

Serbia

Executive Summary

The year 2016 was the first year of implementation of the Programme of Cooperation 2016-2020. The context within which progress is made for children under this Programme between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and UNICEF Serbia remains promising overall, yet still challenging.

Throughout 2016, UNICEF continued to highlight the extreme vulnerability of families travelling with children, and the needs of refugee and migrant children were therefore prioritized. Guided by its Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) UNICEF continued to implement a two-pronged approach, whereby humanitarian assistance supports the enhancement of the national response systems for the medium and longer term in the areas of child protection, education and infant and young child feeding (IYCF).

UNICEF Serbia continued to provide strong support to the development of national policies and strategies in sectors highly relevant to children: education, early childhood development (ECD), child protection and social protection. Implementation of activities was somewhat delayed with the general elections held in April 2016. Yet, UNICEF's solid engagement with multiple actors helped preserve the initial investment in policy reforms and systems strengthening, and work continued with the new Government to further build on it.

UNICEF's work in 2016 focused strongly on the youngest children, and was aimed at advocating for universal access to preschool, improving the skills of parents of young children and ensuring that all children under three years of age can grow up in a supportive family environment.

Significant achievements included modelling innovative measures to reduce school drop-out rates, modelling of family outreach services to prevent family separation, the establishment of a parent line and the enhancement of the capacities of the health system in the areas of ECD and interventions for children with developmental delays. The scaling up and/or mainstreaming of these successful models into the regular system of social services will remain a priority in 2017.

UNICEF supported two major conferences: on family support and innovative services to prevent child/family separation; and on dropout prevention and early school leaving. These two conferences served not only as opportunities to share Serbia's good practices, but also as forums for further knowledge exchange with other countries in the region and potential cross-border cooperation. Representatives from the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia attended both conferences, paving the way for further technical cooperation.

Strategic partnerships continued to be critical to the achievement of planned results, and UNICEF continued to play a brokering role in the further development of collaborative partnerships between different state and non-state organizations to advance the dialogue on child rights. Of particular importance, is the partnership established with the National Association of Persons with Disability to conduct a situation analysis of children with disabilities, with financial support from the European Union (EU). This is expected to be

completed in 2017 and will provide comprehensive insight into the state of children with disability in Serbia. It also paved the way for the design and implementation of more focused and collaborative advocacy and interventions to challenge social norms and practices that contribute to the discrimination of children with disability.

UNICEF Serbia's position as the lead advocate on children's issues with the corporate sector was also expanded through effective collaboration with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce and other national business associations in order to promote child rights and business principles within the business sector in Serbia and to influence children's rights inclusion in the business agenda.

Evidence generation remained a priority. Systematic investigation and analysis of data generated a fresh understanding of the challenges and opportunities for the 7.2 million children living in Serbia in the area of violence against children, children with disability, child marriage and special education. These findings will be further used to inform the development in 2017 of a new National Plan of Action for Children and a new Strategy for the Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence, with UNICEF's support.

Shortfalls also remain. Further work is required to reduce instances of violence against children. The quality of education remains a concern, as do instances of school segregation. Additionally, limited capacity within certain geographical areas also resulted in the slow implementation of national health strategies, limiting the nation's ability to achieve improved health and nutrition results for women and children, especially among minority groups.

Humanitarian Assistance

Despite the de facto closure of the Balkan route in March 2016, a continuous stream of refugees and migrants continued to arrive in Serbia. With the smaller number of refugees/migrants able to cross to Hungary compared to those crossing from Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to Serbia, the numbers of refugees/migrants in Serbia reached over 7,000 in December 2016. At that rate, the number of refugees/migrants going through Serbia is expected to reach 12,000 people, with approximately 6,000 of them most likely requiring accommodation during the winter for anywhere between one month to several months. With the outcome of the EU-Turkey agreement still unknown more refugees/migrants are expected.

The complex political situation in Europe, the lack of effective information-sharing systems for refugees and migrants, as well as physical barriers between countries, have left refugee and migrant children and their families facing great uncertainty. The steady increase in the numbers of refugees and migrants and their period of stay created additional needs for services for children. In line with the Core Commitments for Children, UNICEF continued to implement a two-pronged approach, whereby humanitarian assistance supported the enhancement of national response systems for the medium and longer term, especially in the areas of child protection, education and infant and young child feeding.

UNICEF Serbia was actively engaged in regular Government and United Nations (UN) country team coordination mechanisms on the refugee/migrant crisis in the country. UNICEF took the lead in mobilising all relevant stakeholders to raise awareness of the rights of refugee/migrant children, to adapt its response to their needs and improve assistance to children and their families. UNICEF in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council continued to operate child-friendly spaces (CFSs) in Presevo, Dimitrovgrad, Bujanovac, Sid and Belgrade to support children of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers and their families. In addition to provision of psychosocial support services through recreational and educational activities, child-friendly spaces served as spots for identification of child protection concerns.

A total of 38,513 children (17,909 girls 20,604 boys, including 147 children with disability) benefited from CFS services in 2016. UNICEF further supported the centres of social work (CSWs) in different municipalities to deploy social workers to identify and respond to the needs of unaccompanied and separated children. Together with Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs, UNICEF co-chaired the Child Protection sub-Working Group (CPsWG) at the national and sub-national levels. The working group focused on a coordinated use of resources to respond to child protection needs as well as exchanging information, knowledge and experience among the different actors.

An information management system was established for child protection and it played a crucial role in data collection and analysis. Data on activities and available capacities were collected from all actors and presented at the CPsWG regularly. This ensured better coordination and allocation of resources among the child protection actors.

UNICEF, in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council, continued to operate four mother and baby spaces in Presevo, Sid, Bujanovac and Dimitrovgrad, where lactating mothers can continue to breastfeed, while mothers of children under two years of age received counselling and support on infant and young child feeding (IYCF). UNICEF, in partnership with the Human Centre for Integration and Tolerance, also established a mobile IYCF programme at the northern border with Hungary for stranded families with infants and young children. A total of 6,690 children under two years of age and 4,821 mothers benefited from the services of mother-baby spaces and IYCF outreach support in 2016.

In addition, 25,124 children up to the age of 12 were provided with appropriate winter and summer non-food items either in reception centres or through mobile teams. A desk review of international practice on education of refugees/migrant children was conducted to support further discussions with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) on the development of an education response. Consultative meetings with education stakeholders resulted in the development of a draft protocol on procedures for the inclusion of refugee and asylum-seeking children.

A capacity-building programme for education institutions (preschools, primary, secondary) was developed and will be piloted in two municipalities until February 2017 and further scaled up with refinements, based on lessons that will be learned in 2017. A first training of 17 front-line workers was implemented in October 2016 to provide structured education programmes contributing to the development of key competencies in diverse groups of children. UNICEF Serbia also deployed mentors who further supported civil society partners implementing non-formal education programmes.

Emerging Areas of Importance

Refugee and migrant children. UNICEF in Serbia has been responding to the refugee and migrant crisis since 2015. Although a repetition of the 2015 summer-autumn events, namely uncontrolled, disorganised mass irregular movement of people across the borders, is mostly unlikely, a continuous stream of refugees and migrants continued to arrive to Serbia from Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 2016. As such, the issue of refugee and migrant children feature prominently into the implementation of UNICEF-supported interventions, as the steady increase in numbers of refugees and migrants and their period of stay has created additional needs for services for children.

UNICEF Serbia's response is guided by the Core Commitments for Children. Based on its comparative advantage and presence of other partners, UNICEF provided technical support in the areas of child protection, education, nutrition and non-food-items. UNICEF continues to implement a two-pronged approach, whereby humanitarian assistance supported the

enhancement of national response systems for the medium and longer term, especially in the areas of child protection, education and IYCF.

Early childhood development (ECD). ECD was identified as a pivotal cross-cutting issue in the Country Programme Document 2016-2020. Two important analyses were developed in 2016 to further inform programming: the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey secondary analysis on ECD and a draft ECD Situation Analysis that compiled available data from quantitative and qualitative research in all ECD relevant areas. These analyses confirmed the need to focus on the most vulnerable communities such as Roma and families of children with developmental difficulties and disabilities through supporting parental well-being and inclusive coordinated ECD services. A full ECD strategy is expected to be developed in the first quarter of 2017.

Although UNICEF Serbia has a separate programme outcome dedicated to young children's well-being that addresses more specifically health and the inter-sectoral dimension of ECD, ECD is integrated in education (access and quality of preschool programmes), child protection (social benefits, prevention of violence against children, prevention of family separation) and into advocacy, communication and partnership activities. With UNICEF's support, there is an increasing understanding of the need for a coordinated approach among sectors. Some initial steps were taken in spearheading a discussion across sectors on the need to develop a national ECD strategy, which will remain a priority in 2017.

Key areas of intervention in 2016 included nutrition, with the promotion and protection of exclusive breastfeeding, including for refugees and migrant population. Support for quality of care in maternities and neonatal units was also provided, including the adoption of national accreditation standards for maternities and neonatal units that integrate mother-baby friendly principles. Strengthening primary health care services (paediatric services, visiting nurses, and developmental counselling units) was also supported to provide comprehensive support to families of young children from early stimulation and early detection of developmental risks and developmental difficulties to early childhood interventions (ECI). Inter-sectoral memorandums of understanding in providing such support were signed in ten selected localities

Outreach to the most vulnerable families was initiated with ECD information, education and referral being provided through trained Roma health mediators and Roma non-governmental organizations (NGOs) integrating ECD, particularly developmental assessment and counselling, in the work of children's hospitals. ECD concepts were also introduced in the two medical schools' paediatric textbooks and curricula.

Awareness was raised about evidence-based ECI services and the need to strengthen its network through inter-sectoral cooperation. An assessment on early intervention services in Serbia was initiated. Communication materials were developed, while a national ECD communication campaign was scheduled to be launched in the first quarter of 2017. Diversified early childhood education and care programmes and standards for inclusive preschool education were developed. Child protection mechanisms were strengthened to reduce toxic stress and other developmental risks in the family through intensified cooperation between health and social welfare systems (visiting nurses' and Roma health mediators' referrals, mechanisms for protection of children from violence, new family support services).

Summary Notes and Acronyms

CCCs	Core Commitments for Children
CFS	Child-friendly Spaces
CMT	Country Management Team

CP	Country Programme
CPsWG	Child Protection sub-Working Group
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSW	Centre of Social Work
DCT	Direct Cash Transfer
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECI	Early Childhood Intervention
EU	European Union
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IE	Inclusive Education
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
MODS	Network of Organizations for Children
MoESTD	Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
MoH	Ministry of Health
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PAS	Performance Appraisal System
PHC	Primary Health Care Centre
PSE	Preschool Education
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
UN	United Nations

Capacity Development

To strengthen the health system to support children and parents in improving child development outcomes, in-service training for 170 paediatricians and visiting nurses from ten primary health care centres and all 68 Roma health-mediators was organised, benefiting more than 15,500, of whom 5,500 were from Roma communities. Over 2,000 health professionals were sensitised on ECD through conferences and technical discussions. The concept of development paediatrics was introduced into university curricula of two medical schools, and a paediatric specialisation textbook was developed.

More than 100 preschool professionals and 60 municipal representatives were trained on planning local inclusive policies and diversification of preschool education (PSE) programmes, while more professionals were reached through horizontal exchange (11,050) and online courses (350). Over 50 per cent of preschool institutions (2,000 participants) took part in several technical discussions on inclusive early childhood education and care.

The capacities of 500 education professionals from high-performing schools were strengthened to support low-performing schools to implement school improvement plans. Capacity building on dropout prevention and intervention reached over 1,100 professionals from primary and secondary schools, benefiting 7,000 children.

Support to social welfare systems to prevent child/family separation and implement flexible forms of family-based care (intermittent fostering, kinship care, guidelines for prevention of family separation, permanency planning) included training for professionals from 70 per cent of municipalities. To increase referrals and quality of protection through diversionary orders for child offenders, 384 professionals were trained. Improvements of child protection in civil proceedings were addressed through training for 831 court and social welfare professionals.

The capacities of 27 regional police units, all 18 regional school administrations and child protection services in 20 municipalities were upgraded in the areas of prevention, identification, referral and protection from child-online abuse. Close to 100 professionals from health, education and social welfare systems improved their skills in recognizing and acting upon sexual violence against children.

Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

UNICEF supported the first comprehensive study on capacities of special education to provide quality education to students with disabilities. The analysis provided key findings for the planning of the transformation of special education, including on organizational and structural characteristics of schools and classes for students with disabilities, quality of education, and students' perception of their current and future role in an inclusive environment.

The findings of the 2015 research on access to ECD services and family practices related to ECD were translated into a monitoring tool for visiting nurses, which is helping to holistically assess developmental risks and support early development of children. Knowledge brought by this research was further used to draft a new in-service training curriculum for visiting nurses and new guidelines for their work.

The evaluation of inclusive education (IE) in Serbia showed considerable progress was made in the introduction of the IE concept. Valuable insights were provided for further support aimed at enhancing teacher capacity, inclusiveness of schools and the quality of education for the vulnerable children. These will serve as a basis for advocacy and the development of new interventions.

To monitor development and quality of case management for children in care, a follow-up assessment was conducted showing some positive trends in the quality and timeliness of the reviews of child individual care-plans. However, it showed that the quality of case management is still not satisfactory in terms of the timeliness and comprehensiveness of compulsory reviews, which should be instrumental in deciding the best interest of children in care. This will remain a priority area in 2017.

Building on previous efforts in addressing violence against children through multi-sectoral work, UNICEF supported the development of national cross-sectoral study on drivers of violence against children, which will inform the development of a new national violence against children strategy in 2017.

Partnerships

UNICEF continued to play a brokering role in the further development of collaborative partnerships between different state and non-state organizations to advance the dialogue on child rights.

To create a wider network to promote ECD, UNICEF mobilized a wide range of partners, including policymakers, academic institutions, health, education and social welfare sectors, civil society organizations, and the private sector. ECD was prominently on the agenda of business forums, thereby presenting corporate support to ECD. Partnerships with the influential "Nedeljnik" and "Politika" magazines contributed to the enhancement of child rights public advocacy efforts related to ECD.

An analysis of the implementation of the Code for Marketing Breast Milk Substitutes in national legislation and practice brought together policymakers, practitioners and civil society partners in a dialogue to improve very low exclusive breastfeeding rates in the country and

the quality of health care, particularly maternity services. The continuation of this partnership will remain a priority in 2017 to move this agenda forward.

To better understand factors influencing child marriage within Roma communities in Serbia, UNICEF partnered with the Institute of Ethnography as a reference institution in this field. UNICEF and the Institute will, in cooperation with NGOs from the Roma Women's Network, conduct qualitative research that should provide a better understanding of social norms and strategies to be employed to tackle early marriages.

UNICEF also partnered with 36 legal aid actors providing free legal advice in 25 municipalities, aimed at addressing child rights violations and increasing access to justice for the most marginalized children.

A partnership with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce was established to expand advocacy on children's issues with the business sector and to promote child rights and business principles and their inclusion in the business agenda.

External Communication and Public Advocacy

A communication for development strategy was developed for awareness raising and advocacy activities on social inclusion of children. The implementation of the ECD component began in 2016 through partnership agreements with the influential "Nedeljnik" and "Politika" magazines, which are raising awareness and building knowledge on the importance of investing in ECD. ECD will remain a priority in 2017 with a multimedia nationwide campaign planned.

A knowledge, attitudes and practice survey on immunisation was commissioned. It aimed to generate and document evidence on existing attitudes and practices towards immunisation among caregivers/parents from the general population, vulnerable groups and health professionals, as a prelude to a broad multi-media campaign to combat anti-immunisation attitudes.

The media campaign on The Right Program for the Right Age aimed at informing the public, specifically parents, about the new system classifying TV content as potentially harmful to children. This resulted in a 12 per cent increase of knowledge about the new TV content rating system compared to 2015 (68 per cent in 2015 vs. 75 per cent in 2016).

Serbian print, broadcast and digital media and agencies published or broadcast 3,631 articles, news notes and video stories about UNICEF activities in Serbia. There were 170,282 page views on www.unicef.rs and 39,765 on www.unicef.org/serbia. UNICEF's social media communication in 2016 resulted in a 40.5 per cent increase compared to 2015 (increase Facebook: 20 per cent, Twitter: 48 per cent, YouTube: 39 per cent, LinkedIn: 55 per cent), while the number of Instagram followers increased from 530 in 2015 to 1,850 in 2016.

Partnerships with social media influencers helped mobilise new audiences and promote regular monthly donations. National and Global Ambassadors supported UNICEF 70th Anniversary and the fund-raising telethon, contributing to the expansion of the key messages' reach and support obtained.

UNICEF Serbia contributed to global, regional and national communication and advocacy efforts on the refugee and migrant crisis with multi-media assets.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

UNICEF supported the organization of two major conferences: on family support and innovative services to prevent child/family separation; and on dropout prevention and early school leaving. These two conferences served not only as opportunities to share Serbia's good practices, but also as further knowledge exchange with other countries in the region and potential cross-border cooperation. Representatives from the Governments of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bulgaria attended both conferences, paving the way for further technical cooperation.

UNICEF supported knowledge exchange and learning from Croatia, the UK and the US to support capacity building on violence against children on sexual violence for health, education and social welfare professionals; and on managing and implementing a free parent-line to provide information/support and referral on parenting and violence against children.

UNICEF supported a Serbian multi-sectoral team to visit Bosnia and Herzegovina to share experiences on integrated ECD policy and services. Subsequent training was organized to further develop ECD services in Serbia. Knowledge exchange was facilitated by UNICEF between agencies for accreditation in Serbia and Croatia to support the sustainability of the baby-friendly hospital initiative in Croatia.

The countries on the refugee and migrant route established very good collaboration in implementing IYCF in emergencies, education and child protection activities through mutual visits, sharing of guidelines/protocols, training/information materials. UNICEF Serbia presented its support to the Government on unaccompanied and separated children identification and support in a regional conference in Croatia. Support was also provided for the visit of a Serbian delegation on learning from Austria's experience on integration of refugee and migrant children into the education system.

Serbia presented its good practices at two important international events. The Government of Serbia shared its results and strategies applied in child-care reform and deinstitutionalization at a workshop organized by the Government of Peru. The Deputy Ombudsman for children from Serbia shared their practices and expertise in handling complaints related to child rights violations in Turkey.

Identification and Promotion of Innovation

UNICEF has been supporting the development and piloting of the school-based model for dropout prevention and intervention to support the Government's legal framework in education. Dropout prevention is one of the Government's priorities.

The model combined individualised support to students at risk with continuous support to schools in capacity building, improvement of the school culture and cross-sectoral cooperation. It included a mix of measures effective in reducing dropout: a) school early identification and response system; b) strengthening school capacities on inclusive education, modern teaching, violence prevention, parental and student participation and antidiscrimination; and c) engagement of parents, peer support and enriched remedial teaching.

The model was piloted in ten primary and secondary schools covering 7,000 students and 700 teachers, resulting in a drastic reduction in the drop-out rate by 66 per cent. Results were evaluated based on indicators, such as absenteeism, grade repetition, student achievements and students' satisfaction with the school. Individualised support to students at risk of dropout proved to be one of the most effective measures.

Such results show that school can impact external factors such as extreme poverty, serious family issues and behavioural problems. The model is cost effective, relatively easy to implement and sustainable within the existing legal framework. The fact that the model was successful in schools with a pronounced problem of student dropout, those that were under-equipped and with poor infrastructure and located in impoverished communities, and those with greater numbers of student travellers, social assistance beneficiaries, refugees, Roma students and other vulnerable groups, provides evidence the piloted model could be implemented in any school. A resource pack for dissemination includes guidebooks for model implementation, remedial teaching and a study on the effectiveness of the model. Scaling up of the model will be a priority in 2017.

The model was also included as a good practice example in the European Toolkit for Schools of the European Commission.

Support to Integration and Cross-Sectoral Linkages

In 2016, UNICEF continued to bring different sectors, such as social welfare, health and education, together on a regular basis to ensure the identification and support of children with developmental delays and disabilities or to prevent and respond to violence against children.

UNICEF facilitated technical discussions among the health, education and social welfare sectors to synchronize their work in assessing, monitoring and supporting ECD interventions. In eight of nine targeted municipalities, memorandums of understanding on ECD were signed in three sectors, and action plans were developed on increasing access to and quality of ECD interventions. Capacity building in ECD involved different sectors to increase mutual understanding on roles and responsibilities and facilitate cooperation for the benefit of the most vulnerable children.

Since 2009, inter-sectoral commissions assessed and provided additional educational, healthcare and social support to children from vulnerable groups (children with disabilities, Roma) to change the approach to social inclusion. To support the standardization of the commissions' work procedures and capacities to provide relevant and quality support to vulnerable children, 90 per cent of all members (more than 700 professionals) were trained. A total of 444 children (out of 653 applications) in ten municipalities benefited from direct and individualized support.

Building on previous efforts in addressing violence against children through multi-sectoral work, UNICEF supported the development of a national cross-sectoral study on drivers of violence against children, which will inform a new national violence against children strategy. Cross-sectoral dialogue and cooperation was also established to address child online violence, ensuring that the draft National Cyber Safety Strategy endorses the same approach. The establishment of local inter-sectoral violence against children teams in an additional 12 municipalities was initiated. Systems (education, health, social welfare, police, and justice) and NGOs were brought together for capacity building and participatory development of local protocols aimed at prevention, identification and response to violence against children in their communities.

Service Delivery

UNICEF Serbia continued to address the lack of services for children at the edge of care and families at risk of separation through the piloting of an intensive family outreach services aimed at preventing family separation. The service reached 1,406 children in 603 families. Based on positive evaluation results, recommendations for scaling up were being developed at the end of 2016 and will remain a priority in 2017.

To improve quality and reduce recidivism through direct work with children and their families, diversionary schemes and alternative sanctions were modelled and reached 679 children. Standards and procedures for their implementation were upgraded. Four child victim protection units were established, providing support to 82 children and protecting them from secondary victimisation. Guidelines for hearings of children in criminal proceedings were also finalized and will be further disseminated in 2017.

The Inclusive Education Network, supported by UNICEF, provided support and capacity development to 17 educational institutions serving approximately 10,000 students and 140 professionals for quality inclusion of 65 children with disabilities in regular schools.

As a result of two years of collaboration, nine primary health care centres (PHCs) improved their capacities in supporting ECD, particularly of Roma and children with disability. The capacity of paediatricians and visiting nurses to support parents for ECD and early identification of developmental risks were built. An instrument was introduced for monitoring child development, reaching 15,500 children, more than 5,500 of whom were from Roma communities.

With the support of the private sector, developmental counselling units addressing the needs of children with disability were refurbished providing a child-friendly environment for ECI and benefiting almost 1,500 children. Inter-sectoral collaboration was improved with the education and social welfare sectors. These achievements are being translated into relevant national legislation to be scaled up.

Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

UNICEF highlighted the main children's vulnerabilities in its inputs to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC). These inputs, particularly on the position of children with disability in education and the system of childcare, were reflected in the concluding observations of the CRPD to Serbia issued in May 2016, while the Committee on the Rights of the Child session on Serbia will be held in January 2017. The main inputs on the position of children educated in segregated settings for children with disability were based on the UNICEF 2015 comprehensive study on capacities of special education to provide quality education to students with disabilities.

In cooperation with the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and the MoESTD, UNICEF began to develop guidelines for the identification of discrimination in educational institutions and to build capacities of educators and inspection units in that regard.

UNICEF, in partnership with the National Association of Persons with Disability, initiated a Situational Analysis of children with disability that is expected to be completed in 2017. It will provide comprehensive insight into the state of children with disability in Serbia with a focus on protection from violence. The development of the analysis should strengthen capacities of civil society organizations (CSOs) for evidence-based monitoring and advocacy and help in designing and implementing more focused and collaborative advocacy and interventions aimed at challenging social norms and practices that contribute to the discrimination of children with disability.

NGOs from the Roma Women's Network continued outreach work to strengthen Roma families in ten municipalities. In cooperation with the Ombudsman and the Commissioner for Equality, Roma NGO activists provided information and support to Roma families to attain rights and entitlements related to ECD, health and social protection as well as assistance and empowerment to recognize and act upon rights violations.

Gender Equality

Following recommendations from the light gender assessment performed in 2015, gender mainstreaming priorities were operationalized in the 2016-2017 workplans. The following areas were particularly addressed in 2016: initiating work on reducing child marriage (focusing on the Roma community), engendering the response to violence against children, bringing a gender perspectives into ECD programming, and ensuring a gender-responsive humanitarian response with the migrant population.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey data indicated that nearly 60 per cent of girls from Roma settlements marry before the age of 18, and that number is steadily increasing. UNICEF commissioned an analytical report on child marriage that showed the crucial need for strengthening data collection systems in all sectors and for designing interventions for educational and economic empowerment of young girls. In partnership with the Roma Women's Network, UNICEF will implement a qualitative study on the drivers of child marriage and develop effective strategies to end child marriage.

UNICEF supported the Government to revise general and special protocols for protection of children from violence, as one of the priorities of the EU Chapter 23's action plan. Attention was given to gender and understanding violence against children in the context of domestic violence. Further, training on recognizing and responding to child sexual abuse was organized for close to 100 health (primarily paediatricians), education and social welfare professionals. A case study on prevention of gender-based violence in schools was prepared and disseminated.

As part of the ECD programme, capacity building of health professionals addressed child development and gender-aware child upbringing but also other issues of crucial importance, such as the father's engagement in child-rearing and the mother's well-being. With new skills, visiting nurses assessed close to 2,000 women for postpartum depression and provided them advice and referrals.

Through four mother and baby corners and outreach work at the northern border with Hungary, UNICEF supported more than 6,690 babies and 4,821 mothers. Besides IYCF counselling and support provided by skilled nurses, mother and baby corners offer private and safe spaces to breastfeed and spaces for women and mothers to socialize and get psychosocial support.

Environmental Sustainability

UNICEF in Serbia does not systematically conduct environmental impact assessments of its interventions. This is mainly due to the nature of its works in a middle-income country such as Serbia, where the primary focus is on policy development, system strengthening, social mobilisation and advocacy.

However, some topics relevant to environmental sustainability are included into preschool education programmes and the programme of the seven community centres in deprived Roma settlements (environmental protection, improvement of quality of life in communities).

The office achieved a modest savings regarding electricity consumption by migrating to the LIGHT information and communication technology (ICT) office model, as part of the global Lightweight and Agile IT Project. Four servers that consume 300 w/h have not been in use since June 2016, which consequently led to a reduction in electricity consumption by 2,500 kWh. In monetary terms, the savings were US\$ 200 for the six months. To reduce paper wastage, all staff were assigned a code for retrieving material sent to the printer, thus

reducing the frequency of unnecessary print copies. The quantity of paper used by the office in 2016 will be the baseline to measure any improvement in 2017.

Effective Leadership

The country management team (CMT) continued to monitor the key performance indicators and red flag areas including grant expiry, direct cash transfer (DCT) liquidations, budget commitments/utilization, resource mobilization, donor reporting, cash flow forecast, bank optimization and implementation of audit recommendations.

Key annual results were defined through a participatory process and described in the 2016-2017 Annual Management Plan. Progress towards results was reviewed on a quarterly basis, while specific issues were discussed at regular country management team and programme meetings. Furthermore, Performance Appraisal System (PAS) workplan outputs were prepared by each staff member with their supervisors, and were closely linked to annual programme and management priorities and results. Day-to-day priorities were shared and discussed through bi-weekly stand up meetings.

The country management team met seven times during 2016 and took significant steps to improve operations and programme management by: 1) improving the 2016-2017 Annual Management Plan; 2) improving management of the office as a part of audit preparation; 3) regularly monitoring the main performance indicators; and 4) addressing issues identified in the global staff survey through a teambuilding/coaching programme.

The UNICEF Serbia Risk and Control Library was reviewed in April 2016, and it was concluded that no revision was needed. Of the eight key risks identified, three were assessed as low, two as medium, and three were assessed as high. The action plan for the high risks and mitigation measures were put in place.

The emergency risk assessment part of the Early Warning/Early Action (EWEA) website was updated in August 2016. UNICEF Serbia's risk profile and preparedness pages of the EWEA, including key actions, were updated and uploaded into the system.

The business continuity plan was updated in July 2016, after the testing exercise was completed.

Financial Resources Management

The country management team met regularly and reviewed the utilization rate and actual expenditures against the approved budget. Reports on budget utilization per grant and WBS were prepared monthly and distributed to budget owners and management. UNICEF Serbia was in full compliance with the segregation of duties policy and procedures.

Bank reconciliations were completed, uploaded and approved in VISION within the deadlines, with regular follow up of the reconciling balances. Monthly financial closure and review of accounts were performed.

The transition of financial transactions to the Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) went well thanks to appropriate orientation and training. The existing standard operating procedures (SOPs) and work flows and assignment of VISION roles will need to be reviewed in line with GSSC SOPs and requirements in 2017.

As part of the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT), eight micro-assessments, two simplified financial management checklists, 25 spot checks, and 55 programme visits were carried out in 2016. While well formulated, implementation did not take place according to plan, which led to an observation by the external auditors. The plan was thus revised in October following the audit observations.

The total regular resources (RR), other resources (OR), and BMA funds utilization as of 31 December 2016 stood at 100 per cent, 100 per cent and 97 per cent respectively. OR expiring by the end of 2016 were 100 per cent utilized.

While the external audit reports for Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) will be issued in early 2017, 12 observations and recommendations were shared with UNICEF Serbia at the exit meeting. Of these, only one was a compliance issue. Appropriate actions were initiated to have all the recommendations closed by the end of January 2017

DCT status was reviewed continuously and in CMT meetings. As a result, 99.7 per cent of DCTs were liquidated within six months of disbursement. There were no outstanding DCTs over nine months throughout the year.

Fundraising and Donor Relations

UNICEF in Serbia embarked on a new country programme cycle for the period 2016-2020. The current board approved ceiling for the CP 2016-2020 for programmable funding is US\$19,272,128.53 (OR+RR). As of 31 December 2016, a total of US\$9,918,560.85 (OR+RR), which is equivalent to 51 per cent of the board approved ceiling, is available. UNICEF further raised US\$1,865,646 to respond to the refugee and migrant crisis in 2016. Donors responding to crisis in partnership with UNICEF include the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and the Japanese Government.

UNICEF is currently finalizing its resource mobilization strategy. Regional/cross-border funding strategies with interested donors will also be explored in 2017. UNICEF also requires US\$3.5 million in 2017 to meet the increased humanitarian needs of refugee and migrant children and their families with critical health, nutrition, education and child protection services.

All ten donor reports were sent on time. UNICEF Serbia established an internal quality control mechanism for all donor reports. Feedback received from donors on the quality ranged from very good to outstanding.

In 2016, the total private sector fund-raising income reached US\$722,000, which is 94 per cent of the planned income. Pledge income increased 51 per cent in comparison to 2015. UNICEF Serbia began face-to-face recruitment in collaboration with five banks in Serbia, as well as recurrent payment SMSs with all three mobile operators that cover the entire market.

Evaluation and Research

Eight initiatives planned by the 2016 integrated monitoring and implementation plan were entered into the plan for research impact monitoring and evaluation (PRIME) and regularly monitored, reviewed and updated as part of the regular quarterly, mid-year and end-year programme reviews. As initially planned, five out of eight initiatives implemented in 2016 were finalized. The management response of evaluations carried out in the previous years were regularly updated and followed up.

In cooperation with the MoESTD, UNICEF Serbia undertook a formative country-led evaluation of inclusive education. The findings were endorsed by the Evaluation Steering Board, composed of the MoESTD, the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of Serbia, UNICEF and the key development partners supporting inclusive education in Serbia. The evaluation findings showed considerable progress made in introducing the concept of IE and provided valuable insights for further support aimed at

enhancing teacher capacity, the inclusiveness of schools and the quality of education for vulnerable children. Recommendations will be used as a basis for advocacy and development of new interventions.

As a follow-up to the multi-country project implemented in Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia related to inclusion of Roma and other vulnerable children, UNICEF Serbia participated in the multi-country evaluation managed by UNICEF Albania, which is expected to be finalized in 2017.

Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

To secure savings, UNICEF Serbia continued to use common UN services and contracts for travel agents, conference organization, procurement of stationery, cleaning supplies and courier and hotel services. In 2016, four tenders for common UN services were undertaken (mail services, toners, hygiene supplies and mobile telephony) by other UN agencies, resulting in a cost avoidance of US\$3,400 of staff time. As the UN Country Team in Serbia approved the Business Operation Strategy for 2016-2020 in November 2016, further yearly saving or cost avoidance is anticipated in 2017 and beyond.

Supply Management

The total value of local procurements amounted to US\$2,176,074. The office completed 41 market research activities, 12 invitations to bid, and six requests for proposal processes for local procurements. Of 334 purchase orders, 251 were institutional procurement of goods and services amounting to US\$ 1,445,683, and 83 were for individual contractors and consultants amounting to US\$ 730,391. Emergency-related supplies from Copenhagen Supply Division amounted to US\$ 71,615.

Institutional Local procurement of goods and services brake down	Amount (US\$)
Programme supplies and services	1,377,822
Operational supplies and services	67,861

Procurement was related to programme activities, private sector fund-raising activities, emergency response and office supplies. In response to the refugee and migrant crises (summer and winter clothes for children up to 12 years of aged, food and milk). The total value of emergency-related procurement was US\$859,623. Furthermore, there were regular office supplies throughout the year (IT equipment, hygiene supplies, toners and miscellaneous supplies). Most of the building repairs in 2016 were related to security system upgrade, including the installation of a new entrance door with card access, electric gate in the backyard and protective film on windows. Major building repairs are planned for 2017, and the bidding process was finalized in 2016.

UNICEF Serbia had institutional service contracts for on-call driver services, printing services, communications material, designer services, travel, conference organization, equipment, security services and internet connectivity.

The total value of programme supplies in the UNICEF Serbia warehouse (warehouse number 229) as of 16 December 2016 was US\$37,389.

Good collaboration with other UN agencies in the country was demonstrated through the usage of existing UN long-term agreements for hygiene supplies, photocopy paper, travel services, mail services, mobile provider services and toners. Furthermore, UNICEF Serbia

used the common roster for translators, for which the selection process was completed by UNDP Serbia with UNICEF Serbia assistance.

Security for Staff and Premises

The safety and security of staff and premises were maintained throughout the year. The warden system tree and the emergency lists were updated regularly. The warden exercise was conducted once, two satellite phone tests were done by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and one fire drill was carried out. The warden exercise indicated a functional warden system, whereby 90 per cent of staff can be reached within 20 minutes if needed.

All fire extinguishers were regularly checked and maintained. All alternative exit routes in the building were clearly indicated, regularly checked and maintained clear. All staff and consultants were provided with UN ID cards with expiration dates aligned to their contract end date.

Additionally, to upgrade the safety of staff and bring the security level up to Minimum Operational Security Standards (MOSS) standards the following actions were taken.

- Safety film was installed on all windows;
- An access control system was installed;
A security alarm system connected to a security company was installed;
- The main entrance gate was refurbished;
- An additional safety gate was installed between the main entrance and the backyard to limit access to only authorized personal and vehicles;
- All legal requirements in terms of fire protection were implemented, and a note of full compliance with domestic legislation was issued by the Ministry of Interior;
- The office driver undertook the two-day defensive driving training and all three office vehicles underwent regular maintenance services;
- All consultants and staff completed both Basic and Advance security in the Field online courses, and the Representative attended the two-day SAFE and first aid training in Brindisi;
- All staff were provided with mobile phones that have a camera and GPS; and
- Gender-based violence orientation was conducted for all staff and implementing partners.

Human Resources

The current staffing matrix was approved during the 2015 Programme Budget Review. The core staffing structure remained unchanged in 2016 compared to 2015. The office recruited one fixed term fundraising assistant. However, as human resources needs went beyond existing capacity to respond to the regular programme needs and the challenges posed by the ongoing refugees and migrant crisis, four United Nations volunteers (UNV) were recruited in the areas of supply and logistics, education in emergencies, child protection in emergency and social inclusion. In addition, nine standby partners assisted the office with the emergency response. Furthermore, 60 consultants and individual contactors were recruited in 2016.

Performance planning in accordance with the new PAS system was completed online for all staff within the set timeframe. Performance discussions were held all through the reporting period. All 2015 PAS reports were finalized by 31 March 2016.

The local staff development committee identified competency gaps and supported staff training. Individual and group training responded to the requirements of the developmental plans outlined in the PAS. Staff association elections were held in December 2016. The association played an active role in team building and improving staff morale. The Representative took part in the regional training.

The staff's ability to respond to emergencies was further improved by strengthening their capacity for emergency preparedness and response. Programme staff and critical operations staff attended the training conducted by the Regional Emergency/DRR Specialist in March 2016. The UNV working on supply/logistics attended the training in emergency organized by Supply Division.

In response to the main issues identified in the recent Global Staff Survey, a three-day team-building workshop for all staff was conducted by a consultant. In addition, a coaching programme was designed for all managers that will be implemented in 2017.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

The continued availability of ICT resources and efficient user support were ensured in 2016 through the effective technical maintenance of the ICT infrastructure.

The cloud-based office platform O365 with Outlook, Skype for Business and OneDrive was widely used by staff for communication and data exchange within the UNICEF organization and with external partners. A UNICEF Serbia site space based on SharePoint was created, and will be fully implemented in 2017.

One of the major changes in the ICT infrastructure was the office migration to the LIGHT ICT office model, as part of global Lightweight and Agile IT Project.

The primary internet connection speed was increased to 100Mbps in order to further improve external connectivity and bandwidth to centralize and cloud-based UNICEF business systems, SAP/VISION and Office 365.

The LIGHT Project also made a significant reduction of the ICT footprint by eliminating the need for in-house hardware servers. The data from the local file server were migrated to the Regional Office Service Centre in Geneva, and all other physical servers were decommissioned and their functionalities were overtaken by global or Regional Office servers. Overall savings are estimated to be \$US 25,000 for four years (the life-cycle period for server hardware). The migration of the local file server also improved disaster recovery procedures and business continuity.

Eight new laptops were procured to comply with LIGHT project requirements as per UNICEF standards for hardware. All workstations were migrated to Windows 8.1 operating system standard image. In addition, the wireless network was redesigned for full mobility and stable connectivity for both staff and visitors and enabling seamless printing to local printers from any device. Out-of-date equipment and toners were disposed of in an environmentally secure manner or recycled.

Programme Components from RAM

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 UNICEF-supported programmes are efficiently designed, coordinated, managed and supported to meet quality programming standards in achieving results for children

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Serbia started its new Country Programme 2016-2017. Interventions in each sector were agreed upon with partners, including line ministries, CSO partners and academia for 2016 and 2017 based on available evidence to address specific vulnerabilities of children. Good

progress was noted, despite general elections that slowed down programme implementation for five months. Regular programme meetings and bilateral discussions were held between sectors to ensure better synergy of programmatic interventions. Progress was made in that regard, but more attention needs to be devoted to cross-sectoral programming in 2017 and beyond. The creation of a position on social inclusion will also enable UNICEF Serbia to focus more strategically on issues of social inclusion across sectors. More synergy was created between sectors and the communication unit, with more engagement of the latter in programmatic interventions. Communication for development will remain a priority for 2017 and beyond to initiate changes in social norms as envisaged in the Country Programme Document. DRR remains a priority for 2017.

OUTPUT 1 UNICEF staff and partners are provided timely, appropriate, pertinent and necessary guidance, tools, technical assistance, financial resources and supplies to effectively design, manage and evaluate programmes in an optimal manner to deliver results for children

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The new Country Programme Document 2016-2020 was initiated. Draft workplans for each UNICEF programme component were developed with the respective line ministries by February 2016, and were subsequently approved. UN joint workplans are awaiting the nomination of working group chairs by the Government of the Republic of Serbia. By the end of December 2016, seven programme meetings had been held, fostering a better cooperation between sectors on key issues such as fund-raising, social inclusion and child marriage. UNICEF Serbia held midterm and end-year reviews with counterparts within all programme components. The implementation of the workplans are overall on track, although some unexpected delays were encountered across programmes. Strategies to overcome these delays/challenges were refined continuously to ensure the best results for children.

OUTPUT 2 Effective and efficient operational support to achieve an optimum level of programme delivery

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Serbia was reclassified in 2016 as a medium-risk country, based on the EU Inform system. This, combined with the ongoing refugee and migrant crisis, warrants a better emergency preparedness and response from UNICEF Serbia. To that end, training on emergency preparedness and response was conducted for all staff in the first quarter of 2016.

The response and contingency plans for the refugee and migrant crisis were also regularly updated to ensure the latest developments were factored in. UNICEF Serbia is also looking at developing its cross-sectoral DRR strategy to be able to position UNICEF's strategic support to Government efforts in that area. However, there were delays in identifying suitable technical expertise, despite multiple external and internal re-advertisements. This will remain a priority in 2017.

OUTPUT 3 UNICEF staff and partners are provided tools, guidance and resources for effective advocacy and partnerships on child rights issues with stakeholders

Analytical Statement of Progress:

With partnership agreements signed with the influential national weekly "Nedeljnik" and "Politika" daily, a media coalition was expanded to enhance child rights public advocacy efforts related to ECD, and to strengthen UNICEF's brand positioning. Eighteen multi-media products, including videos, stories, photographs and infographics, were produced and disseminated locally, regionally and globally through digital channels.

UNICEF Serbia digital platforms were updated regularly. The Serbian-language website was revamped.

Online and off-line reporting on child rights issues and UNICEF activities were regularly monitored, analysed and reported on against the globally adopted Key Performance Indicators. The set targets were exceeded in both the off-line and online spheres.

Communication support was provided for public and media events with donors, national ambassadors, the Headquarters mission for the State of the World's Children Report photo series and all fund-raising and programme initiatives. Six videos, human interest stories and photos were produced focusing on children on the move and UNICEF's response, and were featured on the UNICEF Serbia, regional or global digital platforms.

The UNICEF 70 branding was applied to all stationery items and included in the email signature of staff and consultants. The 70th anniversary was substantively marked, including through a billboard campaign across Serbia. Interviews/articles about UNICEF and issues related to the situation of children in Serbia were published or broadcast by all mainstream media outlets and Air Serbia's on-board magazine. A locally produced 30-second video was broadcast on national, regional and local television stations in the seven days leading up to the anniversary, while the two-minute version was broadcast as part of interviews with broadcast media and during the UNICEF 70 Telethon programme. Four 'There is Hope' testimonials were produced, and two were used for the UNICEF 70 Telethon, which was organised in collaboration with a national TV station.

OUTCOME 2 All children have enhanced access to justice and benefit from strengthened mechanisms for monitoring and addressing human rights violations

Analytical Statement of Progress:

This outcome is aimed at strengthening capacities of justice and child protection system professionals to refer and implement diversionary schemes and alternative sanctions, implement newly defined protection procedures for child victims/witnesses in criminal justice proceedings and secure the best interests of the child in civil proceedings. It further includes support and strengthening of CSOs in Serbia as well as collaboration with independent institutions aimed at active promotion of child rights as well as monitoring of and acting upon child rights violations.

Through capacity-building activities encompassing all involved justice and social welfare professionals and piloting of diversionary schemes and alternative sanctions, significant knowledge was captured. A base was created for the development of a programme for working with juvenile offenders aimed at improving quality of interventions and standardization of practices across the country. Apart from contributing to increased application of diversionary schemes and alternative sanctions for child offenders, these activities also contributed to shortening the length of often prolonged juvenile justice proceedings.

As to child victims and witnesses in criminal proceedings, support to the four regional victim protection units was ongoing in 2016, and their services are being increasingly used by judicial bodies. This, together with initial capacity-building activities for judicial and social welfare professionals and police, contributed to improving the quality of their work and to reducing the length of the criminal proceedings when a child victim or witness is involved. However, the fact that judges/prosecutors are not being held accountable for protection of child victims and witnesses in proceedings remains a challenge.

The development of operational guidelines and initial capacity-building activities for judges and social welfare professionals were the first steps in advancing the right of the child to participate in civil proceedings in line with the principle of the best interests of the child.

There is no nationally available data on civil proceedings, and this remains a serious challenge when it comes to monitoring and recording progress.

UNICEF played a key brokering role in bringing together and creating a network of free legal aid actors providing legal advice related to child rights across the country.

The partnership with the Network of Organizations for Children (MODS) was continued to further strengthen capacities of its 84 members and enhance its influence in policymaking, implementation and monitoring. Advocacy points raised by MODS found their way into the Expose of the Prime Minister as a commitment of the government to advance the position of children. The Government also heard the calls of civil society and re-established the Child Rights Council, which met in December 2016 and committed to the development of the new National Action Plan for Children in 2017.

Following an open call for disability people organizations, a partnership was established with the National Association of Persons with Disability, which will conduct a Situational Analysis of children with disability. To build on and promote the Analysis findings, new partnerships will be established with selected Association members, which will engage in collaborative actions aimed at challenging social norms and practices that contribute to the discrimination of children with disability.

Strengthening of the capacities of staff from the Office of the Ombudsman and Commissioner for Equality for handling complaints on human rights violations was supported by enabling their participation at international training. The cooperation with the Commissioner for Equality focused on supporting the implementation of the new anti-discrimination legislation in practice, and aims to develop manuals and guides for teacher, students and parents. Priorities in cooperation with the Office of the Ombudsman relate to the development of a special report on violations of child rights.

Support to the MoESTD in the development of an information system for preschool education resulted in the development of new modules for preschool institutions and employees and the establishment of an analytical unit of the Ministry that is meant to strengthen analysis and usage of data coming from the system.

In partnership with the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government, a new framework for the monitoring of social inclusion and poverty of men, women, boys and girls at the national and local levels was under development in 2016 and will be opened for consultations early in 2017. The framework is based on relevant EU and national strategies and the recently adopted SDG goals and indicators.

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia was supported through a partnership with the NGO Secons to further promote the DevInfo database and its use among municipal authorities. Data promotion efforts resulted in a considerable increase in the number of visitors to the database and data downloads.

The major knowledge generation activities in 2016 related to IE, violence against children and child marriage. The comprehensive evaluation of IE in Serbia showed considerable progress being made in introducing the concept of IE, and provided valuable insights for further support. The Study on Drivers of Violence against Children was being finalized at the end of 2016, with the aim of providing guidance for the development of a new national strategy for protection of children from violence in 2017.

To better understand causes and social norms influencing child marriage and develop effective strategies to tackle them, a synthesis report was produced and will be complemented by qualitative research on child marriage within Roma communities. This is being implemented in partnership with the Institute of Ethnography and NGOs from the Roma Women's Network.

OUTPUT 1 National Government and other stakeholders have increased capacity to ensure application of diversion schemes and alternative sanctions for juvenile offenders, and to ensure the protection of children involved in criminal, civil and administrative proceedings, in line with international standards

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The piloting of diversionary schemes and alternative sanctions in four main cities was ongoing as of the end of 2016. Significant knowledge was captured from the process and a team of practitioners and experts drafted a programme for working with juvenile offenders aimed at improving quality of intervention and standardization of practices across the country. Three sets of training activities with a focus on diversionary schemes were implemented, reaching 384 justice and social welfare professionals. The first activity aimed at increasing referrals to diversionary orders, which are still uncommon in Serbia (focus on procedures for referral, the importance of timely interventions that can reduce recidivism). The second focused on increasing the quality and timeliness of guardianship authority/social services reports to prosecution and courts. The third focused on applying a systemic approach in working with families of child offenders.

The lack of sustainable financing mechanisms for programmes supporting juvenile offenders remains a challenge. Available official data on juvenile offending for 2015 (such as length of criminal justice proceedings, percentage of implementation of diversionary schemes, etc.) will be used for the development of a transformative monitoring for enhanced equity (TRANSMONEE) country analytical report for Serbia.

Support to the four regional victim protection units is ongoing. Their use by courts is increasing, but remains a challenge due that judges/prosecutors are not held accountable on the protection of victims in proceedings. Key actors were supported to develop operational guidelines for guardianship authorities submitting reports on juveniles to prosecution/courts and guidelines for child participation in civil proceedings. As a result, in all municipalities, a total of 831 court and social welfare professionals working in civil proceedings with special focus on acting in the best interests of the child were sensitised. There is no nationally available data on civil proceedings, which remains a serious challenge when it comes to monitoring and recording progress. UNICEF played a key brokering role in bringing together 36 free legal aid actors providing legal advice related to child rights in 25 municipalities. Four capacity-building events and one horizontal knowledge exchange were organized. However, the free legal aid law is still not endorsed despite numerous advocacy initiatives by different stakeholders.

OUTPUT 2 Independent institutions and civil society effectively monitor, advocate and report on realization of child rights

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The partnership with MODS was continued to further strengthen capacities of its members and enhance its influence in policymaking, implementation and monitoring. Aiming to ensure child rights are recognized as a priority by the new Government, MODS provided inputs for the Keynote Speech of the incoming Serbian Prime Minister, raising issues about the most vulnerable children in Serbia. The keynote content was reflected in the Expose of the PM as a commitment of the Government to advance the position of children, particularly the poorest and children with disability.

MODS also made a public call for the re-establishment of the Child Rights Council, which was responded to by the Ministry of Social Affairs, and the Council was re-established on 8 November 2016. It had its first meeting in December 2016. Council members adopted positions related to issues raised in the Second and Third Periodic Reports on the

implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to be relayed to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. A discussion was held with regard to the adoption of a new National Plan of Action for Children and a new Strategy for the Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence. A decision was made to form a working group for drafting these documents, with technical support from UNICEF.

An assessment of programmatic and organizational capacities and capacity-building needs for MODS members was completed, and an online database was developed that can in future serve as a monitoring tool for capacity-development activities of MODS members. The final report was presented to the MODS Management Board and the MODS assembly, and a capacity-building plan that is based on the findings of the assessment is being developed.

UNICEF established a partnership with the National Association of Persons with Disability, which will conduct a Situational Analysis of children with disability. Further partnerships will be established with selected Association members in 2017 to engage in collaborative actions aimed at addressing social norms and discriminatory practices against children with disability.

The cooperation with the Office of the Ombudsman identified IE and protection of children from violence as the main priorities for cooperation, however approval of the proposed workplan was pending at the end of 2016. Strengthening the capacity of staff of the Ombudsman's Office and the Commissioner for Equality for handling complaints on human rights violations was also supported.

The cooperation with the Commissioner for Equality will focus on supporting the implementation of the new anti-discrimination legislation in practice, and aims to develop manuals and guides for teachers, students and parents. UNICEF will further support the Commissioner to develop child-friendly materials on how to recognise and act in cases of discrimination. To better understand the value and contribution of the Commissioner's Youth Panel, an independent evaluation was ongoing at the end of 2016 to inform future support to child participation mechanisms.

OUTPUT 3 National data collection and management systems strengthened to collect, analyse and disseminate data on the most vulnerable children

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF support to the MoESTD aimed at strengthening evidence-based policymaking was ongoing for the development of an information system for preschool education and an analytical unit of the Ministry to strengthen analysis and usage of data coming from the system.

In partnership with the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government, the updating and development of new social inclusion and poverty reduction indicators was ongoing at the end of 2016. Based on relevant EU and national strategies and the recently adopted SDGs, this process will result in a new framework for the monitoring of social inclusion and poverty of men, women, boys and girls at the national and local levels. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia was supported, in partnership with the NGO Secons, to further promote the DevInfo database and its use among municipal authorities. Municipalities received promotional material and weekly posts based on selected DevInfo data. Data promotion efforts resulted in a considerable increase in the number of visitors to the database and data downloads. Further support will also be discussed with the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Governance.

As a follow-up to the 2015 regional disability measurement workshop, UNICEF's successful advocacy efforts to introduce disability measurement based on functionality resulted in the establishment of a Working Group of the Institute of Public Health of the Republic of Serbia tasked to develop a registry of children with disability based on the WHO International Classification of Functionality. Besides serving its purpose within the health system, the registry is also meant to provide information for social protection and education sectors and enable better planning of support to children with disability. The new registration format was developed in 2016, while UNICEF will support the development of the methodological guidance and other steps necessary for its full application in 2017.

The evaluation of IE presented to the Evaluation Steering Board in October showed considerable progress being made in introducing the concept of IE, and provided valuable insights for further support aimed at enhancing teacher capacity, inclusiveness of schools and the quality of education for the vulnerable children.

A study looking at the drivers of violence against children was being finalised at the end of 2016, and will be used as a key reference document for the development of the National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Violence in 2017.

UNICEF supported the National Association of Persons with Disability to conduct a Situational Analysis of children with disability. It will provide comprehensive insight into the state of children with disability in Serbia and help in designing and implementing more focused and collaborative advocacy actions aimed at challenging social norms and practices that contribute to the discrimination of children with disability.

A synthesis report looking at the causes, consequences and interventions effective in combating child marriage was completed. Complementary qualitative research on child marriage within Roma communities is also being implemented in partnership with the Institute of Ethnography and NGOs from the Roma Women's Network to provide a better understanding of social norms and effective strategies to tackle child marriage.

OUTCOME 3 Vulnerable children and their families are adequately supported so that their resilience to poverty and external shocks is increased and they live in a safe, non-violent family or family-like environment

Analytical Statement of Progress:

This programme component aims to support government in the child protection system reform so it is efficient and effective in ensuring that vulnerable children live in safe, caring and nurturing environments and their families increase their resilience to poverty and external shocks. Through knowledge generation, capacity building, modelling and support to policy reforms, the programme focused specifically on:

- a) upgrading the social work system to provide services in line with the best interest of the child and development of family-strengthening services for the most vulnerable families to prevent child/family separation;
- b) strengthening cooperation and improving the systems' capacities for prevention and protection of violence against children; and
- c) increasing the social welfare system capacity for emergency response.

UNICEF-supported interventions were implemented in close partnership with the relevant ministries, government institutions and CSOs. Key targets related to institutionalization of family-strengthening services, further transformation of residential institutions and violence against children prevention and protection policy and implementation strengthening, became an integral part of the EU accession mechanisms (Action plan, Chapter 23). This was one of the most visible policy advocacy results in 2016.

Progress was made in piloting family-strengthening services. The family outreach service targeting the most vulnerable and marginalized families, including families with children with disabilities, those at risk of separation and placement of a child into care, was successfully modelled. The service evaluation as well as draft service standards and costing were finalized. The ministry initiated a process of mainstreaming the service, which requires regulatory and budgetary changes for the service to be sustainable and financed from the national budget. Guidelines for case management in CSWs to improve planning and support to families at risk were developed and are awaiting formal endorsement by the ministry. Intermittent foster care (fostering as shared parenting) for families with children with disability was also piloted to prevent risk of separation. The piloting process, under the leadership of the line ministry, resulted in guidelines being developed and inputs formulated for regulatory / administrative changes to enable this form of support to families with children with disabilities to be used across the country. In order to support the downsizing of large-scale institutions and address the increased ratio of children with disabilities in residential care, a comprehensive analysis of all institutions was carried out that directly encouraged the line ministry to establish a working group mandated to develop a more detailed transformation action plan.

Technical support provided to address policy and regulatory framework in relation to online violence against children helped in reaching a consensus among key actors on the way forward. Relevant recommendations from that process were translated into inputs to the draft National Cyber Safety Strategy developed by the Working Group of the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication. The capacities of the Ministry of Interior and the national Net Patrol Hotline were strengthened for identifying and rescuing child online victims and reporting on child sexual abuse. The training programme on prevention of and response to digital violence is now available to all schools, while an introductory course on digital violence was developed for the first time for mainstream child protection professionals. Knowledge generated on digital violence, and particularly those on parent's awareness about internet risks, helped in identifying the need to sharpen focus on strengthening knowledge and skills of parent of young children in the forthcoming period. Support to CSOs to actively advocate for and monitor implementation of a violence against children policy and regulatory framework was operationalized, and a workplan for 2017 was agreed upon with the ministry on the development of a new National Violence against Children Strategy. Support to further strengthen sectoral capacities and expand the work of violence against children local inter-sectoral teams was initiated in 12 municipalities. The first free parent line in the country to provide information, support, advice and referral related to parenting and violence against children issues was established.

The existing child protection system was further strengthened for identification and protection of refugee/migrant children through support to the development of SOPs that were endorsed by the ministry responsible for social affairs. In addition, in parallel to comprehensive capacity building to identify, assist and support unaccompanied and separated children, support included deployment of additional outreach social workers in affected locations to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the response. In close coordination with state actors and in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council, UNICEF operated five CFSs to support children refugees, migrants and asylum seekers and their families. Together with the line ministry, UNICEF co-chaired the national-level CPSWG, which included representatives from UN agencies, international and national NGOs and governmental institutions working on child protection. The CPSWG contributed to a coordinated use of resources to respond to child protection needs, and allowed for an exchange of information, knowledge and experience among different actors, including the development of minimum standards for CFSs in Serbia.

OUTPUT 1 Support services and measures targeting children living in families experiencing multiple deprivations and preventing separation are integrated into the social welfare system

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Based on the piloting of family outreach services in four cities, the Republic Institute for Social Protection was supported to develop service standards. Their mainstreaming into the system required changes to the rule book on standards for community and residential social services, which is now being addressed by the related working groups established by the ministry responsible for social affairs, to which UNICEF actively participates. Instruction for CSWs on supporting families experiencing multiple deprivation to prevent placement in care whenever this is in the child's best interest is being developed. Training related to the same topic for 395 case managers of CSWs were completed (83 per cent CSWs covered).

Despite UNICEF's continuous advocacy, the instruction has yet to be signed by the Minister and formally distributed to all CSWs. The guidelines for permanency planning were finalized and published, the team of 12 trainers received capacity development training, and 200 case managers were trained. Guidelines for culturally competent social work practice were finalized, and will be ready for publishing and promotion in 2017. Development of the guidelines was informed by input from Roma families, case managers/practitioners from CSWs and Roma-led NGOs. In parallel, support to the Roma Women's Network was initiated to enhance their capacities for strengthening the demand side and increasing access of Roma families with children to cash benefits and services.

Efforts were also invested in securing more flexible forms of foster care to help make sure children stay with their families or their extended families. The piloting of fostering as shared parenting (intermittent foster care) was finalized in four cities and will require further refinement. The guidelines were published and distributed to all CSWs, while 246 case managers from 65 per cent of CSWs were reached directly through 14 one-day information sessions. However, complex administrative procedures are in place for enabling this form of support to families with children with disability, making the number of families receiving these services very low. Additional efforts will be required in 2017 with a focus on advocating for regulatory improvements and potential expanding of capacity building outside of the four pilot cities. Guidelines for kinship care were published and disseminated to all CSWs and regional fostering centres.

A total of 281 case managers (77 per cent CSWs covered) also participated in 14 one-day information sessions on kinship care. A national conference on family strengthening services was organized in November that aimed to promote good practices and advocate for the institutionalization (sustainability) of family support services. The conference was also an excellent opportunity for horizontal knowledge exchange with attendance from other UNICEF Country Offices and their partners from the region. A study on piloting of family outreach services (implemented by the Republic Institute for Social Protection) was presented as well as a preliminary external evaluation (implemented by the Faculty of Political Science) of the positive outcomes of both the family outreach service and fostering as shared parenting.

OUTPUT 2 Violence against children-related policies/protocols are legally enforced and their implementation is monitored

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Support provided to the Ministry of Interior (Department for High Technology Crime) and the national Net Patrol Hotline contributed to upgrading capacities for the identification and rescuing child online victims and reporting on child sexual abuse material (new equipment provided, training for 70 professionals from all 27 regional police units completed, new mobile application for reporting child sexual abuse material launched).

Continued support to the education system resulted in an upgraded training package

(15,000 copies) on prevention and response to digital violence and related capacity building of 130 professionals from all 18 regional school administration units (including a pool of trainers) to support its implementation in schools.

Support to capacity building in preventing child online abuse for practitioners from the mainstream child protection services was completed, with 265 professionals in CSWs from 20 municipalities. A pool of trainers was also established to sustain implementation.

National research capacities were further strengthened by supporting the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy's participation in the UNICEF Innocenti global research project on internet and children. A survey on parents' awareness about internet risks was conducted and widely promoted. It highlighted the importance of more comprehensive efforts in strengthening parents' knowledge and skills with a focus on parents of young children. UNICEF actively participated in the Working Group established by the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication to develop the National Cyber Safety Strategy and supported technical dialogue to address the policy and regulatory framework in relation to online violence against children.

Activities related to supporting the social welfare system to take the lead in national violence against children coordination produced several results. The national study on drivers of violence against children to inform policy development was being finalised at the end of 2016 after a wide consultation process. This study will be a critical element in the development of a new violence against children strategy and upgrading of sectoral protocols that are scheduled to come into effect in 2017.

MODS, being the key CSO partner supported to advocate for improvements of the existing violence against children policy and regulatory framework and the monitoring of its implementation, completed the national baseline mapping of local violence against children protocols. In partnership with the CSO Child Rights Centre, mentoring support was provided to 12 municipalities to establish and/or upgrade existing violence against children inter-sectoral protocols and their implementation. Plans for sectoral violence against children (education, social welfare and health systems' professionals) and additional thematic capacity building for CSOs and local inter-sectoral teams (gender-based violence, digital violence, violence against children with disabilities) was initiated in 2016 and will continue in 2017. A more detailed plan to improve data collection and reporting on violence against children was agreed upon between the social welfare, education and health systems. The free parent line to provide information, support, advice and referrals related to parenting and violence against children issues was made operational in partnership with the line ministry for social welfare and the NGO FICE (800 parents accessed the service so far). A more intensive service promotion plan is planned for 2017.

OUTPUT 3 Social welfare system is strengthened for DRR and emergency response

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF continued to focus on strengthening the existing child protection system while at the same time providing direct services to refugee and migrant children. In Serbia, UNICEF took the lead in raising awareness of the rights of refugee and migrant children and in mobilizing all stakeholders to adapt the response to meet children's needs. With the closure of the Balkan migration route in March 2016, UNICEF adjusted its response to meet the changing needs of children. The first quarter of the year was marked by an influx of refugees passing through the country towards Western Europe, staying in the country less than a day. From March 2016 onwards, fewer refugees crossed to Serbia, with an average of 200 daily, however their stay in the country extended from a few days to several months.

The limited capacities of child protection actors made the adequate identification of child protection risks extremely difficult. UNICEF therefore supported the Ministry of Labour, Employment Veterans and Social Affairs to strengthen the identification and protection process through the deployment of additional social workers in affected locations, and strengthening their capacity to identify and assist unaccompanied and separated children, vulnerable children and families. In close cooperation with Government and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and with significant input from civil society, SOPs, including risk assessment tools for identifying, referring and support vulnerable refugee/migrant children, were developed, published and distributed. The SOPs were endorsed by the ministry responsible for social affairs.

In close cooperation with NGO partners, UNICEF translated the Child Protection Standards in Humanitarian Action, which were published and distributed throughout the country. UNICEF further supported the CSW and NGOs in Belgrade, Presevo, Bujanovac, Sid, Subotica to deploy social workers to identify and respond to the needs of unaccompanied and separated children. Unaccompanied children were referred to police for the documentation needed for asylum procedures, accommodation and health services. More importantly, CSWs ensured a guardian was assigned for identified unaccompanied and separated children. The guardian is the legal representative of the child according to local regulations and tasked with the role of providing close follow up and ensuring the best interests of the child is the primary consideration.

UNICEF in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council continued to operate five CFSs in Presevo, Bujanovac, Sid, Dimitrovgrad and Belgrade to support children of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers and their families. In addition to provision of psychosocial support services through recreational and educational activities, CFSs worked as spots for identification of child protection concerns.

Together with the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs, UNICEF co-chaired the national-level CPsWG, which included representatives from UN agencies, international and national NGOs and governmental institutions working in child protection. The CPsWG focused on a coordinated use of resources to respond to child protection needs as well as exchanging information, knowledge and experience among the different actors, including the development of minimum standards for CFSs in Serbia.

OUTCOME 4 Increased percentage of young children, particularly Roma and children with disability, benefiting from equitable, gender-sensitive, quality health and other ECD services and supportive parental practices

Analytical Statement of Progress:

With UNICEF advocacy and technical input, ECD was increasingly recognised as a priority in various key policy documents, including the National ECD Programme for the Health System, the National Social Inclusion Strategy of Roma Women and Men, and the Belgrade Council for Child Rights.

The capacities of the health system were strengthened to provide, in cooperation with other systems, evidence-based ECD/ECI services, prioritising the most vulnerable children and their families. Inter-sectoral cooperation was strengthened in eight of nine targeted municipalities through the signing of memorandums of understanding on ECD between the health, education and social welfare systems. While the introduction of developmental paediatrics into university curricula was initiated through elective courses for medical students and revision of paediatric syllabus, a set of 11 in-service training modules on ECD

for paediatricians was developed and accredited with the literature widely promoted through the Paediatric Association of Serbia.

New instruments for assessing child development were introduced in the practices of selected health institutions at all levels of health care. Modelling of improved ECD/ECI services through regular paediatric and patronage nurses' services as well as through improved capacities of developmental counselling units in nine selected PHCs proved successful and will expand to an additional 30 to address regional representation. The introduction of developmental paediatrics, more precisely developmental stimulation, assessment and interventions for those in need, in the tertiary level children's hospitals was initiated through selected hospital in Belgrade. A set of 11 ECD training modules for patronage nurses was also accredited, and UNICEF-supported regional training modules will complement this package with its full adaptation in the first half of 2017.

The new national guidance for patronage nurses was drafted as well as new documentation, both integrating key ECD areas in the everyday patronage nurses' practices (issues such as developmental outcomes, mother-child interaction, parenting competencies, environmental stress factors, postnatal depression as well as fathers' engagement in upbringing etc.). The Institute of Public Health of Serbia was supported to prepare a functional analysis of patronage and developmental counselling services within PHCs, so that results can guide further advocacy and investment efforts. Reaching the most vulnerable such as Roma was further supported through improved capacities of Roma Health Mediators who were trained in supporting families for ECD stimulation and protection. The network of Roma Women's NGOs, in partnership with Ombudsman and Commissioner for Equality, was also active in ten localities in educating families with young children to recognise their rights and entitlements in health, education and social welfare and supporting them to claim discrimination and rights violations. A series of materials for general and Roma parents of young children as well as for professionals was published, while a full-fledged ECD campaign will start in 2017.

The strengthening of the network of ECI services was supported through organising an inter-sectoral study tour to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the organisation of a series of international expert lectures and advocacy efforts as well as through an ongoing situation analysis of ECI services implemented in partnership with Open Society Institute UK and their ECD programme. The inter-sectoral expert group for developing national guidance that would address screening, diagnostics and interventions for children with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) was formed and the documentation of key early intervention services provided in Serbia was initiated.

Immunisation coverage, particularly among Roma is yet to be addressed. A knowledge, attitudes and practice survey among parents on immunisation was initiated and should provide valuable input for a nationwide campaign on immunisation.

An analysis of the implementation of the Code for Marketing Breast Milk Substitutes in national legislation and practice revealed gaps, including in law enforcement. Key policymakers, experts and civil society representatives gathered to discuss how to improve the very low breastfeeding rate and the situation in maternities. Addressing quality of maternities and neonatal units and particularly high discrepancies in perinatal mortality in some of the regions in Serbia through implementation of newly adopted accreditation standards for maternities and neonatal units will be prioritised in 2017.

In close cooperation with the MoH, the Commissariat for Refugees and NGO partners, UNICEF provided IYCF support to almost all young migrant children and their mothers, either directly through established mother and baby corners and outreach services or through setting nationwide standards. Capacities of the relevant institutes of public health, PHCs, and partners on the ground were developed, as were those of individual service providers such as nurses. Age-appropriate food and nutrition assessments were provided to

every child under two years of age. Materials and guidance developed on IYCF through this emergency will be translated into ready-made information/education communication materials and will inform the MoH's contingency procedures for IYCF in any type of emergencies.

OUTPUT 1 Increased quality of and access to ECD services, especially for Roma children and children with disability

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The national ECD Programme for the health system, developed in cooperation with UNICEF, was adopted by the Government. Eight targeted municipalities also signed inter-sectoral memorandums of understanding on ECD.

With UNICEF's support, the process of introducing developmental paediatrics into the overall paediatric curricula for medical students and paediatric residents in the Medical Faculty in Belgrade was initiated. Building on efforts made in 2015, the newly introduced instruments for assessing child development were accepted in the 12 targeted institutions at all levels of health care. Seven new trainers on implementing the guide for monitoring child development will further support its usage throughout the health system. With UNICEF's support, a University children's hospital will model the mainstreaming of developmental paediatrics into its daily activities.

To increase understanding of evidence-based ECI, an inter-sectoral study tour to Bosnia and Herzegovina and a series of lectures for more than 500 health and other professionals were organised. Strategic discussions were initiated to explore how the health, education and social welfare systems can collaborate to ensure children and family receive coordinated support from all sectors. To better understand institutional capacities for ECD/ECI services, a functional analysis of developmental counselling units, patronage nurses and ECI services were initiated and are expected to be completed by March 2017. A partnership was initiated with the Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists and Aligned Professions focusing on improving screening, diagnosis and treatment capacities for addressing autistic spectrum disorders in young children.

In partnership with the Paediatric Association of Serbia and the Institute of Public Health of Belgrade, nine PHCs finalised an ECD capacity-building programme. With improved ECD services, 80 trained paediatricians reached 5,500 children, of whom 1,334 were Roma, while 90 trained patronage nurses reached 10,050 families, of whom 4,191 were Roma. The capacities of nine developmental counselling units were improved through staff training, child-friendly refurbishment and provision of didactic materials providing improved services to 1,500 children at risk or with developmental difficulties. Sixty of 68 Roma Health Mediators were trained in supporting vulnerable families for ECD stimulation and protection. The new web-based software for the Roma Health Mediator database is in its final phase awaiting MoH approval. A new national guide for patronage nurses was drafted integrating documentation, protocols, assessment instruments and new competencies defined with UNICEF support. UNICEF's regional ECD capacity-building package for visiting nurses will be fully adopted to the Serbian context in 2017. Three online modules were accredited and in use by the end of 2016. A wide range of ECD communication materials for parents and professionals was developed and distributed, while a full-fledged ECD campaign will start in 2017.

The knowledge, attitudes and practice survey on immunisation commissioned in 2016 faced delays, from the MoH, and will only be implemented in the first half of 2017. The aim is to document existing attitudes and practices towards immunisation among parents from the general population and vulnerable groups. This will serve as an evidence base for developing a campaign to combat anti-immunisation attitudes.

OUTPUT 2 Maternal and neonatal services apply family-centred approach and support continuum of care in service provision, with a specific focus on Roma and other vulnerable children and mothers

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The accreditation standards for maternities and neonatal units that incorporate baby and mother-friendly principles and evidence-based neonatal care protocols were finalised with the MoH and a professional reference group, after piloting in four health institutions in Serbia in 2016. They were adopted by the Government, and a full roll-out is expected in 2017. They attracted significant regional interest, and a similar process is being considered in Croatia. An analysis of the implementation of the Code for Marketing Breast Milk Substitutes in national legislation and practices identified gaps in the enforcement of international and national laws. As follow up to these findings, policymakers, practitioners and civil society partners were brought together in a dialogue to improve the very low exclusive breastfeeding rates in the country as well as quality of health care, particularly maternity services, which will remain a priority in 2017. UNICEF also supported the participation of a Serbian delegation to the 25th anniversary of the baby-friendly hospital initiative, which is expected to result in a strengthened commitment from the MoH to support this initiative and support the re-establishment of national coordination mechanisms. UNICEF also facilitated cross-country discussions with Croatian baby and mother-friendly programme expert teams. Preliminary plans with the MoH to address perinatal regional disparities and improve developmental care in neonatal units with a focus on the south region were developed. Bringing international expertise, and developing new partnerships and models to move this process forward will be prioritised in the next period, including fund-raising.

OUTPUT 3 Health system is strengthened for DRR and emergency response

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF is the leading partner of the MoH in providing IYCF support to refugee and migrant children and their mothers. To respond to this need, UNICEF supported the establishment of mother and baby corners across the country (six in 2016, of which four were still operational at the end of the year). IYCF outreach services were organized where the mother and baby corners could not be established, following the migrants' route, fluctuating influx and settlement throughout the country.

Mother and baby corners offer safe spaces for breastfeeding to lactating mothers. Trained nurses, engaged in partnership with local PHCs, support breastfeeding mothers and counsel them on infant feeding, health, development and the hygiene of babies, and refer them to adequate services if needed. The provision of daily portions of age-appropriate feedings for infants and young children was also organised as well as support to non-breastfeeding mothers and infants. Mothers also received support for themselves – safe, private spaces to relax, rehydrate and warm up – and hygienic items for their babies (including opportunities to give them a bath) as well as clothes, and various preventive care messages depending on the time available.

Regular nutrition assessments (using mid-upper arm circumference) were performed, and based on the established protocol, a few children identified with moderate acute malnutrition were being supported with appropriate supplementation. UNICEF also supported the MoH, Institute of Public Health and Commissariat for Refugees in developing guidance for preparation of meals for children up to six years of age and for introducing micronutrients in their regular meal distribution to compensate for expected deficiencies.

UNICEF supported the training and regular supervision of 24 engaged nurses and further strengthened the capacities of more than 100 frontline workers to ensure that refugee and migrant infants and children were provided with proper information, support and referral.

UNICEF supported the development of various communication materials on IYCF / breastfeeding and secured the supply required for the full operationalization of the IYCF response.

Through international technical assistance, UNICEF supported the development of SOPs on IYCF in emergencies, which are guiding the IYCF response and will be the basis for the development of MoH's contingency procedure for IYCF in any type of emergency.

OUTCOME 5 Increased percentage of vulnerable children and adolescents participating in relevant, quality and inclusive pre-university education with improved learning outcomes and competences

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF continued to focus on supporting the development of a conducive policy environment to reduce inequities in accessing quality inclusive education.

UNICEF supported the strengthening of the education system through expert technical assistance in modelling new and inclusive pre-university learning practices, and evidence-based studies and advocacy to enable relevant, quality, inclusive and equitable education for all and to secure sustainability.

Progress was made in increasing access to quality inclusive preschool education for vulnerable children through the development and modelling of diversified preschool programmes, policy and practice analysis and capacity-building programmes for local authorities and preschool education professionals. These results and lessons learned paved the way for a comprehensive reform of preschool education led by the MoESTD and the strengthening of legal and institutional frameworks, with support from the World Bank's upcoming investment in the sector.

Strategic technical support was provided by UNICEF, with financial support from SDC to the MoESTD to ensure that capacities of the Group for Social Inclusion are strengthened to lead, implement and monitor the agenda of IE, at both the policy and implementation levels.

A ground-breaking model was implemented for school dropout. The school-based model on dropout prevention and intervention proved effective and ready for scale up. The implementation of the model contributed to the improvement of learning and social outcomes of students in pilot schools. Resource materials, guides and training programmes were developed and will be made available to all schools in Serbia along with an analytical study on the effectiveness of the model.

The group for prevention of violence and discrimination in the Ministry supported by UNICEF in the previous period was fully funded by the Ministry. UNICEF continued to provide technical expertise and supported non-violence activities focusing on digital violence and gender-based violence. Moreover, technical expertise was provided to the Ministry in designing non-discriminatory interventions in the education system.

Two core pieces of research for further development of IE were developed: a country-led evaluation of IE and a comprehensive study on capacities of special education to provide quality education to students with disabilities. The findings will be used for further development of programmes, including refinement of strategies.

Towards better quality and learning outcomes of all students, UNICEF initiated expert consultations with representatives of all universities in Serbia on improvement of university study programmes for education of future teachers based on modern inclusive policy and practice.

Horizontal learning for improvement of quality of education was established and piloted by matching low-performing and high-performing schools.

Empowerment and engagement of parents and children was promoted through all UNICEF-supported interventions, especially through the peer-support network for IE, and the establishment of the National Association of Parents and Teachers and info line for parents within the MoESTD.

UNICEF began supporting access to quality education for refugee/migrant children through capacity building of professionals for non-formal programmes and support for the creation of sustainable solutions, as well as relevant support for integration of children in formal education programmes.

OUTPUT 1 Access and quality of PSE are increased through improved legal framework, diversified programmes and services and inter-sectoral cooperation aiming at improving equity

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF continued to support the MoESTD with policy advice and capacity building in improving coverage and quality of PSE.

Jointly with the Group for Social Inclusion, UNICEF drafted a proposal on legal changes in PSE. Technical events on the importance of inclusive early childhood education and care for preschool institutions were organized covering more than 50 per cent of the institutions and approximately 2,000 participants. UNICEF also supported the development of an action plan for PSE in Belgrade to address inequities in urban areas. A multi-country analysis on decentralization and its impact on the delivery and quality of early childhood education and care services for children aged three to six was ongoing at the end of 2016, in partnership with Yale University.

UNICEF supported the establishment of an Analytical Unit within the MoESTD and the development of an education information system for preschool education. The Analytical Unit should strengthen the overall capacity of the Ministry to base its policies and decisions on evidence and is closely involved in structuring and development of the overall information system.

A model for expansion of access and improvement of preschool education quality through the diversification of preschool was developed and tested in ten municipalities where 888 children (of whom 80 per cent are from vulnerable groups) were enrolled in preschool programmes for the first time using 11 newly adapted and equipped premises and local institutions (museums, libraries, open spaces and cultural centres). At the same time, around 1,500 children not attending kindergartens and 2,500 who did attend kindergartens actively participated in various local events for children and parents. More than 100 preschool education professionals and 60 municipal representatives were trained on planning local inclusive policies, diversification of programmes, inclusiveness and the use of ICT in preschool education. Further, 350 preschool professionals completed three online courses on education for social justice, programme diversification and horizontal learning. A preschool home-visiting programme was developed and piloted. A resource pack will be developed for scaling up diversified preschool programmes to other municipalities and preschool institutions, and will include theoretical concepts and the “how-to” materials for those institutions. The network of 12 mentors received capacity-development training to support further dissemination of models to preschool education practitioners in Serbia.

A comparative analysis on the systems of accreditation of preschool programmes and providers with recommendations for the establishment of the accreditation system in Serbia was developed and discussed with key stakeholders.

In 2016, in partnership with the MoESTD, UNICEF launched reform initiatives supporting the piloting of a new preschool education CURRICULUM framework, the development of new quality standards in preschool education and development of model for inclusion of children with disability in preschool education. The results of the UNICEF programme and the findings of an analysis on costing of half-day programmes, preschool education accreditation systems and research on inclusiveness of preschool education strongly informed the national preschool education policy design, which will be implemented with an upcoming US\$50 million World Bank loan.

OUTPUT 2 The capacity of pre-university education system - teachers and professional staff / schools is empowered for dropout prevention and provision of quality and IE enabling better learning outcomes and achievements of the most vulnerable

Analytical Statement of Progress:

With UNICEF support, the Group for Social Inclusion of the MoESTD launched different initiatives aimed at the improvement of IE, notably the development of an Action Plan for IE, support in drafting legislation and capacity building of education professionals.

The capacities of more than 6,000 education professionals were strengthened in the areas of inclusive preschool education, inclusive education and quality education.

The school dropout prevention and intervention model proved effective with a drop-out rate reduced by 66 per cent. Individual support to students proved to be one of the most efficient measures. Development was started on a guide on remedial teaching and a guide on the early warning intervention system. The model is included in the European Toolkit for Schools and the MoESTD plans to scale it up.

Community centres provided learning assistance for the development of competencies and social skills of more than 1,000 children (470 Roma and 570 non-Roma children) and approximately 230 parents.

The IE Network, supported by UNICEF, provided support and capacity development to 17 educational institutions serving approximately 10,000 students and 140 education practitioners. Sixty-five children with disabilities in regular schools and their parents benefited directly through diverse support activities (mentoring and coaching of teachers for individual education planning, strengthening of parents, peer-support, etc.) aimed at increased learning and social outcomes for the targeted children.

In cooperation of the Commissioner for Equality and UNICEF, a guide was developed for segregation prevention, development of inclusive enrolment policies and desegregation of schools and classrooms. After many years of continuous advocacy, the bylaw defining criteria for recognizing discrimination in education was adopted by the MoESTD. Procedures and mechanisms on conduct in cases of discrimination in education institutions were in development at the end of 2016.

UNICEF in cooperation with the Ministry and the Science Centre Petnica initiated technical consultations with university professors educating future teachers on improving pre-service teacher training with modern inclusive theory and practice. In addition, UNICEF organised training for education institutions, universities and think tanks on quality IE using modules on IE developed by the Regional Office.

Diverse mechanisms and models to enhance education quality and relevance were developed and piloted. The capacities of high-performing schools were strengthened to support low-performing schools in implementation of school improvement plans through horizontal learning. An online training platform for education professionals was launched.

The group for prevention of violence and discrimination in the MoESTD previously supported by UNICEF is now fully funded by the Ministry. UNICEF provided expertise and supported capacity building of education professionals focusing on digital violence and gender-based violence.

Two core research activities were developed: a country-led evaluation of IE and a study on capacities of special education to provide quality education to students with disabilities. Its findings will inform further IE policy and transformation of special education.

To increase participation of parents in education, local clubs of parents and teachers were supported in 11 towns, and support was provided to the establishment of a National Association of Parents and Teachers.

OUTPUT 3 Education system is strengthened for DRR and emergency response

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Strengthening education system for DRR

In order to support capacity building of national stakeholders and integration of DRR into the education system and school practices, an analysis of the primary and secondary school curriculum was developed with recommendations for further action.

UNICEF is further supporting the mainstreaming of DRR-related content in the first four grades of primary school in cooperation with the Primary School Teachers Association of Serbia. The project includes development and implementation of training of trainers, training of teachers from 56 municipalities, and the development of guides for teachers and materials for work with children. The project will also provide support to the implementation of acquired skills through monitoring visits to schools in 2017.

Emergency response

UNICEF supported the MoESTD and relevant institutions to: (i) develop a framework for the response of education in emergency; (ii) build the capacity of educational institutions for ensuring the access to education of children staying for longer periods in Serbia; and (iii) build the capacity of service providers of non-formal education in the asylum / reception / transit centres to deliver non-formal education programmes that aim to develop the key competences for lifelong learning of around 2,000 children aged 3 to 18 currently accommodated in these centres.

Technical support was provided to analyse international practices and recommend options for Serbia. A study visit to Austria for eight representatives of MoESTD, the Commissariat for Refugees, faculties, schools and NGOs was organized in cooperation with KulturKontakt Austria to learn about integration of refugees in the education system. Training was organised for 40 representatives from 12 education institutions in two municipalities where asylum centres are located. The training aimed to provide access to quality education for refugee/migrant children covering intercultural competencies, antidiscrimination and provision of adequate support at the school and classroom level. As a follow up, mentoring support to all schools was provided to develop plans for enrolment and provision of support

to students. Enrolment of the first group of 20 unaccompanied minors older than 15 who have never attended school was facilitated in cooperation with the Belgrade CSW.

Based on an analysis of the capacities of the actors on the ground, a first training of 15 front-line workers for implementation of non-formal education programmes was conducted, as well as training for facilitators of the implementation of the 1001 Nights Civic Education programme for children aged 7 to 12, and a toy library for children age three to six. Implementation started in the centres in mid-December. Partnerships with NGOs were established on delivering ICT training for adolescents aged 13 to 18.

OUTCOME 6 Child rights are advanced through public advocacy, partnerships and social mobilization that promote non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive practices

Analytical Statement of Progress:

To foster non-discriminatory social norms supportive of social inclusion, especially of children with disabilities, positive parenting and a zero tolerance of violence, UNICEF in 2016 developed detailed communication and dissemination plans for awareness raising, social mobilisation and advocacy activities related to social inclusion of children. Through strategic partnerships with key print media outlets, awareness was raised and knowledge strengthened about the importance of investing in ECD, the significance of positive ECD practices to a child's future and ways of implementing them. A full-scale public campaign will be implemented in 2017.

Two communication initiatives on the prevention of digital violence were successfully implemented, and a mobile app for reporting illegal pornographic content on the internet was widely promoted in public in cooperation with the Fond B92 Foundation and the Safer Internet Hotline Net Patrol.

A media campaign resulted in increased awareness of parents about a new TV content rating system aimed at protecting children from harmful TV programmes. In addition, the work with broadcasters resulted in the consistent application of the prescribed TV content rating by the public broadcaster (RTS).

UNICEF's position as the lead advocate on children's issues with the corporate sector was expanded through effective collaboration with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce and other national business associations to promote child rights and business principles within the business sector in Serbia and to influence children's rights inclusion in the business agenda. Alliances with the corporate sector enabled the leveraging of resources for children.

OUTPUT 1 Increased use of evidence-based and innovative communication approaches to address selected social norms and behaviours in relation to inclusion of children with disability, Roma children and violence against children and women

Analytical Statement of Progress:

A communication for development strategy and detailed communication and dissemination plans were developed for awareness raising, social mobilisation and advocacy activities related to social inclusion of children and adolescents in 2016 and 2017. The realisation of the ECD component began in 2016 through partnership agreements with the influential national weekly "Nedeljnik" and the daily "Politika". They are, through regular monthly articles, raising awareness and knowledge about the importance of investing in ECD, why positive ECD practices are vital to a child's future and how to implement them. A substantive public and programmatic ECD campaign, aimed at increasing understanding, engagement, commitment and investment in ECD, will begin in early 2017.

The knowledge, attitudes and practice survey on immunisation commissioned in 2016 faced delays from the MoH, and will only be implemented in the first half of 2017. The aim is to generate and document evidence on existing attitudes and practices towards immunisation among caregivers/parents from the general population, vulnerable groups (poorest households, Roma communities) and health professionals. This will serve as an evidence base for developing a campaign to combat anti-immunisation attitudes and stimulate a dialogue between representatives of the health system and its beneficiaries.

Two communication initiatives on the prevention of digital violence were implemented. As part of the violence prevention programme, a #ReplyforAll campaign addressing online sexual violence and exploitation was implemented. It provided an opportunity for adolescents and young people to learn from each other about combatting online abuse and exploitation and to gain knowledge on how to keep themselves safe online. The campaign results were featured on ICON.

Within the capacity-building for combatting violence, abuse and exploitation of children on the internet programme, a mobile app for reporting illegal pornographic content was widely promoted in public in cooperation with the Fond B92 Foundation and the Safer Internet Hotline Net Patrol.

A capacity-building seminar for journalists on the concept of inclusion was held in collaboration with the Association of Journalists of Serbia. The aim was to sensitise the media and increase their knowledge and understanding about inclusion, particularly in the education system, and help improve their reporting on the subject matter. Subsequent three-month media monitoring showed that 101 media pieces about IE were published. Approximately every sixth media outlet in Serbia dealt with the subject at least once.

The media campaign on The Right Program for the Right Age aimed to inform the public, specifically parents, about the new system classifying TV content potentially harmful to children, and resulted in a 12 per cent increase of knowledge about the new TV content rating system compared to 2015 (68 per cent in 2015 vs. 75 per cent in 2016). Workshops with TV broadcasters urging them to apply the law and bylaws in this area resulted in the consistent application of the prescribed system of TV content ratings on RTS (the public broadcaster) in terms of the types of classifications, full-time highlights of the prescribed classification for certain programmes broadcast, and broadcasting of appropriate written and audio announcements before a programme classified as inappropriate for children.

OUTPUT 2 Increased use of evidence-based corporate social responsibility (CSR) focused on children within the business sector to address protection and promotion of children's rights

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF Serbia continued to promote business commitments to CSR focused on children to contribute to putting children's rights on the national CSR agenda, expand engagement around dissemination of child rights and business principles and CSR toolkits through national CSR forums and events, and present examples of good practices through business initiatives and digital channels.

UNICEF signed a memorandum of understanding with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce to jointly work on the promotion of Corporate Social Responsibility focused on children. This will be done through joint advocacy, legislative and regulatory framework of CSR focused on children (, encouraging members of the chamber of commerce to have a positive impact on the respect of children's rights) and jointly promote examples of good practice in this area.

UNICEF participated in leading business conferences and presented its CSR framework. UNICEF representatives were among the key speakers at the CSR Serbia annual conference, a conference organized by the Serbian Association of banks, a Telenor CSR event, a CSR forum, the Forum of Business Leaders of Serbia and the UN global compact annual session.

Through presentations at the business conferences and forums, UNICEF presented the results of a UNICEF survey on CSR focused on children and examples of good practices including on the corporate sector's contribution to ECD programmes. The corporate survey conducted by UNICEF at the end of 2015 was widely disseminated in 2016 through media channels, together with seven examples of good practices related to business sector support to children. The corporate survey and the report on the examples of good practice were posted on the websites of leading business networks in Serbia, including the Business Chamber of Commerce, the Forum of Business Leaders, the Serbian Association of Managers, Business and Diplomacy Magazine, the CSR Serbia portal, Cord Magazine, Nedeljnik Magazine, SMART Kolektiv and the Infostud portal.

UNICEF provided its inputs to the CSR Index for Serbia and is lobbying with the Forum of Business Leaders to include child rights and business principles into the CSR Index. UNICEF's engagement in CSR in Serbia was covered through 50 media appearances.

Document Centre

Evaluation and research

Title	Sequence Number	Type of Report
Inclusiveness of preschool education in Serbia	2016/005	Research
Formative evaluation of implementation of inclusive practices in the Education System in Serbia (2009 – 2014)	2016/004	Evaluation
Study on the capacities of special education to provide quality education to students with disabilities	2016/002	Research
Follow up assessment to the Study on Children in Care	2016/003	Research
REPORT ON STATUS OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOCUSING ON CHILDREN	2016/001	Research

Other publications

Title
Mladi u svetu interneta (Young people in the world of the internet)
Pilotiranje usluge Porodični saradnik i evaluacija rezultata pružanja usluge (Piloting the Family Outreach Worker Service and evaluation of the results)
Smernice za postupanje CSR u kontekstu građanskih sudskih postupaka koji se tiču prava i interesa deteta (Guidelines for the treatment of CSW in the context of civil judicial proceedings concerning the rights and interests of the child)
Smernice za učešće deteta u građanskim sudskim postupcima i procenu najboljeg interesa deteta (Guidelines for the participation of the child in civil court cases and assessing the best interests of the child)
Smernice za povremeni porodični smeštaj (Guidelines for flexible fostering)
Smernice za srodničko hraniteljstvo (Guidelines for kinship fostering)
There is hope testimonials
UNICEF 70 video

No fear of snow
Protecting unaccompanied refugee and migrant children in Serbia
Call for pledge Donors
Kindergartens without Borders – Where Communities Gathers
Video about ECD conference in Zlatibor
Flexible foster care for children with disabilities
Protection of children in legal proceedings
Making the wait worthwhile: adapting child-friendly spaces for longer-term stays
The Government of Japan and UNIQLO provide assistance to refugee children and families in Serbia
Od problema do prilika u vođenju slučaja: Priručnik za praktičare (From a problem to an opportunity in case management: A guide for practitioners)
Smernice za pripremu za sud i forenzičko ispitivanje dece žrtava i svedoka krivičnih dela (Guidelines for the preparation for legal proceedings and forensic examination of child victims and witnesses of crimes)
Smernice za planiranje stalnosti u centrima za socijalni rad (Guidelines for Planning continuity in the centres for social work)
Prepoznaj, promoviši i proširi - Priče o uspešnim školama (Recognize, promote and expand - Stories of successful schools)
Korak napred u saradnji škole i roditelja - Vodič za odeljenske starešine (A step forward in the cooperation between schools and parents - a guide for homeroom teachers)
Kako da pobediš predatora na internetu u samo 10 koraka (How to beat predators on the Internet in just 10 steps)
Kako roditelji protiv predatora na internetu: 10 praktičnih saveta (Parents Against Internet Predators: 10 Practical Recommendations)
Digitalno nasilje - prevencija i reagovanje (Digital violence - prevention and answers)
Standard Operating Procedures: Protection of Refugee and Migrant Children

Lessons learned

Document Type/Category	Title
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Programme documents

Document Type	Title	Name
CPD	Country Programme Document	2015-PL16-Serbia_CPD-ODS-EN.pdf
Reference Documents	Costed Evaluation Plan 2016-2020	2015-PL16-Serbia_CEP-EN-15Jun2015.pdf