Executive Summary

As the Country Programme 2012–2017 concludes its fifth year, overall political and economic instability and the ongoing crisis in eastern Ukraine continue to challenge the realization of children's rights in Ukraine. The humanitarian needs of vulnerable children and families remain, especially in non-government controlled areas and along the so-called contact line.

As the focus of UNICEF and other United Nations agencies shifts from humanitarian interventions to recovery and development, UNICEF Ukraine prioritized efforts to ensure the complementarity of its approaches and strategies. The 2016 Country Programme aimed to harness the momentum generated through strong donor support and government cooperation to safeguard the sustainability of changes for children.

With the long-awaited Multi-Partner Trust Fund approved in 2016, the recovery programme for eastern Ukraine was put on stable footing. This channel is expected to provide increased and predictable funding in support of the Country Programme.

A significantly boosted supply function within UNICEF Ukraine brought about significant changes for children. UNICEF’s handling of vaccine procurement for the Ministry of Health (MoH) through an agreement on procurement services not only increased the availability of vaccines in Ukraine, but also opened the door for UNICEF Ukraine to provide technical support for the reshaping of the state procurement system as part of government reform. In regards to the supply stock-out situation of early 2016, UNICEF’s ability to quickly and reliably supply and deliver antiretroviral medications (ARVs) for children in non-government controlled territories not only saved lives, but has also credibly demonstrated the organization’s ability to protect children’s rights on both sides of the contact line.

The Country Programme’s water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) portfolio expanded from UNICEF’s leadership and coordination role as cluster lead agency to the provision of services, hardware, chemicals and expertise to ensure the access of 2.5 million people in eastern Ukraine to safe drinking water. By equally serving beneficiaries on both sides of the contact line, the ‘peace dividend’ of water interventions in eastern Ukraine has been frequently quoted and described. The water risk assessment, which examines the long-term sustainability of the troubled water supply system in Donetsk Oblast, was started in late 2016 and laid the foundation for a comprehensive strengthening of a water system that will provide a lifeline for the majority of the population in that region.

The launch of U-Report in Ukraine represents an entirely new model for engaging young people on issues that affect their lives and futures. By strengthening the ability of young people as rights holders to claim their rights, U-Report aims to establish a dialogue between young people and policymakers on development issues. To date, 25,000 young U-Reporters are using the tool every day to voice their opinions, connect with their leaders and help change the conditions in their communities across Ukraine.
However, access for humanitarian organizations to non-government controlled areas, which effectively limits humanitarian space and makes it difficult to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, remains a concern. Raising awareness of the situation and the needs of children in non-government controlled areas remains a challenge. The fluidity and complexity of the situation on the ground requires flexibility, creative adjustments and prompt action.

Finding solutions to address equity gaps and achieve concrete results for children requires a multifaceted and well-coordinated approach encompassing humanitarian, recovery and development actions. The Country Programme now underway has enormous bandwidth, covering all of these areas, as well as human and child rights within a middle-income country, which poses a distinct challenge for UNICEF Ukraine from a management perspective.

Partnerships with individual donors and groups of donors that arose from shared objectives continued to develop into a number of shared core interests. Many of the results achieved in 2016 were accomplished due to the strong and mutually reinforcing technical and political support of these partners.

In 2016, alliances for children’s rights forged with the Government of Ukraine (e.g. the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the MoH, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons and the Ministry for Regional Development, Building and Housing) reached new levels of commitment for joint programme goals against a backdrop of trust and mutual appreciation.

**Humanitarian Assistance**

In 2016, UNICEF continued to address the needs of the most vulnerable children by ensuring their access to safe drinking water, education, safe learning spaces, community-based child protection services and immediate psychosocial support. Some 3.7 million people, including 580,000 children and 230,106 internally displaced persons, were affected. Disruptions in humanitarian access, the limited capacity of local institutions, weak rule of law and restrictions imposed on protection monitoring in non-government controlled areas severely weakened the protective environment. Similarly, 800,000 people, including 100,000 children living near the front line, faced daily risks of shelling, mines and unexploded ordnance. Given the interconnectedness of the water supply, central heating systems, electricity supply and sanitation systems, some 2.9 million people were at risk of service disruption. The programme aimed to support education facilities, primary health care and child protection services in conflict-affected areas of eastern Ukraine, especially along the contact line.

In partnership with national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and utility companies, UNICEF Ukraine ensured the rehabilitation of public WASH infrastructure, reaching more than 2.5 million people in “areas of high concern” in both government-controlled areas and non-government controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. Access to safe drinking water was ensured through the provision of critical chemicals for water treatment plants, rehabilitation of infrastructure and the creation of alternative sources of safe drinking water for communities affected by the conflict. In addition to the rehabilitation of water pipelines, water trucking and the distribution of bottled water and hygiene kits to more than 330,000 people, UNICEF continued to advocate for a solution to issues related to utility payments across the contact line. The absence of a payment mechanism affected some 4.5 million people whenever water companies cut off the centralized water supply due to unpaid electricity bills.

The treatment of adults and children with HIV and the prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission (PMTCT) of HIV remained one of UNICEF’s main objectives during the
reporting year despite limited access to and within the non-government controlled areas of eastern Ukraine. UNICEF Ukraine delivered ARV medicines that covered the needs of more than 8,000 people living with HIV in both Luhansk and Donetsk non-government controlled areas. UNICEF Ukraine also supported more than 29,000 safe deliveries for women by providing midwifery kits covering critical needs on both sides of the conflict.

Operating on both sides of the conflict through six zonal offices, UNICEF Ukraine focused on the provision of psychosocial support services to more than 250,000 children and caregivers, with girls and women constituting 60 per cent of the total number living in both government controlled areas and non-government controlled areas. Life-saving mine risk education sessions were provided to more than 510,000 children and their families as the threat from unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of war remained a concern for the communities living along the contact line.

During the third round of a comprehensive multi-channel communication campaign, interventions were conducted to ensure parents' uptake of the polio vaccine. The polio outbreak response to an increase of positive attitudes towards immunization, with 71 per cent of parents supporting vaccination compared with 46 per cent in 2012 and 28 per cent in 2008.

In 2016, UNICEF Ukraine estimated that one in five schools in non-government controlled areas had been damaged and was in urgent need of repair. Hence, the rehabilitation of schools affected by the conflict and the provision of education materials and sports equipment continued throughout the year to address the basic needs of some 150,000 children. In some schools, new heating systems were installed to prepare facilities for winter. Kits with warm clothes were delivered to 10,000 children from families in settlements along the contact line.

UNICEF Ukraine leads the education and WASH clusters and the child protection and nutrition sub-clusters. The Office contributed to the health cluster, as well as the HIV/tuberculosis/opioid substitution treatment and mine action sub-clusters. Collaboration in humanitarian response was conducted with the Government at all levels, as well as with United Nations agencies, international NGOs and local partners.

UNICEF Ukraine worked with different partners to enhance child rights monitoring. The Office collaborated with national NGOs and the Human Rights Ombudsman’s Office to strengthen local partners’ capacity to monitor the situation of children in institutions. The team monitored 35 childcare institutions, foster families and small group homes affected by the conflict (in Donetsk and Luhansk government controlled areas). Child protection training was provided for 53 representatives of oblast administration to enhance their capacity to identify and address violence and other emerging issues. Furthermore, 25 local specialists were trained on child protection monitoring approaches, with 12 actively supporting the Human Rights Ombudsman’s Office with follow-up monitoring on child protection within their regions.

**Emerging Areas of Importance**

**The second decade.** Adolescents aged 10–19 constitute 9 per cent of the entire population in Ukraine. This population group remains under-represented in national policies and programmatic frameworks. In 2016, UNICEF Ukraine was working with partners in the Government, the United Nations, civil society and young people to expand opportunities for youth engagement in decision-making through the U-Report. Building social cohesion and resilience among adolescents and young people, especially those affected by the conflict in eastern Ukraine through increased community participation, has been a priority.
To date, 25,000 U-Reporters were mobilized in Ukraine, with 40 opinion polls conducted. With the help of U-Report, UNICEF and partners analysed social issues that mattered to adolescents and used the polls' results to influence the development of social initiatives such as an anti-bullying campaign in Ukrainian schools and planning the work of the Office of the Ombudsman for Children’s Rights on inclusive society, among others. Capacity development of adolescents through a network of 17 youth clubs was applied as a strategy to enable this population to gain practical skills that increase their voice and ability to be active in their communities. UNICEF established a dialogue with the Office of the Ombudsman for Children’s Rights for creating a sustainable platform where children and adolescents could express their views on issues of concern.

Adolescence as the second decade of life was mainstreamed through the Country Programme in 2016. One of the Country Programme outputs is children and youth enabled to participate in the decision-making process. Adolescent health and access to HIV prevention, care and support services were incorporated through two other outputs on integrated community-based services established and critical attitudes, practices and behaviours to child health, protection and development effectively addressed. UNICEF Ukraine aimed to realize the rights of adolescents and young people and specifically contributed to halting the spread of HIV by focusing on the adolescent population. As part of the ‘All In’ mobilization campaign, HIV-positive adolescents increased their participation in decision-making at the local and central levels and worked on the peer-to-peer level in their communities.

UNICEF Ukraine supported the Ministry of Youth and Sport to revise the draft Youth Law through an evidence-based, inclusive and participatory cascade of youth consultations and public debates with youth NGOs and educational and cultural organizations (SCOs), experts and youth workers. It resulted in the new draft law being more relevant to the aspirations of young people. UNICEF’s work on youth engagement and youth clubs is linked to the Ministry of Youth and Sport’s plans to strengthen youth centres and youth policies.

The strengthening of the social cohesion and resilience of both internally displaced persons and those of the host communities was another relevant programme component in 2016. UNICEF’s project, ‘Towards greater social cohesion and integration of internally displaced persons in eastern Ukraine’, underlined the need for a stronger platform on socially inclusive approaches among youth and communities. In this sense, a specific programme will be developed on strengthening reconciliation, resilience, conflict prevention and social inclusion for adolescents and youth in eastern Ukraine.

UNICEF Ukraine also drafted a new strategy note for the new Country Programme that includes a stronger focus on youth and adolescents. It acknowledges that the focus on adolescents will be a priority for UNICEF Ukraine, reflecting the increased commitment from the organization.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

The so-called contact line: The 500 km line of separation between Russian-supported separatist districts of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and the rest of Ukraine (International Crisis Group)

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>ART</td>
<td>antiretroviral therapy</td>
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<td>ARV</td>
<td>antiretroviral</td>
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<td>CMT</td>
<td>Country Management Team</td>
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<td>GCA</td>
<td>government-controlled area</td>
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<td>GSSC</td>
<td>Global Shared Services Centre</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>information and communication technology</td>
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Capacity development of service providers and policymakers remained one of the key strategies in the Ukraine Country Programme 2012–2017.

As a key step towards strengthening the overall national system for the protection of children’s rights, UNICEF Ukraine supported the development of the State Programme of the National Plan of Action on the Convention on the Rights of the Child implementation 2017–2022. This constitutes a significant strengthening of government capacities to establish an effective and efficient child rights protection system at both national and local levels.

Steps to enhance service quality for the most at-risk adolescents included the development of an online regional learning hub on this population and the computerized adaptation and training tool training for integrated management of childhood illnesses (IMCI) with 2,000 service providers as beneficiaries. UNICEF Ukraine also contributed to strengthening health providers’ knowledge on PMTCT programme management for vulnerable pregnant women.

In four oblasts, laboratory assistants and paediatricians gained knowledge on the DBS method for early infant diagnostics of HIV.

In regards to HIV-positive adolescents, the capacity of local NGOs was built through leadership skills trainings, the implementation of advocacy plans, the delivery of supplies and the use of digital tools. As a result, the number of HIV-positive adolescents receiving services that met their needs increased by 50 per cent in 2016.

Outreach to children to address heightened distress was enhanced through the capacity development of more than 5,000 school psychologists, teachers, social workers and volunteer community workers to identify, refer and provide immediate psychosocial support to children.

Capacity-building efforts and training on polio counselling reached 2,200 medical workers and educational professionals working in secondary schools and kindergartens. More than 750 medical workers improved their capacities and skills on effective counselling of parents, and some 300 health workers from the rayon, regional and national levels became trainers on effective counselling on mother and child health issues.

Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

UNICEF Ukraine provided technical assistance to the MoF to assess the quality of budgetary submissions, primarily related to child-focused expenditures. Responding to UNICEF’s advocacy call to apply the ‘value for money’ diagnostic tool to assess budget requests, the
MoF expressed its intention to capitalize on quality evidence solutions related to child-focused expenditures.

Through its cluster coordination role, UNICEF Ukraine provided critical contributions to advocacy initiatives. An evidence-based mechanism was set up by the WASH cluster to inform the public about the impact of the conflict on water supply and infrastructure.

To address critical gaps in the design of major policies concerning children in times of economic shock and increasing vulnerabilities, UNICEF supported key research products such as the Multiple Overlapping Deprivations Analysis and the assessment of the performance of cash transfers, which focused on vulnerable families and children. Five priority areas of potential deprivations for children were identified: living conditions, especially housing and utilities; access to healthcare services; leisure and access to information; education; and neighbourhood safety. The findings will be used for the development of the new Country Programme 2018–2022 and its advocacy strategy.

To link social cohesion and peacebuilding with an evidence-based approach, UNICEF Ukraine launched the social cohesion and reconciliation (SCORE) index assessment in eastern Ukraine, jointly with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The first results, which will serve as a future baseline, are due in early 2017.

Based on the gains of the psychosocial support-life skills education programme, the dialogue with the Ministry of Education and Science led to the integration of these components into the state in-service programmes and to the policy decision on a broader safe school concept. This will enhance anti-violence strategies and improve the protective school environment.

**Partnerships**

In 2016, UNICEF made a significant effort to strengthen partnership with the Government and non-government counterparts at the decentralized level, while significantly expanding partnerships with the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry for Youth and Sport and the MoH.

In realizing the importance of sustainable change in a local setting and to accelerate overall national social protection reforms, a new strategic partnership was established with the Union of Ukrainian Cities, one of the largest organizations representing the interests of local governments.

To create 7,500 new kindergarten seats in nearly 200 facilities, strategic alliances were built with the education departments of five conflict-affected regional administrations in eastern Ukraine. Memoranda of understanding were signed with governors of Dnipropetrovsk and Donetsk oblasts regarding the expansion of kindergarten spaces and the provision of sports equipment and sports for development trainings in schools.

Within the WASH sector, UNICEF Ukraine succeeded in reaching a wider audience by partnering with international and local NGOs in eastern Ukraine, as well as donors, governmental departments and water utility companies.

Effective partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science led to the adoption of the Safe School Strategy as part of education reform. Improved partnership with the MoH, donors and civil society lead to increased awareness of the importance of the immunization programme restoration.
A collaborative effort between UNICEF Ukraine and the Ministry of Youth and Sport resulted in the revision of the draft Youth Law. Technical support was provided through an evidence-based, inclusive and participatory cascade of consultations and public debates with youth NGOs and civil society organizations, experts and youth workers.

On the humanitarian side, by building effective alliances with the donor community and the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons, UNICEF Ukraine managed to increase support for internally displaced persons and conflict-affected populations.

**External Communication and Public Advocacy**

UNICEF’s standing as a trusted independent voice for the rights of all children was strengthened through integrated digital and traditional media outreaches, new communications interventions and public advocacy. UNICEF Ukraine maintained its leading presence related to issues that affect children in both social and traditional media (52 per cent), with 84 per cent positive coverage.

UNICEF’s global press statement urging support for the 580,000 children living in conflict-affected areas of eastern Ukraine was widely picked up, not only by national media but also by top-tier international media including *The New York Times*, the Associated Press, Al Jazeera, *Newsweek* and Deutsche Welle.

A social media package was prepared and distributed through UNICEF global social media platforms. The campaign’s hashtags #UkraineChildren and #UkraineConflict recorded more than 68 million potential impressions on social media.

A visit by a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador to conflict-affected children in eastern Ukraine raised the profile of the need for education-in-emergencies interventions, with more than 800 million global viewers learning about the situation.

Highlighting the importance of education in conflicts and crises was the main objective of the joint European Union-UNICEF #EmergencyLessons information campaign, which received more than 1.1 million views of one video alone on the global UNICEF Facebook and Twitter accounts. The campaign also enjoyed support from high-profile celebrities.

A nationwide multimedia campaign, ‘You are among friends. Let’s be together’, which promoted the social inclusion of internally displaced children and services for conflict-affected populations, was launched with the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons. The first component of the campaign, ‘Tiny Stories’ videos, was viewed by more than 14.5 million people on several television channels, and more than 50,000 viewers were able to access the video material through different social media channels.

**South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation**

In 2016, UNICEF took part in the SCORE index, a smart tool designed to identify and measure two preconditions for peace in society. The SCORE index came about as a result of the large number of peacebuilding and reconciliation programmes originally established in Cyprus and funded by international donors (UNDP, the European Union, the European Environment Agency and the United States Agency for International Development).

The need to evaluate peacebuilding programmes is not particular to Cyprus. Today, as governments and donors seek more effective ways to manage development outcomes, there is a growing international demand for a mechanism that enables the impact of peacebuilding
and reconciliation projects to be quantified.

Its potential uses and benefits are numerous, from highlighting national policy needs to informing international donor decisions to providing researchers with a rich source of data and the larger public with an overview of important issues in their society.

As such, the SCORE index has strong potential to play an important role in informing UNICEF Ukraine’s programming, its advocacy for children’s rights and, in the Ukrainian context, to reduce the equity gap in access to quality social services. The SCORE index is currently under consideration, and UNICEF Ukraine is currently providing support to UNICEF Moldova, where the index will be rolled out in 2017 as a joint UNDP/UNICEF project.

**Identification and Promotion of Innovation**

UNICEF Ukraine and its partners developed an electronic voucher system aimed at optimizing the distribution of hygiene supplies. Technology that works like an electronic wallet available on mobile phones facilitated the exchange of vouchers for hygiene items at selected shops for more than 6,000 vulnerable persons and more than 400 infants living along the contact line. The innovation also provided the possibility to choose hygiene items according to beneficiaries’ needs, as opposed to receiving a pre-packaged hygiene kit, favouring ‘value for money’ through considerably reduced distribution costs and supporting access to hygiene supplies at the beneficiaries’ doorsteps.

The introduction of the standardized first-line antiretroviral therapy (ART) instead of three separate ARVs, as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), increased patients’ satisfaction in ART and adherence to it in Ukraine. Nearly 90 per cent of patients in non-government controlled areas switched to receiving first-line ART regimens, and new patients received a once-daily, single, fixed-dose combination tablet containing tenofovir, emtricitabine and efavirenz.

UNICEF Ukraine’s continuous advocacy and policy change efforts regarding the introduction of standardized ART was unlikely just a few years ago, but can now provide the momentum to push the HIV epidemic into irreversible decline in Ukraine.

UNICEF Ukraine joined U-Report, with 25,000 young Ukrainians currently registered. Young people have helped to gather information and perceptions on issues of concern to them, providing an evidence base for programming and policymaking. In terms of innovations, U-Report Ukraine has been working with AIESEC on the organization of a hack-a-thon for social ideas. U-Report was also used to choose a priority Sustainable Development Goal for Ukraine, which U-Reporters identified as decent work and economic growth.

In partnership with adolescent and youth association, Teenergizer, UNICEF Ukraine initiated development of a digital application to monitor adolescents’ adherence to HIV/AIDS treatment.

**Support to Integration and Cross-Sectoral Linkages**

Building on lessons learned in 2015, UNICEF Ukraine focused its efforts on strengthening the linkages between the emergency and regular programme to maximize long-term resilience and system strengthening. For example, WASH activities were closely coordinated with and embedded into the education and child protection sections to ensure WASH services in schools and the delivery of supplies to government controlled areas, as well as delivery and monitoring in Donetsk non-government controlled areas. The child protection and education sections worked together closely on the Safe Schools Declaration, school-based trainings and the safe schools strategies as part of the planned education sector
Enhancing cross-sectoral linkages beyond the social sectors was at the core of the design of the Convention on the Rights of the Child implementation concept. The structure and content of the concept were discussed and agreed upon by the key line ministries, think tanks and local NGOs. The approved concept aims to establish an effective and efficient child rights protection system at the national and local levels, within the framework of the ongoing decentralization process in Ukraine.

Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

The operationalization of the normative principles of the human rights-based approach to cooperation was mainstreamed throughout the activities of the ongoing Country Programme. In particular, the design of the Convention on the Rights of the Child implementation concept and its structure and content are fully aligned with international standards and priorities including, for example, the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child.

Programming for social services reform is guided by a human rights approach, recognizing the need for system responses for children and families to be within a comprehensive response. In particular, UNICEF Ukraine advocated for system responses that consider the specific needs of the most vulnerable and excluded, putting pressure on governmental duty bearers to deliver for the most vulnerable.

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This extends to advocacy work with formal education authorities, so as to create a system where all concerned parties would ensure safe, conducive and supportive environments for children in school as well as mediation work with combatting parties at the national and local levels in order to protect schools from attacks.

UNICEF Ukraine managed to contribute to the realization of the basic human right of access to clean drinking water and sanitation for affected people in Donbass region. The Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action were applied as guiding principles. UNICEF Ukraine ensured life-saving activities and maintained the bulk of the water supply.

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UNICEF Ukraine focused on addressing the inequalities in service delivery for HIV patients living in non-government controlled areas, including pregnant women and children affected by HIV, by protecting their rights to health care through ART access.

UNICEF Ukraine also strengthened the ability of rights holders to claim their rights by introducing U-Report. U-Report guarantees the U-Reporters anonymity and provides unbiased delivery of voices, opinions and demands to the attention of decisionmakers.

The participation of marginalized and excluded people was promoted to achieve greater equity-focused results. In sports for development activities, participation of internally displaced persons and female players was encouraged through the Volleyball Tournament Regulation and advocacy efforts.

Gender Equality

Promoting gender equality has been an important issue in the Country Programme. Gender equality has been promoted in the recommendations of the ‘Analysis of the National Policy of Protection of Child Rights’, for example, through the design of normative regulations to reflect the concept of ‘responsible parenting’, which includes an increased role for fathers in parenthood.

The gender perspective was also mainstreamed in studies with the gender differences
diagnosed, data disaggregated by gender and equal representation of both genders provided. For example, the findings of the ‘Analysis of Cash Transfers’ outlined that children with disabilities living with single mothers with disabilities barely benefit from the state cash assistance programmes (the difference is US$27 per month) when compared with other types of low-income families.

UNICEF Ukraine continued to be an active member of the United Nations Thematic Group on Gender. In particular, UNICEF was a co-organizer of the ‘16-days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence to End Violence Against Women’ campaign. Within the campaign, UNICEF Ukraine organized a photo marathon (flash mob) in social media and a separate U-Report poll on gender-based violence.

In WASH-related activities, the special needs of women and children were considered as part of the different types of hygiene kits. During school rehabilitation, WASH facilities were designed for boys and girls, taking in account their special needs.

The safe schools concept developed by UNICEF Ukraine is now in its implementation phase and considered to be included in legislation by the MoE. The concept recognizes that girls and boys have different needs and face different patterns of risk. Typically, girls are more likely than boys to be at risk of sexual violence, while boys are at greater risk than girls of physical attacks, which also negatively impact psychosocial well-being.

The United Nations office in Ukraine conducted a Culture Staff Survey of all staff members. One of the questions was on perception of gender equality. Based on the results, 76 per cent of United Nations staff believe that the United Nations system in Ukraine makes adequate effort to fulfil its mandate to achieve equal representation of women and men.

**Environmental Sustainability**

Environmental sustainability has been introduced as a results area within the strategic programme note, which was presented and discussed at the strategic moment of reflection in October 2017. It will be further developed within the planning process towards the next CPD 2018–2022.

**Effective Leadership**

The 2016 Annual Management Review meeting took place in February and reviewed UNICEF Ukraine’s 2015 performance against the established management indicators. Action points were identified and applied in 2016.

UNICEF Ukraine was audited by the Office of Internal Audit in November and December, applying both on-site and remote audit techniques. The audit report is set to be available in early 2017. Realizing that the recommendations from the audit will constitute a unique opportunity to make the exponential growth of the Country Programme more sustainable, UNICEF Ukraine has already prepared for the speedy implementation and application of the audit recommendations, including increasing the capacities of the planning and budget sections.

In 2016, the country management team (CMT) continued to regularly review the respective Results Assessment Module and UNICEF Ukraine-specific indicators and achieved an overall good implementation rate for the action points raised.

Major initiatives taken by the CMT in 2016 included: strategic revision of management indicators to align it with the changing priorities of the Country Programme; office management and programme priorities established through consultative processes; effective
response to emergencies; monitoring of key performance indicators; efficiency and effectiveness in donor reporting; budget implementation, follow-up with expiring grants, contributions management and monitoring of direct cash transfers; as well as support to field offices.

The country management team concluded the implementation of recommendations coming out of the assessment of the security environment by hiring a Professional Level 3 security specialist to support management and the heads of field offices.

The country management team also endorsed the establishment of a long-term agreement with an audit company to conduct micro-assessments and spot-checks within the framework of the implementation of the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT).

**Financial Resources Management**

The UNICEF Ukraine country management team continued to provide strategic direction, guidance, leadership and oversight to ensure that the Country Programme is aligned with the changing requirement of the country and that planned results are achieved in the most effective and efficient manner to address any issues or bottlenecks.

The programme and operations teams regularly monitored effective programme implementation, response to emergencies, achievement of key performance indicators, internal and financial control work processes and budget preparations.

In 2016, UNICEF Ukraine managed to utilize all types of resources—institutional budget, regular resources, other resources regular and other resources emergency—in a timely and effective manner.

The Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) went live in 2016. Part of the finance function was transferred to the GSSC on 18 April. This led to the review of staff responsibilities to fit the changed work processes. Even though bank reconciliation was entrusted as a GSSC responsibility, UNICEF Ukraine actively continued to monitor the open items monthly and proactively initiated the needed solutions.

In 2016, UNICEF Ukraine faced a high risk of volatility of the banking system in Ukraine. The risk was assessed and mitigated and escalated to the United Nations Country Team, the UNICEF Regional Office and UNICEF Headquarters.

UNICEF Ukraine was internally audited on site in November 2016; the draft report is expected in January 2017.

**Fundraising and Donor Relations**

The 2016 Annual Work Plan had a planned budget of approximately US$68 million. A total of US$44,096,460 was utilized in 2016.

In 2016, UNICEF Ukraine managed to generate an overall total of US$26.5 million in other resources income (both regular and emergency), which is less than the US$36.1 million received in 2015, but still well above the US$10.26 million received in 2014.

Out of this, other resources total received as a new contribution in 2017, approximately US$8.3 million was other resources emergency against the 2016 Humanitarian Action for Children appeal (US$4.3 million). Together with other resources emergency carried forward from previous years, this brought the 2016 Humanitarian Action for Children to 50 per cent funded, highlighting the trend of decreasing overall other resources emergency contributions
received for Ukraine.

Compared with the newly approved ceiling for the Country Programme 2012–2017 of US$60 million, the US$13,371,518 other resources regular utilization put the country on a good path towards fully meeting the new funding frame.

While bi- and multi-lateral donors remain the most significant contributors to the Country Programme, UNICEF Ukraine continued to engage with selected major in-country private sector donors and managed to secure a total value of US$300,000 in resources, out of which 97 per cent were in-kind contributions.

In applying good and timely donor stewardship, UNICEF Ukraine proactively engaged with the group of donors that constitute the ‘core donors’ for UNICEF Ukraine (Canada, Germany, Japan, the European Union and the United States of America) and managed to successfully engage with a number of new and smaller donors.

Donor reports consistently met the corporate quality benchmarks established, and all donor reports met the submission deadline.

**Evaluation and Research**

Programme and advocacy efforts drew significantly on research generated throughout the year. As an example, the Strategy for Routine Immunization in Ukraine in 2017 has benefited from the data generated through the independent monitoring report of the 2016 vaccination campaign.

In 2016, the integrated monitoring and evaluation plan saw a 60 per cent implementation rate.

A total of five studies were completed and uploaded to the annex of this report. Preliminary findings of the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis conducted in 2016 are available and are awaiting finalization in early 2017.

The Country Programme evaluation was conducted between May and October 2016 as the highlight of UNICEF Ukraine’s evaluation-related activities in 2016. The Country Programme Evaluation reviewed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the Country Programme 2012–2017, with a specific focus on the years 2014–2016.

Apart from the lessons learned, the Country Programme Evaluation provided the following five key recommendations, for which a management response will be formulated within the second half of January: 1) re-assess bottlenecks, identify vulnerable groups and improve the quality and availability of disaggregated data to support UNICEF programme planning and monitoring; 2) ensure that decentralization advances and does not harm children’s and vulnerable groups’ rights; 3) shift focus towards policy advocacy by building broad pro-reform coalitions; 4) revise the approach to piloting and modelling and make it more strategic; and 5) improve UNICEF planning and monitoring and evaluation architecture with increasing focus on results and equity.

The Country Programme Evaluation commissioned by UNICEF Ukraine in 2016 was rated as ‘highly satisfactory’ by the external quality assurance facility.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

UNICEF Ukraine identified efficiency gains and cost savings as part of its priorities. Significant cost savings resulted from the implementation of common services, including
through sharing premises with other United Nations agencies. In addition, UNICEF Ukraine developed strategies for cost savings in the areas of logistics, construction and information and communication technology (ICT), with clear and measurable objectives, ensuring that beneficiary needs are met and not exceeded, with improved management of lateral collaboration to ensure joint orders (for events, delivery).

UNICEF Ukraine increased its efficiency gains and achieved cost savings in its operations in a variety of ways in 2016:

- Virtual no-cost modalities for training, teleconferences, meetings, interviews, briefings and discussions;
- A decrease in administrative maintenance resources by utilizing common services;
- More efficiency and savings through cost-shared budgeting and functioning in the field through common premises (e.g. UNDP continued to administer the premises, which significantly released UNICEF’s workload).

Due to immediate emergency needs in eastern Ukraine, UNICEF Ukraine optimized the processes and managed the increased volume of activities by pursuing the following approaches:

- Long-term agreements for most all purchases;
- Shared common premises in five cities of Ukraine (common premise in Mariupol shared with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at no cost to UNICEF);
- Effective cooperation between UNICEF Ukraine and other United Nations agencies when needed to cross the conflict line rapidly and without difficulties and/or without using additional resources.

Significant gains were achieved through the implementation of the Light project within the ICT function—a simpler, quicker and more qualitative approach to staff access to the office infrastructure.

In the second half of 2016, both the management review and the internal audit were conducted. These allowed UNICEF Ukraine to comprehensively revise the governance structure and work processes and look at weaknesses that needed adjustments.

**Supply Management**

The supply component continued to function effectively in 2016 and included local as well as off-shore procurement of a wide range of commodities. UNICEF Ukraine received two blanket local procurement authorizations for a total value of US$4,895,340 for the physical rehabilitation of 180 kindergartens and the construction of 30 sports playgrounds for schools.

The total value of supplies received in 2016 was US$19,298,641.05 (programme supplies: US$11,298,257.43; operational supplies: US$571,243.40; services: US$7,429,140.22, which included construction: US$3,731,908.10).

A significant level of effort was allocated to procurement services and in-country logistics. UNICEF Ukraine coordinated the delivery and in-country logistics of vaccines and ARVs valued at US$18,407,339.56. Based on the successful cooperation, in 2016, the MoH transferred US$32,777,873 for the procurement of vaccines and ARVs through procurement services in 2017.

UNICEF Ukraine used warehouses provided by the Government, commercial warehouses for supplies and medicines and MoH agency warehouses for vaccines and ARVs. UNICEF dedicated time and effort to MoH capacity enhancement and supplied cold chain equipment for central and regional stores valued at US$413,000.
During the first quarter of 2016, UNICEF Ukraine procured vaccines for the final round of the national polio campaign targeting 3.7 million children up to 10 years old. The outbreak response was a factor in the fact the circulation of vaccine-derived poliovirus has likely stopped.

Strategic sourcing was enhanced through the establishment of local long-term agreements for services and various types of kits and the contracting of local manufacturers. The logistics cluster was utilized for operational support, including deliveries of ARV drugs for the non-government controlled areas. UNICEF Ukraine also cooperated with UNHCR on the major delivery of supplies to these areas. The value of the inventory of programme supplies controlled by UNICEF Ukraine recorded as being physically in the warehouse on 31 December 2016 was US$823,536.38. The value of programme supplies issued from local warehouses controlled by UNICEF Ukraine in 2016 was US$5,672,537.05. The total value of supplies managed in UNICEF Ukraine’s controlled warehouse was US$6,496,073.43.

The United Nations Common Procurement Activities Group succeeded in extending long-term agreements for conference and travel services and establishing long-term agreements for printing services.

To address the low level of suppliers’ awareness of United Nations procurement procedures, four agencies of the Procurement Group (UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)) under the Operations Management Team oversight conducted four regional vendor conferences to raise awareness of suppliers and increase knowledge to effectively participate in United Nations tenders. This will ultimately strengthen the abilities of United Nations Country Team agencies to requisition the needed commodities on time in compliance with United Nations rules and regulations.

Security for Staff and Premises

UNICEF Ukraine maintained a standing level of readiness for emergency and security situations, including emergency communication systems, security information and structures, emergency evacuations and security incident management.

Managing and enhancing the safety and security of staff and premises remained of outmost importance in 2016. The following strategic measures were implemented and maintained:

- The Minimum Operating Security Standard compliance of field offices was ensured through: 1) completion of implementation of the recommendations of United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) security/risk assessments; and 2) establishing all key elements of compliance. This measure was regularly monitored by the Operations Management Team.
- Regular briefings were conducted and relevant security information shared to keep staff updated and aware of the steps required under different security-affected conditions. The security focal point remained accessible 24 hours per day/7 days per week to address security incidents and/or escalate them to UNDSS or the UNICEF Operations Centre. UNDSS provided detailed security briefings for all new staff and experts on mission. Respective updates of security operation procedures were disseminated.
- Staff were exposed to security trainings, and the completion of trainings was monitored. Key security meetings/debriefings were attended, including safe and secure approaches in field environments and first aid trainings; security cell meetings and senior management team meetings. Cooperation with other United Nations agencies in Ukraine was actively used for joined convoys or for borrowing armoured vehicles in cases of critical missions. Office cars were equipped with Global Positioning System navigators.
- Security equipment was provided and maintained, using the security funds allocated by UNICEF Headquarters Security in response to official requests.
UNICEF Ukraine followed through on the recommendations of the UNICEF Headquarters security review mission conducted in 2015. In late 2016, as recommended, a security specialist (Professional Level 3) was hired to support the management and heads of field offices with regards to security-related issues that can affect programme delivery. The security specialist is based in Donetsk and provides close oversight of Donetsk and Kramatorsk as well as overall security advice for UNICEF Ukraine.

**Human Resources**

UNICEF Ukraine continued to apply the results-based model to identify and meet its human capacity needs by using the workplan and emergency response plan. A strategic human resources transformation was supported to improve UNICEF’s ability to deliver better results for children and increase staff capacity to perform effectively and efficiently.

In 2016, UNICEF Ukraine embarked on an extensive recruitment process to fill in the positions approved by the mid-term review. As a result, 18 temporary appointment positions were established to support the implementation of two projects funded by the Government of Germany and approved by the UNICEF Regional Director. UNICEF Ukraine applied the human resources fast track, which significantly facilitated the recruitment.

To strengthen staff competencies in emergency response, trainings were provided to ensure that staff would respond effectively, reliably and in a timely manner to the needs of children and women in unstable situations in Ukraine.

Performance management was conducted on a regular basis according to established deadlines, and the completion rate was monitored by the country management team. The UNICEF Ukraine fixed-term performance evaluation was transferred to the Agora system in early 2016.

UNICEF Ukraine conducted regular local joint consultative committee meetings to discuss staff well-being and morale issues.

In 2016, UNICEF Ukraine benefited from the visits of the Division of Human Resources Director and the Regional Chief of Human Resources who presented upcoming human resources reforms.

In 2016, UNICEF Ukraine successfully shifted its human resources administration processes to the GSSC.

**Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology**

ICT solutions were provided in accordance with global UNICEF standards and policies, with emphasis on four key results: infrastructure maintenance and provision of technical support under any conditions, including emergencies; promoting and advising on the use of technology for collaboration and programme results; business continuity planning; and general technical user support.

UNICEF Ukraine’s ICT team contributed to promoting and supporting the use of innovative technology through the following measures:

- Lightweight Agile ICT infrastructure was implemented to ensure effective and simple access of staff to the UNICEF office from remote locations and zone offices. The lightweight Agile ICT infrastructure introduces a new architectural model for UNICEF field offices that aims to significantly reduce complexity and minimize operational risk by reducing the footprint of ICT infrastructure.
- Microsoft OneDrive and SharePoint cloud-based solutions, as well as the office’s shared drive were extensively used for critical information storage and sharing. The office email system was fully migrated to the Microsoft Office 365 cloud-based solution.
- Maintenance and connectivity checks of the key office and infrastructure applications were regularly conducted.
- Support of BGAN terminal, maintenance of Iridium satellite terminals, ultra-high frequency Motorola radio stations.

Unified communications and collaboration (Voice over Internet Protocol services, Polycom, Skype for Business) enabled UNICEF Ukraine to guarantee cost-effective and high-quality staff communication.

UNICEF Ukraine effectively took advantage of social media, particularly Facebook, Twitter, VKontakte, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc., to support efficient communications, information sharing and efforts to strengthen visibility. Social media also assisted human resources to advertise vacancies.

UNICEF Ukraine acted as chair (for the first six months) and later as an active member of the United Nations ICT Working Group.

UNICEF Ukraine pursued a practice of proper and safe equipment disposal, the decisions for which were made by local property survey boards.

Programme Components from the Results Assessment Module

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 By the end of 2017, there is a government-endorsed roadmap for the overall changes required to reform health and social protection systems necessary to realize the rights of the most vulnerable children, adolescents, women and families.

Analytical statement of progress:
While economic hardship combined with low-level conflict continues to burden children and families in eastern Ukraine, in 2016, there was a clear return to the issue of social sector reform, which includes specialized social services relevant for children, as well as the health, education and justice sectors.

UNICEF Ukraine applied due diligence to ensure that funding made available for service capacity building in eastern Ukraine also benefited the linkage of these results to the overall social sector reform policy.

Progress was made towards administrative decentralization. In this context, UNICEF Ukraine positioned UNICEF as a sought-after technical authority in regulating, standardizing and budgeting for specialized social services for children. As one of the founding members of the Expert and Coordination Council on Social Policy, UNICEF and other United Nations agencies, as well as the World Bank and several line ministries, identified and proposed a set of provisions for the most marginalized groups of children and families within Ukraine’s social protection sector reform. In doing so, UNICEF Ukraine seized a unique opportunity to contribute to the establishment of an innovative protection system at the local level in 35 municipalities nominated as pilot locations for the implementation of modern tools by the Government of Ukraine.

Through active participation in a number of normative commissions and councils in 2016, UNICEF Ukraine managed to advocate for inputs into key issues regarding the child rights
agenda, such as the juvenile crime prevention strategy, the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and healthcare sector reform.

UNICEF Ukraine assisted the Government with key insights and analyses regarding gaps in the realization of children’s rights through a sector budget analysis within the social sector and a Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis draft report. The expectation is that UNICEF research and analysis will have a direct and traceable impact on the 2017 budget and its allocation of resources for children with significant and measurable deprivations.

With the introduction of U-Report in Ukraine, UNICEF Ukraine can now relay and amplify the opinions and attitudes of more than 25,000 young people. Whereas this marks a significant achievement in making the voices of children and young people heard, it also adds value and weight to UNICEF’s voice as an advocate for children’s rights in political decision-making.

OUTPUT 1 Enhanced and functional governance for children’s mechanisms established

Analytical statement of progress:
UNICEF Ukraine participated in the establishment of the Expert and Coordination Council on Social Policy, a multi-disciplinary platform designed to promote a consolidated perspective on social protection reforms, including the establishment of an integrated social protection system for children and their families. Under UNICEF Ukraine’s guidance, the Council developed a set of recommendations for the Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP) on legislative social protection mechanisms, an advocacy effort that moved into further support by elaborating a roadmap on social protection reform. In partnership with the World Bank, the concept is to focus on the 35 newly identified consolidated municipalities, defined as piloting territory for the implementation of modern tools to develop strong and effective social protection systems at the local level.

With the tentative agreement of the Ministry of Justice and under its lead, the Inter-Agency Coordination Council on Justice for Children was established, and draft inception documents were developed. The Council’s work focuses on the implementation of the human rights strategy and associated action plan, the introduction of a diversion scheme for children in conflict with the law and the development of a comprehensive juvenile crime prevention strategy. It also aims to strengthen common government approaches to upholding international and local standards on justice for children.

To further streamline the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in Ukraine, UNICEF Ukraine supported efforts to develop the concept for the State Programme of the National Plan of Action on the Convention on the Rights of the Child Implementation 2017–2021. The concept was decreed by the MoSP to be used as a drafting foundation for the new Law of Ukraine on Convention on the Rights of the Child implementation through 2021.

The preliminary results of the National Study on Child Deprivation developed by UNICEF Ukraine were shared with the MoSP and the MoF. The findings are considered within the design of the country’s 2017 annual budget. UNICEF Ukraine developed the study—using the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis methodology—jointly with the Ukrainian State Statistics Office and generated evidence on the prevalence of non-monetary poverty in households, measuring deprivation and self-assessment. Following national consultations, five priority areas of potential deprivations for children were identified: living conditions, especially housing and utilities; access to healthcare services; leisure and access to information; education; and neighbourhood safety.
UNICEF Ukraine developed and implemented the national reproductive, mother and child health communication strategies and awareness-raising campaigns, as well as educational content for counselling in-service training packages for primary healthcare workers. To further scale up the initiative, UNICEF Ukraine provided technical assistance for the design of the draft national communication strategy, which was endorsed by the national coordination group on maternal and child health in the MoH.

An educational module on the effective counselling of children aged 0–3 was developed and piloted in collaboration with the Post-Graduate Medical Academy. The long-term effects of this accomplishment will have a direct impact on the quality of education of family doctors at the institutional level. Two regional universities are in the process of reviewing the module to be included in their curricula as well.

**OUTPUT 2** Children and youth enabled to participate in the decision-making process

**Analytical statement of progress:**
A new draft Youth Law, which is now more relevant to the needs of young people in Ukraine, was prepared with UNICEF Ukraine’s support and presented at the Parliamentary hearings. UNICEF Ukraine supported the MoES to revise the draft Law through an evidence-based, inclusive and participatory cascade of youth consultations and public debates with youth NGOs and educational and cultural organizations, experts and youth workers.

With the support of UNICEF Ukraine and in partnership with the local administration and NGOs, 17 youth clubs in Donetsk, Luhansk, Dnipro, Kharkiv and Zaporizhia (eastern Ukraine oblasts) served as social inclusion/participation forums for more than 1,700 young people (14–25 years).

UNICEF Ukraine launched a small grants programme for active young citizens in Sloviansk and Sviatohirsk. The community-based grants provided a chance to 160 young people to participate in the development of social projects and consequently to implement them within their own communities. Furthermore, the process offered the opportunity to 120 young people to participate in future legislative development on youth issues, build their leadership skills and strengthen their community involvement by becoming agents of change on issues that directly affect them.

In 2016, UNICEF Ukraine launched its flagship youth initiative, U-Report, in Ukraine. More than 800 young people from all over Ukraine gathered at the U-Report Interactive Workshop to join the new initiative, and more than 25,000 U-Reporters were mobilized, with 40 opinion polls conducted throughout the country. The results of the poll were utilized by UNICEF Ukraine and partners to further develop social initiatives such as the anti-bullying campaign in schools and the future planning of the Ombudsman for Children’s Rights (e.g. on inclusive society).

Sport for development, peace and social cohesion included participatory interventions in 301 schools across the government controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions as well as Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhia regions. UNICEF Ukraine also supported the capacity building of 30 sports teachers, social workers and psychologists, boosting community participation and action to deliver, monitor and evaluate sports for development interventions effectively. A sports for development training programme for physical education teachers is being developed into a full-fledged sports for development training curricula. The Ministry of Education and Science plans to submit it for accreditation and inclusion as a mandatory training for teachers in the future.
OUTPUT 3 Business model to provide social services through civil society organizations established

Analytical statement of progress:
The conflict took a toll on the advancement of social protection reform, with reform processes only really starting to move again in late 2015. While decentralization was initiated in mid-2015, the process was introduced in a piecemeal fashion with social protection lagging. Responsibility was provided to the local municipalities without providing accompanying financial resources.

The key challenge faced by the Ukrainian social protection system can be presented as a systemic inability to proactively identify and holistically respond to the growing social needs of vulnerable children and families throughout the country especially in the most deprived and at-risk localities. The existing system of social protection predominantly applies an administrative and bureaucratic approach to the design of instruments and services.

In 2016, it became apparent that a broader dialogue within the social protection sphere was possible. Partnering with the MoSP and the MoF, UNICEF Ukraine worked with progressive regions to design an initial model for the development of an integrated social support system. A review of the model included the establishment of comprehensive service performance indicators and recommendations on planning and budgetary processes at the different levels of governance, including the individual level of working with the client.

At the same time, an assessment of the budget systems within two municipalities was conducted, with recommendations for enhancing efficiency, including planning steps, forming of programme budgets based on performance programme budgeting and development of performance indicators.

Key findings showed a lack of efficiency of social expenditure planning within local budgets. Representatives of the two participating local administrations and social service providers were trained on the basic concepts of the integrated social service model and the role of case managers in providing quality social services. Accordingly, UNICEF Ukraine proposed the necessary recommendations to enable changing financial approaches for social care services as well as better and more transparent budget development, allocation and execution.

A priority of UNICEF Ukraine was to mobilize the representatives of local government and social service providers to better address the municipalities’ social care services. In the context of a renewed emphasis on the efficiency and effectiveness of public services at the national level, UNICEF identified social care services planning as a key component of its annual work programme in 2016. As part of this work, representatives of local government and social service providers were trained on the basic concept of the integrated social services model and the role of case managers in providing high-quality social services.

In 2016, UNICEF Ukraine focused on the further implementation of the integrated social services model, and a political agreement was reached with the MoSP to include the newly 33-formed united communities.

OUTPUT 4 Enhanced costing of models (including opportunity costs) established

Analytical statement of progress:
A draft standard of early intervention that includes both technical and costing aspects was developed in close collaboration with the Kharkiv-based Early Intervention Centre and
Medical Child Centre. Also with UNICEF Ukraine’s support, a general methodology of costing of social services has been simplified for end-users at the local level. Recommendations were shared with the MoSP for further consultations.

Following the request of the MoF, UNICEF Ukraine provided technical assistance to the analysis of four social sector budget request programmes and ‘budget passports’. A rapid analysis was conducted and presented to the MoF with relevant recommendations on budget programme formulation. The draft passport format for the new budget programmes was developed and shared with the MoF for further review and consultation. The rapid technical assistance provided to the MoF further developed the capacity of the Ministry to assess the quality of budgetary submissions has been improved, including the design and requirements of the new budget passports.

The analysis of budget programmes conducted through UNICEF Ukraine’s technical assistance has also revealed the urgent necessity to significantly increase the effectiveness and efficiency of public spending in child-related social sectors. UNICEF Ukraine has recommended that the MoF start investing in the evaluation of the budget requests through the ‘value for money’ diagnostic tools. Due to the proactive advocacy efforts of UNICEF Ukraine, the MoF expressed interest in identifying a model sector programme primarily related to child-focused expenditures that will be evaluated through ‘value for money’ diagnostic tools.

OUTCOME 2 By the end of 2017, there is a substantial progress towards improving the quality, availability and effectiveness of health- and specialized social and juvenile justice sector services for children, women and families most affected by inequities at the decentralized level.

Analytical statement of progress:
Overall, the Country Programme continued to widen its footprint in terms of increasing the availability, quality and accessibility of a broad number of basic and social services for children and their families in 2016. UNICEF’s provision of vaccines along with quality social mobilization during the polio immunization campaign has driven immunization health services directly to the doorstep of millions of children all over Ukraine, setting a mark of performance within the health system and pinpointing a significant number of shortfalls within the system, which will be a focus of the further programme in Ukraine.

The Country Programme established support to a great number of services often implemented by non-governmental independent partners in early intervention, social outreach to vulnerable and internally displaced children, youth and adolescents in eastern Ukraine. In this context, the programme saw the capacity development of key actors within the social welfare and legal systems and the judiciary, including lawmakers and law enforcement agents, children, young people, families and communities, benefitting tens of thousands of children. These achievements gain their significance not only from the numbers of children reached but also from the fact that community-based services are considered a viable, cost-effective and sustainable way of providing social services in a decentralized setting.

Moving within the seamless transition from humanitarian to rehabilitation and development, the Country Programme managed to attract significant donor attention to the gaps in the education sector, especially in preschool education, which have been exacerbated by the crisis. UNICEF has started with the creation of 7,500 new kindergarten places through the reactivation of unutilized and degraded facilities, emphasizing areas where internally displaced persons are most concentrated.
The Country Programme also successfully lowered the risk of disruption in the provision of drinking water to the area in and around the city of Mariupol in eastern Ukraine. Some 750,000 children and their family members are benefiting from a significant investment in replacing outdated water infrastructure and establishing new, alternative and/or supplementary water sources that increase the shock resistance and crisis viability of water services close to the contact line.

UNICEF Ukraine’s approach to restorative and peacebuilding practices in conflict-affected areas in Ukraine focused on five key outcomes: 1) increasing the inclusion of education into peacebuilding and conflict reduction policies, analyses and implementation; 2) increasing institutional capacities to supply conflict-sensitive education; 3) increasing the capacities of children, parents, teachers and other duty bearers to prevent, reduce and cope with conflict and promote peace; 4) increasing access to quality, relevant conflict-sensitive education that contributes to peace; and 5) cross-cutting contributions to the generation and use of evidence and knowledge in policies and programming related to education, conflict and peacebuilding.

To make schools a safe place and education a key agent of change for peace, UNICEF Ukraine introduced tailored and age-specific conflict resolution programmes in schools in eastern Ukraine as a model concept and provided training programmes on restorative, non-violent communication and conflict resolution practices for school specialists.

OUTPUT 1 Integrated community-based services established

Analytical statement of progress:
While the conflict created greater vulnerabilities, opportunities have arisen to identify system families and enhance service responses. Steps have been taken to increase access to and quality of community-based services for vulnerable children and families, linking these developments with Ukraine’s broader reform processes.

To increase access of basic services to children and families affected by the conflict, UNICEF Ukraine developed community protection centres, providing protective and psychosocial responses to more than 170,000 children and caregivers. Centres’ psychosocial support mobile teams travelled to remote areas close to the contact line, where 6,300 children and 2,600 caregivers received legal counselling, psychosocial support interventions and catch-up classes. While designed to address the conflict, these responses serve as a model of community-based prevention services. Advocacy with national state partners has raised attention to the model as an option for social work, with interest expressed from colleagues of the MoSP and the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons.

Building on Ukraine’s experiences, early intervention services for young children with or at-risk of development impairments or delays were expanded through testing the model in five regions. Twenty-five early intervention teams were initiated, linking capacity development with parent advocacy and policy initiatives. UNICEF Ukraine received support to establish an inter-sectoral early intervention national policy platform to strengthen coordination among decisionmakers, service providers and communities.

Steps to enhance service quality for most at-risk adolescents included the establishment of an online regional learning hub on most-at-risk adolescents and IMCI Computerized Adaptation and Training Tool (an innovative software application) training, enhancing the knowledge of 2,000 service providers to date. Services for adolescents living with HIV/AIDS were strengthened in five cities, with 100 providers enhancing skills on disclosure practices and development of a methodology guide. A participatory countrywide assessment captured
lessons learned on work with adolescents and HIV, with results presented at the National Adolescent Health Conference for 200 healthcare providers. Assessment recommendations were shared to apply in Ukraine’s new National AIDS Plan.

Likewise, UNICEF Ukraine collaborated with the MoH to enhance health providers’ knowledge on PMTCT programme management for vulnerable groups of pregnant women, as well as the newest PMTCT strategy. Guidelines and clinical PMTCT protocols were established. In four oblasts, laboratory assistants and paediatricians gained knowledge on the DBS method for early infant diagnostics of HIV. Piloting results have been analysed and presented to the MoH for approval.

Justice prevention services were developed to advance tolerance and prevent conflicts and hate crimes among youth. More than 2,800 community professionals—social workers, police, vocational and technical school staff and teachers—and more than 700 young people from vocational training schools and 7,000 in secondary schools learned about restorative, non-violent communication and conflict resolution practices. Another 3,196 adolescents gained conflict resolution skills in peer-to-peer training and school mediation programmes, where 767 children collectively resolved their disputes. Use of mediation as a diversion mechanism for children in conflict with the law was developed for approbation, where 13 social workers gained skills to be mediators in criminal procedures.

OUTPUT 2 Critical attitudes, practices and behaviours related to child health, protection and development are understood and effectively addressed.

Analytical statement of progress:
As part of UNICEF Ukraine’s efforts to have practices and behaviours related to child health understood and effectively addressed, UNICEF focused on capacity development for effective counselling, including education guidelines for health workers. UNICEF Ukraine developed and implemented advocacy, awareness and social mobilization activities on immunization, HIV prevention, life skills and safe behaviours. UNICEF Ukraine’s support for enhancing the quality of healthcare practices at the primary level resulted in more than 750 medical workers improving their skills on effective counselling of parents. Some 300 health workers were certified as trainers on effective counselling on mother and child health-related issues.

As part of its management of the polio outbreak response, UNICEF Ukraine led the communication and social mobilization component and vaccine delivery. More than 2,200 medical workers and educators were trained on effective counselling on polio. The monitoring results showed that in facilities with trained personnel, the level of refusals and the number of contraindications decreased, while vaccination coverage was higher than average in these specific regions.

An integrated communication and social mobilization campaign reached 70 per cent of the population. The awareness on polio among caregivers increased from 68 per cent at the beginning of the outbreak to 96 per cent by Round 3. The level of fear of vaccine-related complications among refusing parents decreased from 67 per cent in 2014 to 38 per cent by Round 3. By Round 3, 71 per cent of caregivers believed that polio vaccination was needed, a fact that contributed to a wider coverage from one round to the next. UNICEF Ukraine’s campaign maintained a positive attitude towards immunization during the polio outbreak, where 71 per cent of parents support vaccination (2016), compared with 46 per cent in 2012 and 28 per cent in 2008.

Behaviour change interventions aimed at prevention of HIV among youth resulted in knowledge building among more than 100 service providers of youth-friendly clinics and HIV
service NGOs working with adolescents as well as awareness raising of more than 25,000 adolescents through the digital campaign, ‘Get Tested’.

More than 500,000 children and parents were reached through mine risk education interventions in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The multi-fold approach included learning sessions, capacity building of educators, awareness raising via television, outdoor advertisements, web platforms, ‘edutainment’ and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador engagement. The campaign for teenagers, which received a Gold Effie 2016 prize, reached more than 87 per cent of children aged 6–11 years living in conflict-affected areas. The teenagers’ campaign increased the level of knowledge on key safe behaviours at an average of 12 per cent.

More than 40,000 people received hygiene promotion messages through local media and digital platforms for children. The baseline knowledge, attitudes and practice survey revealed the main barriers and key practices related to hygiene among children to be addressed in 2017.

Resilience and coping mechanisms were strengthened, and social cohesion among conflict-affected children and communities was increased through the effective roll-out of the life skills education programme, reaching more than 100,000 children in 1,573 schools, including 735 preschools. As a result, 25 per cent schools and community centres in the project areas are using conflict-related life skills education materials.

**OUTPUT 3  Access to essential commodities**

**Analytical statement of progress:**
To ensure the continuous flow of safe drinking water in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, UNICEF Ukraine supported water utility companies with pipes, pumps, accessories, equipment and rehabilitation of water facilities, a programme that reached approximately 2.5 million beneficiaries from both sides of the contact line.

UNICEF Ukraine also procured 50,000 bottles of water (6l) and reached 36,000 people with safe drinking water along the contact line. The programme provided safe water for drinking, cooking and hygiene purposes for 30,069 affected people.

The provision of more than 1,000 tons of liquefied chlorine gas to VodaDonbassa and Popasna Vodokanal reached approximately 2.5 million affected people with safe drinking water, on both sides of contact line in Donetsk and Luhansk. Fifty conflict-affected schools were rehabilitated with improved winterization (heating systems).

A safe learning environment was restored for more than 65,000 children through the rehabilitation of schools and the provision of necessary educational supplies. More than 59,000 children from the two eastern regions, both government controlled areas and non-government controlled areas, received Edu and early childhood development kits as back-to-school tools.

Effective communication and cooperation was achieved with governmental bodies, particularly with the MoES and its local (oblast and city) departments. Memoranda of understanding with the Edu Deps of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, Dnipro and Zaporizhia oblasts were signed and effectively implemented.

In 2016, UNICEF Ukraine supported safe deliveries for pregnant women by procuring midwifery kits and covered 3,000 deliveries in government controlled areas and 26,000 in non-government controlled areas.
In addition to the education and WASH clusters, UNICEF led the Nutrition Sub-Cluster and conducted several assessments related to infant and young child feeding and anaemia prevalence in affected areas.

A training curriculum on infant and young child feeding counselling and educational materials was developed for more than 50,000 pregnant and lactating women. Cascade trainings were also provided to 800 health professionals in government controlled areas in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. UNICEF Ukraine also focused on preventing the indiscriminate distribution of breastmilk substitute by capacitating providers of baby food baskets.

On behalf of the MoH, UNICEF Ukraine procured vaccines for routine immunization worth US$13.5 million—with significant budget savings of US$3.1 million—that can be further used to follow up on unimmunized children.

During the first quarter of the year, UNICEF Ukraine also procured vaccines for the third (final) round of the national polio campaign targeting 3.7 million children up to 10 years. As a result of the outbreak response, circulation of the vaccine-derived poliovirus has now likely stopped in Ukraine.

Life-saving ART for all patients who need it in non-government controlled areas continued in accordance with clinical protocols. Nearly 8,300 patients who were at risk of losing access to life-saving treatment since 2015, including HIV diagnostics, received access to ART. Some 38,000 pregnant women have been tested for HIV and nearly 500 received ART for PMTCT. Fund savings allowed UNICEF to procure additional ARVs and diagnostics that allowed the provision of treatment for 2,000 new patients, which will likely bring the total to almost 10,000 patients by July 2017.

**Document centre**

**Evaluation and research**

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**Lessons learned**

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## Programme documents

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