

Ukraine

Part 1: Situation update in the country

In 2018 Ukraine continued to experience a protracted conflict in the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk that has significantly affected social welfare and cohesion and further contributed to political volatility and economic vulnerability. According to the most recent estimates, 3.5 million people, including 700,000 boys and girls, needed immediate humanitarian assistance. This conflict-affected population lived on both sides of the so-called contact line dividing government and non-government controlled areas.

Progress in terms of conflict resolution remained elusive as the conflict in eastern Ukraine (and in the Sea of Azov) continued to simmer against the background of various diplomatic processes, further entrenching respective positions and pushing prospects for peaceful reintegration further away. The adoption in January 2018 of the law 'On Peculiarities of State Policy on Reinstatement of State Sovereignty of Ukraine on Temporarily Occupied Territories in the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts' established a political context of 'Russian aggression and occupation' and articulated Ukraine's security-military response. The law inherently contradicts the State Target Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme, which was adopted one month prior to the law as a basis for the peaceful reintegration of the population living in the non-government controlled areas. At the end of the year, partial and time-limited martial law was introduced following a naval incident between Ukraine and the Russian Federation on 25 November near the Kerch Strait that further exacerbated the complex operational environment in the East of Ukraine.

As part of its human rights reporting obligations, Ukraine submitted the 5th and 6th consolidated periodic national report on the country's implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child for the period 2011-2018. Based on data collected through the periodic national report, a five-year (2018-2021) State Social Programme on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted. The shadow report to be submitted by civil society organizations was being finalized at year end.

Simultaneously, Ukraine started implementing the SDG agenda with the establishment of an inter-ministerial working group to enhance coordination and monitoring of various programmes and tailored country indicators. This body falls under the chairmanship of the First Vice Prime Minister.

The economy remained fragile and vulnerable to shocks. While it was considered to have stabilized with 3.4 per cent GDP growth in 2018, the high degree of reliance on international macro-economic assistance, the relatively slow pace of reforms and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine continued to put pressure on the economy. The ruling majority in parliament, the cabinet and presidency forged consensus and initiated a multitude of large scale reforms (land reform, constitutional reform, public administration reform, energy sector reform, anticorruption, and decentralization), and adopted a slew of legislation across all key sectors, including a transition to multiyear budget planning. The implementation of such legislation was constrained as most sector reforms remained predicated on the outcome of the presidential and parliamentary elections slated for 2019.

Reports on poverty showed mixed results in 2018. An overall positive reduction of poverty by income coincided with an increase of poverty by deprivations. Simultaneously, the data suggested an increase in inequality by income. This was particularly true for households with three or more children in Ukraine (18 per cent of the population, representing 45.3 per cent of the poor).

Despite a relatively high level of government spending on social safety nets (4,9 per cent of GDP), the country's performance in reducing poverty and protecting the vulnerable, measured by coverage of the poorest and adequacy of benefits, was limited. This was mainly because Ukraine's social protection system is a combination of welfare programs inherited from the former Soviet Union and many added benefits, which are predominantly categorical, thus creating a welfare system that is complex and poorly adapted to current needs. In total, there are more than 130 distinct categories. In 2018, the Government adopted a comprehensive methodology on integrated social protection at the decentralized level.

The decentralization reform has begun to deliver results. Newly formed local authorities (874 consolidated municipalities) received a larger set of responsibilities in terms of service delivery and saw their budgets increased compared to pre-reform levels. Financial data suggest that local authorities tended to prioritize economic affairs such as roads and utilities, often at the expense of social services.

Existing national child protection systems and structures have failed to systematically address key challenges, particularly in the areas of family separation, access to justice for all children and protection from violence, abuse and exploitation.

Ukraine has one of the highest numbers of children separated from their families in the region. Despite the ongoing de-institutionalization reform, approximately 106,000 children remained separated from their families and placed in childcare institutions, predominantly from extremely poor families having at least one parent and/or caregiver alive. The country lacked reliable data and information that could meaningfully inform policies and programmes in this area. Family-oriented care systems and community-based 'gatekeeping' mechanisms were not widespread, and were often weak or inefficient.

Children with disabilities represented a significant percentage of children in state run residential institutions. The scale-up of the early identification and early intervention models remained slow, although the Government introduced a national Platform on Early Intervention in 2016.

Violence against children also posed a significant challenge. A UNICEF-supported knowledge, attitudes and practices study from June 2018 documented widespread beliefs reinforcing the culture of violence. Sixty seven per cent of adults interviewed believed that physical punishment could be applied to a child with educational purpose; 46 per cent of men and 32 per cent women respondents believed that the victim of domestic violence was guilty. And one in two people believed that smacking children was not an act of violence.

In the absence of national system for prevention, early identification, registration and response to violence against children cases, cross-sectoral cooperation among health, education, social, legal and other services remained a priority. Lack of reliable data hindered efforts to reveal the pervasive nature of violence and convince decision makers of the need to invest in comprehensive services at local level. Specialized services for cases of sexual violence and

exploitation and other complex cases of violence against children were limited.

In the justice sector, ongoing reforms on juvenile justice led to a sharp reduction in the number of children remanded to judicial care. However, the justice system needs further strengthening for the protection of rights of child victims and witnesses, as well as introduction of models of restorative justice such as diversion and mediation.

In the education sector, in 2018 the Government adopted the “New Ukrainian School” approach that set out values and principles of the pedagogy of partnership and promoted inclusive education and the child-centred model of education. As part of the New Ukrainian School approach, the Government also developed and introduced a safe schools concept that integrated the principles of child friendliness, school safety and a protective learning environment. It supported crucial priority areas of the Ministry’s education reform through policy and curricular changes at national level, notably the acquisition by children of key life competencies and crosscutting skills, motivation of teachers, and a stronger overall focus on children.

As an additional pillar to the new approach, the MOES recently introduced the Programme for International Student Assessment, which aims to assess the levels of literacy as defined by ‘capacity to apply knowledge, analyse, reason, communicate, interpret and solve real life problems.’ This approach is consistent with UNICEF’s notion of competency-based quality education.

The waiting lists for pre-school enrolment decreased from 46,898 in 2017 to approximately 39,000 in 2018. However, access to early childhood education remained a challenge, particularly for children in rural areas. Young children living with disabilities continued to have fewer opportunities to access such programmes across the country. This was true despite the increase in the number of kindergartens with inclusive groups from 425 in 2017 to 578 in 2018.

Ukraine made significant progress in the area of inclusive education through a series of structural, legislative, financial and programmatic initiatives. Legal amendments and financial initiatives were introduced. These included: central budget subvention toward inclusive education for municipalities, increasing salaries for teachers who work with children with disabilities, securing additional funding for teacher-assistants, and setting the parameters of partnership between schools and experts on special education.

Combined with deinstitutionalization efforts, these initiatives resulted in the enrolment of 11,700 children with special needs in schools, a 61 per cent increase from the previous year. Financial and legal support were secured for the newly established network of inclusive resource centres. By end of 2018, almost 500 centres were reported to be functioning.

Although the total public and private health spending exceeded the global average for Ukraine’s income level, outcomes of health services remained weak. Public health spending averaged 4 per cent of GDP in recent years. Households co-financed healthcare expenditures at the same level as government through out-of-pocket payments, reaching almost 50 per cent of total health expenditures, among the highest rates in Europe.

In 2018, non-communicable diseases represented a heavy disease burden, with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and tuberculosis (TB) the most serious. Ukraine progressed in prevention of mother-to-child transmission, with the rate decreasing from 7 per cent in 2005 to

2.2 per cent in 2017. Tuberculosis continued to be the main cause of death among people living with HIV.

Immunization coverage remained alarmingly low. Ukraine experienced the largest measles outbreak in Europe, with 47 000 measles cases in 2018, including 16 deaths (10 adults and 6 children). At the end of November 2018, the following immunization coverage rates were officially reported: 76 per cent for MMR1 at 12 months, 78 per cent for MMR 2 at 6 years of age; 54 per cent for DTP3 under 1 year of age, 53 per cent for hepatitis B3 under 1 year of age and 54 per cent for polio 3 under 1 year of age. With the low polio coverage rate, Ukraine remained on the red list as a country with high risk of a polio outbreak. Recent data from an independent National Health Index Survey suggested that support for vaccination remained at 75 per cent among parents with children, and negative attitudes toward immunization decreased slightly, from 13 per cent in 2017 to 11 per cent in 2018.

In 2018, the health sector continued its reform process. The National Health Service, an important pillar of the reform, was newly established to implement the principle of 'money-follows the patient' and pay for provided health services. This payment mechanism was gradually introduced to replace the Soviet model of payment by the number of beds. The national campaign on the selection of family doctors, physicians and paediatricians began in April 2018. The National Health Service signed contracts with 623 medical facilities and doctors allowing private clinics to provide primary health care to access the package covered by the National Health Service. For the first time, Ukrainians could freely choose a doctor, without referring to their place of residence. Over the course of the year, almost 20 million Ukrainians signed declarations with the doctors of their choice thanks to the newly introduced electronic health system.

The Government also extended the validity of the law allowing external procurement of vaccines to March 2020. International organizations, including UNICEF, will provide temporary assistance until then. The Ministry of Health will establish a central procurement agency and develop its capacity.

In Eastern Ukraine, the operational environment remained complex throughout 2018. The contact line and the de facto barrier created between government controlled areas and non-government controlled areas minimized the economic exchange among the territories and hindered freedom of movement of families and children. Breaches of the ceasefire agreement occurred on a daily basis along the contact line, limiting access and putting children and their families at further risk. In 2017 and 2018, civilian casualties resulting from land mines and explosive remnants of war (ERWs) accounted for 40 per cent of casualties. Mine-related incidents and handling of the remnants accounted for 65 per cent of child casualties in 2017 and 2018.

The presence of armed personnel in and around schools was reported throughout the year. The proximity of military operations to schools increased the risk of collateral damage to educational institutions, of injuries and of sexual violence against students and school staff. Forced recruitment of boys into armed groups also was a risk. Access to civil registration continued to pose a problem for children born in non-governmental controlled areas.

Hostilities continued to damage critical infrastructure and disrupt basic social services, further isolating rural communities along both sides of the contact line. This was particularly true for the water infrastructure and the provision of water and sanitation. In 2018, there were 105

incidents reported on both sides of the contact line, putting at risk 4.6 million people who relied on centralized water systems.

Nearly 30 per cent of people living close to the contact line experienced frequent water shortages, either daily or weekly. The number of people accessing trucked water dropped from 12 per cent to 7 per cent in one year due to financial constraints. A REACH assessment conducted in Donetsk and Luhansk government-controlled areas suggested that many settlements continued to highlight water supply as their most pressing need.

In non-government controlled areas, access to drinking water via piped supply dropped from 64 per cent before the conflict to approximately 53 per cent at the end of 2017. Thirteen per cent of households reported daily water shortages.

Quality of care and access to health care continued to worsen, particularly in areas along the contact line. An estimated 1.3 million people remained in need of essential health services. For households with children within five kilometres of the contact line in government-controlled areas, barriers included the cost of medicine (30 per cent), crossing checkpoints, distance to facilities, cost of travel to facilities and lack of facilities.

The conflict increased the vulnerability of the population to HIV/AIDS, especially considering the increased reporting of substance abuse, termination of substitution therapy for injecting drug users, and limited access that children and adolescents had to HIV preventative and treatment services.

The range of protection issues affecting children in eastern Ukraine included displacement, exposure to violence, including gender based violence, limited access to birth registration for children born in non-government controlled areas, family separation and psychosocial distress. Thousands of children bore the cognitive and emotional scars of the traumatic experience that became their everyday reality. Children's limited awareness of the risks of landmines resulted in injuries directly related to the conflict.

Part 2: Major results, including in humanitarian action and gender, against the results in the Country Programme Documents

2018 was the first year of the new country programme 2018-2022 for UNICEF Ukraine. This brought a major programming shift. While the previous programme was structured around cross-sectoral outcomes and a stand-alone emergency programme, the new country programme mirrored the new organizational strategic plan's goal areas. It integrates development, recovery and humanitarian interventions, with the intent of strengthening the humanitarian and development nexus.

Emergency preparedness remained high on the agenda, and in response to potential localized flare-ups, UNICEF developed, with the support of the UNICEF Regional Office, an emergency readiness snapshot covering 50,000 people.

Responding to the humanitarian needs of hundreds of thousands of children and capitalizing on the experience gained, UNICEF expanded its development programme in support of the country's reform agenda, capitalizing on every opportunity to advocate for children and young people. In doing so, UNICEF utilized a broad spectrum of change strategies and approaches to

achieve planned results. Programming in gender equality was mainstreamed across all sectors' development and humanitarian interventions.

In 2018, UNICEF increased its leadership in promoting changes for children by scaling up its advocacy and strategic communication on children's rights in traditional and digital media, as well as by strengthening its partnerships with key actors in the government and private sector, donors, civil society partners and UN agencies. UNICEF participated in inter-agency fora and contributed to initial discussions on the UN reform implementation in Ukraine.

On average, UNICEF created more than 110 million media impressions per quarter. The rate increased by 29 per cent in 2018, with 90 per cent of UNICEF messages receiving positive feedback. In 2018, UNICEF remained the most reported UN or international agency in Ukraine, receiving 46 per cent of the total UN media coverage.

Goal area 1: Every child survives and thrives

Throughout 2018, UNICEF supported implementation of health reform focusing on the primary health care level, while addressing critical issues related to immunization, including a measles outbreak, and responding to humanitarian needs in Eastern Ukraine. UNICEF utilized a wide array of strategies, ranging from evidence generation to capacity development and communication for development to achieve the intended results.

During 2018, UNICEF facilitated the dialogue among various stakeholders involved in health reform and improved their understanding and capacity through several nation-wide events and dedicated Summer and Winter Schools. In total, more than 600 health workers and managers from all regions of Ukraine strengthened their knowledge on health management and public health.

To address financial bottlenecks, UNICEF Ukraine, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health, developed a budget brief on primary health care. The budget brief helped to identify several trends and areas of concern in primary health financing resulting from the fiscal decentralization reform.

To address the issue of professional medical cadres, in 2018, UNICEF continued its cooperation with the Testing Board of Ukraine. This cooperation resulted in improving the content of the tests for medical students in relation to immunization, mother and child health and public health. The revised tests were applied to the first cohort of interns in 2018 and the results were being analysed at year end. UNICEF conducted the analysis of the managerial workforce in the primary health care system, and assisted the Government in identifying the most qualified candidates for further capacity development.

UNICEF continued to support the Government in ensuring an uninterrupted supply of vaccines through international procurement in 2018. UNICEF also provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Health by participating in the working group on the reform of the procurement of drugs, while building the capacity of newly recruited staff from the recently established central procurement agency through their participation in the Vaccine Procurement Forum organized by UNICEF Supply Division.

To strengthen the national immunization programme, UNICEF continued to provide technical support to the public health centre to monitor the availability of vaccines at oblast and rayon

levels, as well as in health facilities, and assist in facilitating vaccine redistribution.

UNICEF and the World Health Organization facilitated and participated in the Effective Vaccines Management assessment. The primary aim of the exercise was to identify bottlenecks and good vaccine management practices. The agencies also used the assessment to increase the capacity of the Government in conducting immunization programme internal audits.

With UNICEF assistance, Ukraine optimized the immunization schedule in line with World Health Organization and UNICEF recommendations. An unnecessary second dose of BCG was removed, and the hepatitis B schedule was optimized for the opportunity to use combined vaccines.

To increase the acceptance of vaccines among parents, UNICEF supported the Government through communication interventions reaching more than 7 million people. More than 250,000 parents were engaged with education content on social media on vaccination and measles. Approximately 800,000 mothers saw personal video stories of popular bloggers-mothers about their experience with vaccination. More than 2.6 million parents learned about the risks of infectious diseases by watching a YouTube video (<https://goo.gl/TqfpBB>).

Recent data from the National Health Index Survey confirmed the challenges associated with the immunization programme. Support for vaccination among parents with children stagnated at 74.5 per cent. The percentage of the population with negative attitudes toward immunization did not change significantly in spite of advocacy and public education efforts in 2018. The percentage with such negative attitudes decreased by only 3 per cent, from 12.7 per cent in 2017 to 9.6 per cent in 2018.

UNICEF continued to support the Government in monitoring the measles outbreak, collecting data related to the outbreak and undertaking data analysis, while providing communication support daily. Considerable challenges remained, and measles continued to pose a national threat.

In conflict-affected areas of Donetsk and Luhansk, both in government and non-government controlled areas, 1,123 families with children under five living along the contact line benefited from an e-voucher system which gave them access to essential medicines. To further strengthen the cold chain along the contact line, UNICEF supported 78 health facilities, providing cold chain equipment and installing larger cold rooms in two health facilities in government-controlled areas.

While sector-specific interventions were implemented in support of the early childhood development agenda, UNICEF initiated a consultancy to map out existing national level early childhood development-related initiatives with the Government and stakeholders to support the design and development of an inclusive early childhood development draft action plan.

To strengthen coordination in the area of adolescent health, in 2018, UNICEF supported the establishment of the National Adolescent Health Advisory Group under the Ministry of Health. This group discussed the revision of policy documents, such as those defining the age of adolescence and of consent and a screening questionnaire for adolescents. UNICEF also empowered adolescents for their voices to be heard on health-related issues. As a result, a youth and adolescents working group was initiated under the Ministry of Health to ensure their

participation in the decision-making process.

While developing and supporting adolescent-oriented services in primary health care in two pilot regions, UNICEF also trained 385 service providers on youth friendly approaches. UNICEF advocated and provided inputs to the revision of the law on the minimum age of consent for adolescents to receive health services. UNICEF also supported the update and review of prevention of mother to child transmission guidelines, while optimizing antiretroviral treatment for children, pregnant women and adults in the context of the emergency response in non-government controlled areas of eastern Ukraine.

As part of the elimination of mother to child transmission of HIV (e-MTCT) and congenital syphilis agenda, UNICEF initiated the process of validation for Ukraine. During the year, the e-MTCT working group was established under the public health centre and made a substantial progress in the implementation of the e-MTCT validation roadmap.

UNICEF also provided technical support to ensure proper treatment of opportunistic infections in HIV positive children. The situation analysis of HIV/TB in children was conducted and presented to national health authorities. Sixty TB doctors and were trained on HIV/TB in children.

A national campaign organized for young people during February-March 2018 increased HIV testing in youth friendly facilities by 44 per cent compared to testing in a similar period in 2017. More than 7,637 teens participated in a social media campaign, which led to the generation of content related to HIV testing and healthy lifestyle reaching more than 2 million young people online. The campaign reached more than 3.2 million young people through multi-media platforms and the engagement of a top celebrity artist. (<https://goo.gl/QD5Axb>)

In the non-governmental controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk, UNICEF delivered five shipments of antiretroviral drugs and other HIV treatment commodities, ensuring access to life saving medications and uninterrupted treatment for 11,200 people living with HIV, including 214 children.

Goal area 2: Every child learns

In 2018, Ukraine continued to make progress toward increased quality and inclusive education for all, including access to early childhood development within the framework of ongoing education reform and expanding platforms where young people can express their views on issues of concern. UNICEF also continued to ensure uninterrupted access to quality education in conflict-affected areas in Eastern Ukraine.

To support the strengthening of effective education systems for learning outcomes, UNICEF provided technical support to the Government in planning for the Programme for International Student Assessment implementation through the establishment of an interagency coordinating process. UNICEF also contributed to the development of the national roadmap.

As part of the ongoing New Ukrainian School education reform, UNICEF supported the Ministry to improve the learning environment and create opportunities for scaling up Early Childhood Environment services in Eastern Ukraine and across the country. Support was provided for the implementation of an early childhood education rating system. This tool was designed to assess group programmes for preschool-kindergarten aged children, and included a rapid

review of the early learning context used to align the Basic Standards of Preschool Education with international early childhood education standards.

The safe schools concept adopted within the education reform became an entry point for UNICEF for modelling the provision of a competency-based safe and enabling learning environment for the achievement of better learning outcomes for children. Fourteen selected educational facilities started implementing their individual action plans covering 2018/2019. Rapid needs and gap assessments, along with teacher, student and community consultations, informed school plans, with safety of children and new student-centred teaching methodologies as main objectives. Approved plans were co-financed by local authorities and UNICEF.

While competency-based learning and LSE were mainstreamed into the New Ukrainian School reform agenda, the Government, with UNICEF support, initiated the scaling up of the LSE programme through in-service teacher training and a newly developed online module. More than 21,000 teachers across the country already completed the LSE course.

To advance inclusive education reform, UNICEF supported in-service teacher's modules on inclusion, as well as the establishment of 500 inclusive resource centres across the country, with the mandate to assist educators to include children with special needs in classes. A comprehensive guide on the structure and operations of the centres was produced and provided to inclusive resource centre staff.

UNICEF developed a research tool to assess the impact of risk exposure on adolescent development and the protective nature the education system plays in mitigating the impact of risk exposure for different groups. The tool was endorsed by the Government as an impact assessment tool for joint pilot projects. UNICEF supported the implementation of related interventions.

UNICEF supported the Government in the development of the national youth strategy 2020-2025 and the model of youth participation. U-report expanded to 74,000 U-reporters (70 per cent girls and 30 per cent boys) who were engaged through weekly polls. Data was regularly used by central institutions including the Ministries of Justice, Youth and Sports, Social Policy and Health. An additional 10,000 young people were reached through a U-ambassadors' peer-to-peer campaign and 360 received legal counselling through uPartners.

The UNICEF UPSHIFT programme was launched in Kharkiv city, Eastern Ukraine's largest city. Four waves were organized, with the participation of 40 teams of young people trained to build skills and capacities suitable for the 21st century, including designing and implementing social impact projects. A small grants project promoting civic engagement also was launched in the conflict-affected areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, reaching 1,619 adolescents through 26 projects in its first wave. UNICEF promoted girls' empowerment through the UPSHIFT programme, and their participation reached 72 per cent. This was communicated widely through social media, while joining efforts with more than 75 partners in support of the United Nations Secretary-General's campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women (UNiTE).

In the conflict affected areas of Donetsk and Luhansk, 46,000 children benefitted from supplies provided to schools and kindergartens, including 19,000 reached through early childhood development and educational kits and 27,000 reached with educational supplies including sports equipment, school furniture and kindergarten supplies.

The rehabilitation of 50 preschool facilities in the government-controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk and in Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia regions was completed, providing early childhood development opportunities to 1,061 children through the creation of new kindergarten seats. Emergency repairs were completed in 33 schools along the contact line, benefiting 7,000 children with uninterrupted learning opportunities in improved facilities.

UNICEF was instrumental in providing coordination and guidance to the education sector on conflict sensitive education through capacity building efforts of partners. The education cluster, co-chaired by Save the Children and UNICEF, continued to document attacks on schools and advocate with all the parties in the conflict on the importance of respecting international humanitarian law. Additional advocacy was conducted with the Government of Ukraine to endorse the Safe School Declaration. This included two roundtable events, which contributed to an official recommendation to sign the declaration issued by the MoES to the Vice Prime Minister.

Goal area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

Through recovery and development efforts and in response to identified gaps, UNICEF continued to enhance the capacities at national, regional and local levels, support the child-centred services in selected municipalities and contributed to strengthening the child protection system. Although many of those services were introduced through humanitarian interventions, UNICEF continued its advocacy with local authorities to ensure their sustainability. UNICEF and partners addressed the social and PSS needs of a large number of children and their caregivers in the most conflict-affected communities of Ukraine.

UNICEF worked directly with the Government to advocate for more child-focused welfare reforms, with more focus on prevention of separation of children from their families, de-institutionalization, community-based child and family support services (including early intervention). This advocacy, complemented by UNICEF's technical support to the Government in drafting a financial framework for the de-institutionalization reform with the 'money follows the child' principle, will eventually assist the authorities to shift the services from residential care to family and community-based care and support.

To strengthen monitoring of violations of child rights at local level, including in alternative child care institutions using the child tracking tools, UNICEF signed a memorandum of understanding with the Office of the Ombudsman, Ministry of Social Policy and the Ukrainian Child Rights Network. Trainings of local stakeholders were conducted.

UNICEF also contributed to knowledge generation on child protection, providing children, their caregivers and communities with evidence to prevent violence against children and gender-based violence cases. A newly developed training package on positive parenting addresses concerns of children and caregivers. It includes tools to prevent violent methods of discipline and improve communication between adolescents and their parents. This was a new direction for UNICEF's work in Ukraine that, in the long-run, will address the issues of increased violence, bullying and other protection challenges.

As a result of the first nationwide rapid survey on domestic violence among men and women aged 18-55, conducted in June 2018, UNICEF co-sponsored the launch of 'Talk against violence' programme, a multi-media-based movement aimed at fostering a dialogue on

domestic violence, including violence against children and gender-based violence. More than 7.5 million people were reached. The movement also involved the Ministry of Social Policy and the United Nations Population Fund.

UNICEF supported the Government in drafting a legal framework on justice for children (J4C), including the J4C Law and the Order on Mediation for children in conflict with the law. The ongoing capacity building of police, mediators and professionals working in the field of justice resulted in improved skills and a more child-centred approach. The training programmes for police were integrated into the curricula of leading universities, the Police Academy and in-service training institutions for police.

A memorandum was signed between the Ministry of Justice, Coordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision and USAID for the development of new services for diversion and mediation for juveniles in conflict with the law.

UNICEF ensured smooth interagency coordination of inter-sectoral platforms, including on J4C and early intervention, bringing together the Ministries of Social Policy, Health, Education, Justice, and Police, as well as sub-national, development and civil society organization partners. Those platforms were instrumental in facilitating dialogue and enhancing cooperation around child rights issues, as well as in promoting new and cross-sectoral models of work.

As part of UNICEF's global commitment to coordinate the humanitarian response in the area of child protection, UNICEF continued to lead the child protection sub-cluster, contributing to the overall coordination of local and international organizations active in conflict affected regions, as well as the mapping of existing projects, services, initiatives and advocacy. UNICEF contributed to the implementation of the child protection programmes under the Humanitarian Response Plan and UNICEF Humanitarian Action for Children.

In government and non-government controlled areas of Eastern Ukraine, UNICEF and partners addressed social and psychosocial needs of approximately 123,500 children and their caregivers affected by the ongoing conflict. UNICEF also contributed to knowledge generation on child protection by providing children, their caregivers and communities with information on child protection risks to prevent violence against children and gender-based violence cases.

UNICEF-supported mobile teams continued to address the immediate needs of more than 5,600 women, girls and boys affected by gender-based violence and domestic violence. This work contributed to the development of a legal and administrative framework on domestic violence at the national level.

UNICEF continued to build knowledge and motivate safe practices related to mines and unexploded ordnance through communication for development interventions, including a digital education campaign and capacity building of adult trainers and young leaders on mine risk education. Some 76 teachers became trainers on mine safety and 1,442 children, including 246 peer-to-peer became master trainers who will in return conduct learning sessions on mine risk education for children in Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts in 2019. A digital education campaign with comic cartoons (<https://youtu.be/xGOxsZFJIHE>) and an edutainment video with a local team of young experimenters (<https://youtu.be/ggZlxRYuxnk>) reached more than 613,431 children with lifesaving messages on mine safety.

UNICEF also initiated a new partnership with Danish Refugee Council-Danish Demining Group

on situation analysis on child mine victims and mapping of available services. This was the first ever attempt to strengthen the protective environment for child mine victims through community support networks and awareness raising. It will contribute to the development of essential foundation blocks for comprehensive child mine victim assistance in Ukraine.

At the end of December, the Government approved the Mine Action Law, which became the guiding document for mine risk education coordination and scaling up of interventions in the coming years.

UNICEF joined other UN agencies in preparing a paper on challenges and recommendations for birth registration of children born in the non-government controlled areas. The paper was included in the advocacy package on social cohesion shared with key national stakeholders and donors. UNICEF also facilitated discussions with the representatives of the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders to simplify and accelerate the process of registration of births and deaths.

Goal area 4: Every child lives in a safe and clean environment

During 2018, UNICEF's support was instrumental in ensuring the provision of safe water to more than 1.7 million families living in the conflict-affected areas of Eastern Ukraine, both in government controlled and non-government controlled areas. UNICEF supported the major centralized systems operated by Voda Donbassa and Popasna Vodakanal, as well as a number of decentralized networks in remote areas of eastern Ukraine, and responded to critical sanitation and hygiene issues at facility and community level.

In 2018, the central water companies (Voda Donbassa and Popasna Vodakanal) were provided with pumps, pipes, fittings, and other necessary elements, to replace defective or outdated equipment and ensure uninterrupted water supply to 255,087 people along the contact line. To strengthen the capacity of company workers on safety and security as well as to reduce the number of incidents, UNICEF supported mine risk education sessions and first aid trainings.

UNICEF also assisted five small scale vodokanals in Donetsk oblast and four in Luhansk oblast. An assessment aimed at identifying major bottlenecks and priority measures for each vodokanal was ongoing, and support to develop rehabilitation and risks mitigation plans will be provided in 2019. In the non-government controlled area of Luhansk, UNICEF provided a sodium hypochlorite plant to Luhanskvoda to improve access to safe drinking water, securing a sustainable drinking water supply for 100,000 people. This was the first project for UNICEF to assist counterparts in transitioning from liquefied chlorine gas as technology associated with high environmental and civil risks, especially for areas located close to the contact line, where the risks of chlorine leakage due to shelling are high.

UNICEF initiated discussions with the Ministry of Ecology on the development of the environmental strategy. As part of UNICEF's support, one of the four laboratories was upgraded to serve as a reference for water analysis. This will allow UNICEF to work on different activities related to drinking water quality, verification of water treatment processes and a basin management project. At regional level, discussions on possible UNICEF support on solid waste management were conducted with the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts administrations. Those plans require further development.

UNICEF supported the provision of water treatment chemicals to water companies, benefiting 1,697,143 people. Since January 2018, UNICEF procured 438 tons of liquefied chlorine gas, 285 tons of sodium hypochlorite, 262 tons of activated carbon, 604 tons of coagulant, 11 tons of flocculant benefiting nearly 1.4 million people in Donetsk oblast and 500,000 people in Luhansk oblast. Given the safety and security risks of chemicals, UNICEF initiated assessments on the hazardous potential use of water treatment chemicals with the objective of developing a transition strategy for the water companies.

UNICEF supported the repair of water and heating systems in 89 facilities both in government controlled and non-government controlled areas, thus creating a favourable learning environment for students and better conditions for patients in hospitals.

UNICEF assisted 45,706 people through provision of bottled water and jerry cans, as well as the installation of water tanks. UNICEF also supported an e-voucher programme providing 9,000 children with hygiene items.

UNICEF organized the Children's Cinema Festival across conflict-affected regions and reached more than 51,000 children with edutainment interventions about hygiene practices. UNICEF conducted direct edutainment sessions on hygiene practices with 1,000 children in pre-school and school facilities in conflict-affected areas. Together with partners, UNICEF developed and piloted an interactive edutainment game and education materials on hygiene practices for 50,000 school-aged children. In non-government controlled areas, UNICEF supported menstrual hygiene sessions in schools for several hundred girls.

The WASH cluster was instrumental in providing coordination and guidance to the sector and in monitoring and documenting significant acute incidents on a real time basis, using information checked with engineers from the water companies and electricity companies and local authorities. More than 58 such reports were issued and distributed to international decision makers, including in-country embassies and donors, as well as advisors of key foreign governments. The WASH cluster played a key role in advocating with all parties for compliance with international humanitarian law and called for windows of silence for workers to be able to proceed with the repairs.

Goal area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life

UNICEF Ukraine promoted two universal child-focused policies that led to a 2 per cent increase in the social protection budget. The policies are expected to have an impact on at least half a million children.

The first policy, which is based on a Finnish model, provides a 'baby box' to every newborn in Ukraine. The 'baby box' contains essential hygiene items and clothes for newborns, as well as a comprehensive set of educational materials on parenting, vaccination and other elements of early childhood development. The Government implemented the initiative with assistance from UNICEF and the UN Office for Project Services. The programme was launched in September 2018 and more than 100,000 families had already benefitted by year end. It is expected that approximately 360,000 families will receive a 'baby box' on an annual basis.

The second policy is a partial reimbursement of the costs for all families and/or caregivers who officially employ nannies for children below six years old. The policy, which benefited 100,000 families, was enacted through a special tax deduction scheme and was equal to the minimum

subsistence level.

Both policies are universal in nature. They directly contribute to the realization of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 'no one left behind' principle of the SDGs. The adoption of the new policies resulted in an additional US\$105 million (0.4 percent of the state budget, or 2 percent of the social protection budget).

The new policies were adopted during a special parliamentary session run by children and youth and supported by UNICEF. The proceedings gave higher visibility to children and youth and their aspirations. The new policies sparked substantial debates in mass and social media. They also generated dozens of TV programmes, hundreds of print and online articles, as well as hundreds of thousands of social media reactions. This helped scale-up the child and family welfare agenda in national public discourse. The renewed public interest was used to advocate for a multi-stakeholder dialogue around the formulation of a comprehensive approach on child and family welfare.

Using its convening power, UNICEF co-chaired the inter-ministerial commission on child rights with government partners. The commission addressed several gaps of inter-governmental coordination across various reforms related to child welfare. It also helped to advocate for the scale-up of child and youth safety in different settings.

UNICEF successfully implemented the Child and Youth Friendly City Initiative in 2018. Some 22 municipalities signed a memorandum of understanding and an additional 138 (including some from the conflict-affected regions) expressed interest. The initiative brings high hopes for an accelerated implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the localization of SDGs through a prioritized agenda for children and youth. The municipalities currently covered by a memoranda of understanding have 3,652,000 residents, representing 9 per cent of the total population.

Each of the 22 municipalities conducted a situation analysis on child and youth rights, created an action plan to address the identified gaps, and a budget to support the action plan's implementation. Twelve of the 22 allocated an additional US\$30 million to implement their child and youth friendly action plans. In December 2018, UNICEF acknowledged 11 municipalities as child and youth friendly city candidates.

Children and youth actively participated throughout the various stages of discussions with the municipalities. With UNICEF's support, a multi-stakeholder coalition was established consisting of government partners, the United Nations Population Fund, national associations of municipalities and an umbrella group of youth organizations.

To support the SDGs implementation, UNICEF customized the global CFCI handbook, produced a manual with the framework of indicators enabling the establishment of a baseline, and tracked the progress for both SDGs and Convention on the Rights of the Child at municipal level.

The Child and Youth Friendly City Initiative received support from the Prime Minister of Ukraine. His engagement set the stage for a government proposal allowing municipalities to allocate an additional 1 per cent of the locally generated income tax to children and youth services after attaining child and youth friendly recognition from UNICEF. A final decision on the additional budget allocation will be taken in 2019.

Responding to a critical gap in locally driven social protection services for children and families, UNICEF promoted the reform of integrated social protection. The Government officially endorsed the methodology, which UNICEF developed and supported in 2018. UNICEF organized integrated social protection trainings attended by more than 200 officials and professionals from several municipalities. The capacities of local officials on case management methodology, inter-sectoral cooperation, local planning and budgeting and the establishment of social services were strengthened. Officials from 12 conflict-affected municipalities in Eastern Ukraine attended a special session of integrated social protection training adapted for the prevailing conditions. UNICEF advocacy resulted in the allocation of European Union funding for training municipalities.

In 2018, UNICEF Ukraine strengthened the capacity of the Government and other stakeholders and supported the generation of reliable and comprehensive data and analysis on child rights across various sectors and at different levels.

Thanks to UNICEF's advocacy and technical support, the Government submitted the long awaited 5th and 6th Consolidated report On the Realization of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Ukraine covering the period from 2011 to 2017. Through a network of the specialized non-governmental organizations, UNICEF facilitated the development of the 'shadow' report on Convention on the Rights of the Child implementation in Ukraine in order to ensure an impartial reflection of the situation on the rights of the child in Ukraine. For the first time, the national report included information on children affected by the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, including those from internally displaced families. The reports helped to address a number of critical gaps across child rights and supported advocacy efforts. The data gathered through the national report was a primary source in the development and adoption of the national action plan on the implementation of Convention on the Rights of the Child for 2018-2021.

In doing so, UNICEF supported the data collection and analysis capacity of the Government and other stakeholders, including the network of specialized non-governmental organizations in the area of child rights to monitor the situation of children in residential care institutions. As a result of this support, the network strengthened its capacity to monitor child rights and increased national representation through new members (from 12 to 18). The cascade training covered 85 regional non-governmental organizations from all 24 regions of Ukraine.

In early 2018, UNICEF, with the support of a UN joint regional mission, contributed to the preparation and the implementation of the MAPS mission, which resulted in the identification of six accelerators for the country. In doing so, UNICEF provided the Government with tailored recommendations on national-level SDGs data availability and compatibility with the system of global 232 SDGs indicators.

UNICEF also became a member of the inter-ministerial working group on SDGs chaired by the First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine. Thanks to UNICEF's technical assistance, the meta-data for all 172 nationally set SDG indicators were described, including the sources of collection and the possibilities of disaggregation. UNICEF's capacity development support resulted in the development of a draft SDGs monitoring system methodology to be approved by order of the Cabinet of Ministers 'on coordination of data collection and SDG monitoring.' To increase the awareness of media about SDGs, UNICEF organized a training for journalists.

In 2018, UNICEF initiated the process for development of the first SDGs for Children National Report. The structure and methodology of the report were endorsed by the multi-stakeholder inter-ministerial working group on SDGs. The SDGs for Children in Ukraine National Report was the first thematic report developed in Ukraine in relation to the SDGs implementation.

Part 3: Lessons learned and constraints

Along with the achievements noted above, 2018 had its share of challenges that affected the planned results and limited UNICEF's impact on child well-being. The conflict in Eastern Ukraine and the macro-economic instability posed considerable challenges and affected the pace and effectiveness of all reforms, including those in social sectors.

Ukraine continued to pursue an ambitious reform agenda covering all sectors directly influencing child well-being, including health care, education, decentralization, social protection and justice, among others. A number of constraints hampered the attainment of expected results.

Major transformations in social sectors coincided with parallel territorial reforms and decentralization of responsibilities to sub-national level. This overlap hampered major focus, guidance and support to be provided by local authorities and created multiple pressing needs on service deliveries at decentralized level.

Limited communication between national and regional/local administrations on the longer-term impact of the proposed changes resulted in some confusion and ultimately distrust in the Government-led reforms by a wide array of stakeholders, including the general public.

The capacity of government institutions to manage change and run large-scale reforms was limited, especially at municipal level. At best, the Government exercised the 'normative role', but it cannot provide sufficient guidance and the support required for coordination, demand generation and capacity development.

Because of limited communication on reforms, public demand for equitable investments in children was insufficient. This affected the reforms related to inclusive education and de-institutionalization.

The presidential and parliamentary elections, scheduled respectively for March and September 2019, were already casting a shadow on the routine work of government institutions. This was most pronounced in cases where officials held diverging political views or agendas.

This pre-election period could also bring a number of 'populistic' expenditures that, in turn, would limit the opportunities for other expenditures. There is a risk of politicians transferring 'stat' obligations (including existing unfunded mandates) to local authorities without adequate financing. The burden on social protection units is likely to remain high as the expected increase of the natural gas prices (a critical IMF conditionality) requires to maintain/if not to increase a largescale 'subsidy' programme.

Despite the significant international support provided to humanitarian and recovery interventions in conflict affected areas of Eastern Ukraine, critical public infrastructure, including educational, health and social facilities, lacked major financial investments from central

government. This calls for increased technical support from partners, enhanced coordination among actors and further advocacy with government, including through humanitarian clusters.

Humanitarian access remained an overall concern, in particular for the non-government controlled areas and in areas near the contact line (0-15 km zone) due to ongoing hostilities and the heavy presence of mines and ERWs. Closure of checkpoints caused delays for timely implementation of programme activities and related travels. The design of UNICEF's new country programme anticipated some of those challenges. Sub-offices located near the contact line effectively monitored the situation of children and women and responded quickly. The UNICEF office in Kyiv provided back up support to those operations as well as technical aid and financial assistance and strategic guidance, including liaison with UN and other development partners.

At national level, UNICEF effectively engaged with line ministries in key strategic reform areas. The Child and Youth-Friendly City Initiative enabled UNICEF to position child rights issues in the debate on reforms and to strengthen children's participation. The success of model municipalities and cities in formulating a budget for integrated social services offers an opportunity to address major gaps in the decentralization process identified by the local authorities.

System strengthening within the framework of the reforms became a key strategy and entry point for UNICEF across all areas of work. UNICEF combined its national level system strengthening support with a sub-national level modelling of new approaches for child focused service delivery, with the intent of further horizontal scale-up, implementing a systemic response. In Eastern Ukraine, UNICEF also continued to build capacity of local authorities and civil society organizations in providing quality services aimed at strengthening resilience and building social cohesion around children, further strengthening the nexus between humanitarian aid and development assistance.

Throughout 2018, UNICEF entered into new, high-level partnerships that supported advocacy efforts on child rights. In child and youth friendly cities and justice for children programmes, UNICEF engaged with the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Ministers and facilitated several inter-ministerial fora that resulted in enhanced inter-sectoral coordination and increased visibility and attention in the respective areas.

Fundraising for the humanitarian sector remained challenging. UNICEF Ukraine carefully reviewed its resource mobilization strategy for 2019 with a view to craft a refined and more successful strategy. The new strategy targets proposals to specific donors and also aims to reach out to new partners, including in the private sector.

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