to support participation by relevant staff members at sectoral meetings, workshops and seminars. One staff member was on one month development assignment at UNICEF Armenia, assisting them to develop a communication campaign ‘It’s About Ability’. In addition, one staff member was on a development assignment in Geneva for two months. A staff retreat was organised jointly with UNDP in May 2014. The main focus of the retreat was on innovation tools in different contexts, personal development and team-building.

UNICEF Montenegro successfully applies HR policies on learning days, flexi-time and working from home. Ensuring staff well-being and maintaining high staff morale are constant priorities of management and the Joint Consultative Committee.

2013 PAS reports were finalised by end-March 2014, and staff members had regular performance feedback discussions with their supervisors throughout the year.
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<td>Evaluation Report for the Justice for Children Initiative</td>
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<td>Montenegro Multi-Annual Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP), 2012-2016</td>
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Other Publications

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<td>Media and Child Rights</td>
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