UNICEF Annual Report 2014

Ukraine

Executive Summary

In 2014, Ukraine was shaken by the onset of a violent conflict that had far-reaching detrimental effects on Ukrainian children. The significant geopolitical dimension attached to the conflict carries repercussions for all areas of UNICEF engagement, including the newly emerging groups of most affected and vulnerable children, the shifting focus of donor attention and government priorities, public perception and partner capacities.

Ukraine is finding itself at a crossroads of having to deliver on an ambitious set of reforms within the European Union (EU) association process, or face the continuing threat of an economic default while paying a heavy price for national unity and integrity.

Having gone through a process of change, expansion, and refocusing, the United Nations system managed to regain relevance and significance in Ukraine. While the political significance of the situation and its associated risks have been the main thrust behind the restructuring and enhancement of the Regional Coordinator (RC) Office, UNICEF Ukraine managed to seek out momentum by consolidating and accelerating its position as a leader for children’s rights. Most relevant examples are the UNICEF Ukraine leadership role in three humanitarian action clusters; the funding secured for the emergency response through a consolidated inter-agency strategic planning process led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA); and the significant representation and contribution of UNICEF Ukraine to the Recovery and Peace-building Assessment (RPA) led by the United Nations, the World Bank and the EU.

The swift onset of the emergency response and the additional US$ 10 million in emergency funding that became available later in the year forced the UNICEF Ukraine organizational setup through major and sometimes painful processes of adaptation and expansion. The on-going emergency-related recruitment of a set of 18 new international and national staff members, the opening of zonal and antenna offices in eastern Ukraine, and the associated expansion of office space and new safety and security requirements, all revealed a number of administrative bottlenecks that the office as a whole is managing to overcome.

Implementation of the regular Country Programme 2012-2016 continued throughout the year, although the ousting of the old administration, presidential and parliamentary elections, the formation of a new government and the exchange of a certain part of the administration inflicted a good degree of delays and setbacks and evidenced the need for adaptation.

Despite the new (and to a large extent additional) emergency response role that programme staff had to embrace, process continued towards the achievement of key planned results. After years of policy advocacy, capacity building, piloting and research, the National AIDS Programme, which contains a key component developed by UNICEF Ukraine on prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT), was cleared by the Parliament. Likewise, development of key pillars within the child social services reform related to financing and budgeting continued throughout the year. In actual terms, this output will be at the heart of the
new government’s renewed focus on social service reform and will lead to a further acceleration of the better protection of the family environment encapsulated in Regional Knowledge Leadership Area (RKLA) 1. UNICEF Ukraine was quick to react to the troublesome economic developments in the country and the subsequently imposed International Monetary Fund (IMF) austerity measures by launching research on child poverty, and adding to the sharpened focus on poverty affecting families, social inequity and disparities. Overall, 2014 marked a distinct return of the Ukrainian administration to ‘listening and reception mode’, which, combined with a strong commitment to accelerate reforms, opens a window of opportunity for the years to come for UNICEF Ukraine to infuse new knowledge, best practices and cross-sectorial programmatic approaches.

The mid-term review process, originally planned for 2014, was postponed until mid-2015 amidst the turmoil and rapidly changing programme environment. In this context, the narrative of the mid-term review has somewhat changed from what was originally planned. In addition to being a routine critical review of the programme direction, the mid-term review planned for 2015 will now be put to use to challenge and confirm the overall validity of the Country Programme 2012-2016, given the new programme environment. It will also critically take into account the new requirements and particularities for realizing children’s rights in eastern Ukraine. With the Theories of Change further developed and evaluated, the 2014 Situation Analysis finalized and the Post-Conflict Need Assessment at hand in 2015, the postponement offers an array of new perspectives and opportunities.

With a tripling of funding becoming available for the Country Programme, strategic partnerships with the Government, donors and the private sector experienced a distinct acceleration in 2014. Diligent public advocacy has further strengthened public recognition and trust in the UNICEF brand, which will help to further accelerate advocacy for the child rights agenda in 2015.

Humanitarian Assistance

The political crisis that gripped Ukraine in 2014 turned into a humanitarian crisis during the second half of the year. The annexation of Crimea (south) by the Russian Federation led to the displacement of more than 15,000 ethnic Tartars to mainland Ukraine. However, the subsequent onset of armed rebellion in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblast in eastern Ukraine led to a much bigger wave of displacement. By the end of 2014, more than 630,000 individuals, including 130,000 children, were registered as internally displaced persons (IDPs), with a similar figure of people taking refuge in the Russian Federation. In 2014, 42 children were killed as a result of the conflict.

By the end of 2014, over 1,250,000 people living in the conflict-affected areas of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts (east) are facing considerable disruptions in the provision of basic services, including limited access to safe drinking water and adequate hygiene. Of the total affected population (5.2 million), 1.7 million are children. OCHA estimates that overall 1.4 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. The country is at high risk of outbreaks of communicable diseases: barely 50 per cent of the 7.9 million Ukrainian children are fully vaccinated. About 100,000 children and parents need support to address psychological distress caused by violence and traumatic events. Many children have limited access to education: at least 900 schools in conflict areas failed to open by 1 September 2014 due to safety concerns and it is unclear how many have opened since then due to the on-going insecurity.
Following the initial quick deployment of a number of UNICEF Ukraine field monitors to keep track of the situation of IDP children, UNICEF Ukraine grew into its new role of sector/cluster lead in the areas of WASH, education and child protection sub-sector/cluster.

A Strategic Response Plan (SRP) was launched in December 2014, calling for a total of US$ 189 million, out of which US$ 32.4 million are attributable to areas in which UNICEF aims to deliver against the 2015 Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC). Meanwhile fundraising from bilateral and multilateral donors is forthcoming and so far amounted to US$ 10 million. This includes around US$ 300,000 that was raised locally from corporate partners in addition to several in-kind donations from corporate partners.

By the end of 2014, UNICEF Ukraine had established a solid network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as implementing partners to deliver on the emergency-related programme priorities in the areas of psychosocial counselling, safe water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) conditions, school rehabilitation and mine risk education.

In the area of WASH, UNICEF Ukraine provided safe drinking water to 100,000 people in the affected areas. In addition, 19,944 people benefitted from the hygiene supplies (7,047 adult, baby and family kits). Hygiene promotion activities in schools provided information to 8,000 children on preventing life-threatening diseases.

In the area of education, around 20,000 internally displaced children benefitted from UNICEF Ukraine locally procured education kits (4,151) and PSD school supplies (13,600 items) distributed to IDP settlements, local schools and NGOs in affected areas. UNICEF Ukraine reached 200,000 families with children with information on mine and unexploded ordinance risks and safe behaviour.

In the area of protection, more than 27,000 children and members of their families benefited from child hotline services, with 94 per cent of the calls coming from boys and girls. In addition, 400 school psychologists were trained on identifying and responding to children’s heightened stress. These psychologists will reach 4,000 children in the post conflict/conflict areas by the end of April 2015. Twelve community protection centres were established in Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts (east) to provide protective services and/or information to over 40,000 children and caregivers affected by the conflict.

In the area of health, UNICEF Ukraine delivered 86 health emergency kits, including basic and specific drugs, disposable supplies and primary health care equipment that will cover 86,000 internally displaced persons for a three-month period in Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts (east). More are in the pipeline.

UNICEF Ukraine and partners reached over 5,000 mothers with information about the benefits of breastfeeding as a life-saving practice and counselling on breastfeeding to prevent the consumption of infant formula among internally displaced children.

Together with WHO, UNICEF Ukraine mobilized US$ 3 million for the procurement of polio vaccines. United Nations agencies are in the process of establishing a joint field presence in several locations, including in conflict areas. The establishment of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), the activation of the cluster system and the OCHA-led coordination structure have enhanced United Nations coordination and joint advocacy efforts around sensitive issues.
**Equity Case Study**

The following is a description of the UNICEF Ukraine HIV programme for most-at-risk adolescents (MARA), based on the final report of the assessment, *Taking stock of the UNICEF Ukraine MARA Programme*, commissioned by UNICEF Ukraine and written by an international consultant.

In the HIV Programme for MARA, UNICEF Ukraine aims to realise the rights of children, including the most disadvantaged and excluded children, and specifically contribute to halting the spread of HIV in Ukraine by focusing support and interventions on most-at-risk adolescents. UNICEF Ukraine strives to protect most-at-risk adolescents from HIV/AIDS in accordance with the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2014-2017 which strives to implement improved, equitable and proven HIV prevention and treatment interventions.

The Approach of UNICEF Ukraine:

The UNICEF Ukraine hypothesis is that by investing strategically in MARA and HIV and providing MARA with a comprehensive package of public health and community-based services responsive to their needs through innovative and integrated service delivery approaches aimed at increasing their access and uptake of HIV testing and counselling, their risk of HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) could be reduced, leading to reduction in HIV incidence overall.

MARA are among the worst-off children in terms of realizing the right to be born and remain HIV-free:

Ukraine has an estimated HIV prevalence rate of 0.62 per cent among its entire population. This remains one of the highest in Europe and Central Asia. The epidemic continues to be concentrated among populations with increased HIV risk (key populations), including people who inject drugs, sex workers and men who have sex with men. Globally, and in Ukraine, a key concern is reaching MARA and young adults, particularly young females engaged in sex work and/or injection drug use, and specifically contributing to halting the spread of HIV in Ukraine by focusing support and interventions. This population is falling through gaps in HIV services and makes up the bulk of the population of young people who are becoming newly infected with HIV in Ukraine.

Prevention coverage is insufficient for all key populations with only 24 per cent of adolescents who inject drugs covered, 69 per cent of female sex workers covered, 54 per cent of girls exploited for sex covered and 33 per cent of boys who have sex with males covered. The main barriers that are continuing to hamper service access for key populations, including MARA, and thus undermine a sustainable and effective HIV response are structural and service-related factors. These include issues related to gender equality, attitudes of society and service providers towards vulnerable and socially marginalised populations, service capacities, service delivery and quality, retention of staff in services and national and local administrations, policy, legal and regulatory frameworks, integration of community-based and public services and lack of MARA-friendly services. While MARA need health services and social support tailored to their needs, the majority of existing prevention programmes are primarily designed for adults. As such, social vulnerability factors hinder access to medical and social services for MARA.
Results/achievements:

The most significant results and changes in the enabling environment and service supply, demand and quality since the start of the MARA Programme include the following:

- MARA have been successfully integrated into the national HIV response (National AIDS Programme (NAP) 2014-2018 and draft national key populations strategy).
- Key legal service access barriers were effectively removed, such as the need for parental consent to access HIV testing and counselling for adolescents aged 14 and older.
- An essential package of HIV services and critical interventions to create a more enabling environment and improve the quality of services has been agreed for MARA at the national level, costed and integrated into the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria project.
- Community-based MARA services are linked to government health and social service providers and vice versa with basic bidirectional referral mechanisms in place.
- Good practices have been integrated into some national social service standards and healthcare protocols.
- Harmful social norms are also being tackled through national and local communications and advocacy.

On the numbers (data from the assessment report):

- The number of MARA appears to have decreased significantly since 2010 (from 165,000 in 2010 to 123,500 in 2013).
- More MARA (47 per cent in 2013, as compared to 38 per cent in 2008/2009) are receiving prevention means and commodities and know where to get tested for HIV.
- The percentage of MARA who engage in unsafe practices (use of non-sterile injecting equipment/unsafe sex) appears to have decreased from 50 per cent in 2008/2009 to 42 per cent in 2013.
- The percentage of MARA who access HIV testing and counselling services and receive their results appears to have slightly increased between 2008/2009 and 2013, particularly among adolescents who inject drugs (23 per cent in 2013, as compared to 16 per cent in 2008/2009) and adolescents living and working on the street (23 per cent in 2013, as compared to 12 per cent in 2008).

Moving forward:

UNICEF Ukraine will continue to work alongside the Government and NGOs to: 1) enable provision of youth-friendly, innovative and integrated models of HIV prevention, care and support services and increase access to and use of health and social services by MARA; and 2) increase the access of adolescents and young people of key populations to confidential, anonymous, and free HIV testing and counselling services and build linkages to HIV prevention, treatment, and care. Strategies include:

1. Strengthening the MARA voice to hold government/donors and key accountable on national and local levels.
2. Identifying and planning for new needs and demands of MARA on healthcare and social systems created by new global guidelines, technologies and means of communication.
3. Strengthening organisational and technical capacities of government and community structures in regards to MARA, including through technical support and the development of relevant technical resources.
4. Improving communication for social change to influence public opinions and reduce social pressure on decision-makers.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

AMP Annual Management Plan
ART Antiretroviral Therapy
BCP Business Continuity Plan
BGAN Broadband Global Area Network
C4D Communication for Development
CANADEM Canada’s Civilian Reserve
CBI competency-based interview
CCC Core Commitments for Children
CEE/CIS Central and Eastern Europe/Community of Independent States Regional Office
CERF Central Emergency Response Fund
CMT Country Management Team
CRC Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRP Crisis Response Plan
CSO civil society organisation
DBS Dry Blood Spot
DCT direct cash transfer
ECHO European Commission Humanitarian Office
EMOPS Office of Emergency Programmes
eMTCT elimination of mother-to-child transmission
EPF Emergency Programme Fund
EPI Expanded Programme on Immunization
ETB emergency trauma bag
EU European Union
EWEA Early Warning Early Action
GAP Gender Action Plan
GPS Global Positioning System
HAC Humanitarian Action for Children
HACT harmonised approach to cash transfers
HRBAP human rights-based approach to programming
HCT Humanitarian Country Team
HTC HIV testing and counselling
ICM integrated care model
ICSC` International Civil Service Commission
ICT information and communication technology
IDP internally displaced person
IMEP Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
IMF International Monetary Fund
IT information technology
MARA most-at-risk adolescents
MoES Ministry of Education and Science
MOSS Minimum Operational Security Standards
NAP National AIDS Programme
NGO non-governmental organization
NPA National Plan of Action
NRC Norwegian Refugee Council
OR other resources
UNICEF Ukraine continues to apply capacity development strategies to overcome identified capacity gaps of duty bearers, mainly within the realm of health and social service provision, but also with regards to parents and caregivers.

Within social service reform, capacity development of social workers on the implementation of the newly developed and government-approved unified assessment tools on children’s safety and service needs was essential to establishing a more systematic response to social protection for children and families. Training seminars for more than 60 state social workers (at least two social workers from each region in Ukraine) led to practical enhancements of the tools, particularly in terms of operationalizing on the ground, in an effort to make social work effective and relevant for children and families.

The ability of prosecutors responsible for monitoring the rights of children in detention facilities was enhanced with knowledge on child rights and child-sensitive skills thanks to the trainings conducted jointly by the Prosecutor’s Office, the Ukrainian office of the Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) and UNICEF Ukraine. The first of its kind, the trainings were based on the joint monitoring mission on the rights of children in the seven juvenile detention facilities, conducted in 2014 by HRO, civil society organisations (CSOs) and UNICEF Ukraine within the framework of the National Preventive Mechanism, which culminated in a special report by the HRO, *The Rights of Children in Detention*.

The capacity development model for interpersonal communication employed by the Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health (RMCH) programme has already shown positive
changes. Parents’ knowledge of and positive attitudes towards reproductive health, child health and disease prevention have increased through capacity building of primary health care professionals through the provision of standardised preventive health services/counselling and streamlined parenting messages. For example, there has been an up to 20 per cent decrease in immunization refusals in the pilot regions thanks to training of 800 primary health care workers on RMCH knowledge and communication skills. The institutionalisation of counselling modules in the postgraduate education curricula also ensured the coherent and continued capacity development of the future workforce of health care professionals.

**Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy**

Creation of evidence for policy dialogue and advocacy remains one of the key strategies of the Ukraine Country Programme.

Several initiatives that were developed over the past years bore fruit in 2014. Most prominently, the years of advocacy of UNICEF Ukraine with the Government of Ukraine to address the low immunization coverage related to weak vaccine procurement modalities and lack of vaccination supplies was officially acknowledged as a priority area to be discussed in the coalition agreement of the new government. In addition to the existing documentation of gaps and detrimental strategic policies, UNICEF Ukraine in consultation with the Ministry of Health (MoH) promptly started the development of policy and scenario plans that will help Ukraine to overcome bottlenecks in vaccine procurement and supply.

Meanwhile and largely due to advocacy based on evidence created through the UNICEF Ukraine health communication pilot project, integration of preventive health promotion and communication into the Health Sector Reform Strategic Plan was agreed with the MoH. This will increase parents’ demand for vaccine services.

In the area of PMTCT of HIV, evidence on the effectiveness of service interventions formalized by the evaluation resulted in the inclusion of the integrated care model (integrated medical and social services approach) into the National AIDS Programme 2014–2018.

Through the United Nations inter-agency compact, UNICEF Ukraine effectively advocated for enhanced social protection and social justice for children and families within the new legislation defining the rights of internally displaced persons, as well as regulating the provision of benefits and services. Through the same channel, the principle of the best interest of the child was duly reflected in the National Human Rights Strategy currently being developed by the Ministry of Justice.

Joint monitoring with the HRO of correctional facilities for minors resulted in a specialized report on the National Preventive Mechanism, in which key shortcomings and challenges in the justice system regarding minors in conflict with the law were identified. The expectation is that future high level advocacy with the HRO based on the findings from the report will lead to a more effective monitoring of juvenile detention facilities under the leadership of the Prosecutor’s Office.

**Partnerships**

A number of strategic partnership arrangements stood out in 2014 as highly effective tools for accelerating and amplifying advocacy messages to policy makers and the public alike.
UNICEF Ukraine partnered with the Ukrainian office of the Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) to advocate for the rights of displaced children with the Office of the Prime Minister. As a result, the Cabinet of Ministers instructed the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) to draft an Action Plan to protect children’s rights to education in affected areas.

Partnerships with HRO, the Organization for Security and Coordination in Europe (OSCE) and Save the Children led to the development and implementation of child rights monitoring mechanisms that will provide critical updates on the situation of children in crisis-affected areas and inform preventive measures and interventions.

UNICEF Ukraine forged strategic partnerships with the Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP), the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the Academy of Financial Management, and several NGOs, enabling a breakthrough in technical preparations towards the establishment of a client-based funding mechanism for child-related social services. At the same time, regional administrations, local practitioners and CSOs were drawn on as key partners in developing case management methods and referral system between medical and social services, as well as social service standards.

A significant breakthrough was made in the area of corporate fundraising in the context of the current crisis. In 2014, following preparatory work over the last years on how to best partner with corporate donors, UNICEF Ukraine managed to leverage more than US$ 350,000 in cash contributions from corporate donors such as Unilever, SAP and ING. This came in addition to in-kind donations of emergency-related supplies by Procter & Gamble, Unilever and Coca-Cola.

Long-standing partnerships with the Football Federation of Ukraine enabled UNICEF Ukraine to deliver messages to fight stigma and discrimination against internally displaced and refugee children, children living with HIV and disabled children during five football matches. The messages reached millions of viewers in stadiums and through live television transmissions, nationwide.

Similar platforms to engage youth, children and the public in the promotion of the UNICEF agenda for children’s rights were established through collaboration with the Government of Japan, the French Cultural Centre and the British Council.

External Communication and Public Advocacy

UNICEF Ukraine continued speaking out for children through integrated digital, broadcast and print media outreach and public advocacy with the aim of promoting child rights, fostering social inclusion, and creating social accountability for children.

In the crisis context, UNICEF Ukraine public advocacy focused on prompting the duty bearers and the public to respect child rights and called for action for children. UNICEF Ukraine public advocacy through international media, newspapers, magazines and UNICEF Ukraine social media accounts highlighting the effects of violence on children and the dire needs of children and families led to gradual increase of public interest in the emergency situation. This was evidenced by the increased response on social media: the most popular tweet had 3.6 million potential impressions. The steady growth in the number of social media followers on three priority platforms, Facebook, Twitter and VKontakte (with more than 43,000 new followers, the number of followers increased by 360 per cent), was testament to the growing recognition of UNICEF Ukraine. A communications package consisting of media stories, factographs and media releases, which was developed jointly by UNICEF Ukraine, the Central and Eastern
Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States Regional Office (CEE/CIS) and UNICEF Headquarters (HQ), contributed to the successful communication and advocacy efforts. In addition, media briefings to journalists at the United Nations in Geneva on the impact of the crisis on children resulted in considerable international coverage on CNN, the New York Times, Reuters, Agence France-Presse and other outlets, which also contributed to wide public advocacy.

Millions of people were reached through various partnerships and messaging about child rights on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC@25). Overall, 1,700 children, including 664 internally displaced children, children with disabilities and orphans, participated in the CRC@25 events. In addition, more than 400 media stories were generated, over three million people were reached through outdoor advertisements and online and over 2,500 people engaged in digital activation.

Thanks to UNICEF Ukraine and the MoH’s information campaign on polio immunisation, policy makers were outreached with advocacy messages on the importance of adequate supply of vaccines and procurement system reform. More than 10 million caregivers, including mothers of children aged 0-5 years and 100,000 internet users were outreached with child polio immunization messages.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

While Ukraine’s development ambitions are modelled after European best practices, regional commonalities across the CEE/CIS region would lend to a more resourceful application of knowledge transfer between countries. However, as a strategy for effective knowledge transfer, south-south and triangular cooperation are still in their infancy in the Ukraine Country Programme, despite the obvious strategic value that more effective heralding of Ukraine’s best practices and experience could bring in return.

In an attempt to increase exchange of knowledge and information on best practices for reducing HIV risks among MARA within the CEE/CIS region, UNICEF Ukraine provided assistance the Ukrainian Institute for Social Research to launch a regional learning hub with the NGO BelAU in the Republic of Belarus. Whereas the Belarus contribution focuses on providing resources in the area of capacity building, the envisioned learning hub is expected to benefit NGOs and government actors in other countries to build on or import the Ukraine experience and best practice in the area of research and documentation of MARA-specific issues.

Identification Promotion of Innovation

Promoting innovations as a strategy is finding its way into the Ukraine Country Programme. A good example is the use of social media to promote voluntary HIV counselling and testing (VCT) among young people.

In 2014, UNICEF Ukraine developed and launched the ‘Get Tested!’ educational HIV information campaign. This campaign uses the country’s largest social network site, Vkontakte, as a platform, which is a first of its kind VCT digital campaign in Ukraine.

The engagement modality, communication platform, target population and target area were carefully designed based on evidence and data on who needs to be outreached the most on HIV counselling and testing. In particular, vulnerable youth in Ukraine, while a key ‘risk group’ with significantly higher risk of exposure to HIV, have little knowledge about modes of
transmission, prevention of sexual transmission of HIV and HIV testing. At the same time, over 80 per cent of targeted youth use Vkontakte.

The campaign focused on targeting adolescents aged 16-19 years, both boys and girls, and primarily students from colleges and boarding schools in Kyiv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, and Zaporizhzhya. The first stage of the campaign, launched in December 2014, is a website with an interactive video game with an engagement factor. After playing the game, the user receives a direct SMS/email with an invitation to VCT and the address of the nearest youth-friendly clinic. The second stage, due to start in April 2015, involves a viral activation linked to ‘relationship update’ on the user’s Vkontakte profile. Upon update of ‘relationship status’, the user receives a message with an invitation to the VCT in the nearest youth-friendly clinic. Although too early to measure results, it is foreseen that the innovative VCT campaign will successfully engage youth in taking up VCT and learning more about HIV.

Support to Integration and cross-sectoral linkages

A great majority of the disadvantages experienced by vulnerable groups of children can be related to the absence of capable, effective, targeted and accessible social services for children and families. The removal of this bottleneck hinges on the reform of governance and financing of these specialized services, which, as a crosscutting and cross-sectorial principle, is at the very core of the UNICEF Ukraine country programme.

With a view to prevent the institutionalization of children falling out of families in difficult life situations, as well as children in conflict with the law, which require restorative interventions from both justice and social service outreach, UNICEF Ukraine seamlessly continued co-chairing the established working group between the MoF and the MoSP throughout the crisis. To inform this process, UNICEF Ukraine continued funding two further steps of budgetary research on addressing the financial mechanism of the social sector reform through the Academy of Financial Management. With the funding mechanism for client-based services established, Ukraine has come one step closer to developing a normative framework for social contracting, which is needed to fully operationalize truly integrated service delivery models.

Cross-sectorial linkages in the PMTCT Integrated Care Model (ICM), subject of a recent evaluation in 2014, focused on introducing integrated medical and social services for drug addicted pregnant women at Centres for Integrated HIV Prevention. UNICEF Ukraine is supporting the bridging of the paradigm-gap between the MoSP and the Ministry of Health by developing standards of care for government and non-government social and outreach workers, which are one of the main bottleneck to accessing integrated care model (ICM) health facilities for the affected groups of women.

As part of the on-going emergency response and banking on the lessons learned, UNICEF Ukraine promoted cross-sectorial linkages between social services, justice, protection, health and emergency services through the establishment of community support centres for internally displaced persons in several locations within the affected area. Operated by a number of partner NGOs, these support centres provide protection and services, including the provision of supplies, legal advice on their status, registration and social assistance, as well psychological support for families and children.

Service Delivery

As an integrated part of the 2012-2016 Country Programme, UNICEF Ukraine endeavours to demonstrate effective service delivery methods to leverage long-term system change and to
increase the core capacities of partners. In this sense, the strategic value of the demonstration and evaluation of innovative services for nationwide scale-up exceeds the direct face value of the services rendered. This was the case with the UNICEF-supported youth-friendly clinics, Early Interventions, MARA outreach services, and protection support centres.

However, UNICEF Ukraine resorted to service delivery to direct beneficiaries, as part of the emergency response, due to the increasing needs of vulnerable children and families in crisis-affected areas and the considerable strain put on national and local capacities.

Besides direct distribution of basic/urgent needs such as safe drinking water, hygiene kits, and health emergency kits, UNICEF Ukraine established a solid network of NGOs as implementing partners to deliver on emergency-related programme priorities in psychosocial counselling, safe water, hygiene and sanitation conditions, school rehabilitation and mine risk education. UNICEF Ukraine also ensured monitoring of emerging issues and needs of internally displaced children to enable coordinated and timely response according to the needs.

**Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation**

In 2014, UNICEF Ukraine launched the Situation Analysis (SitAn) of Children in Ukraine, which is to be published in early 2015. The SitAn provided an opportunity to conduct an in-depth review and analysis of inequalities and root causes of rights deprivations of children. In reviewing changes in the programme environment, the SitAn pays particular attention to children with disabilities, drug-using pregnant women, most-at-risk adolescents and children affected by poverty.

In applying the human rights-based approach to programming (HRBAP), UNICEF Ukraine identified children affected by the current conflict as the most vulnerable and disadvantaged at an early point in 2014. The emergency response carefully took into consideration the capacity gaps on the side of duty bearers, such as parents and caregivers, school psychologists and health workers, but also governmental response mechanisms and non-government players responding to the crisis. This analysis enabled UNICEF Ukraine to tailor subsequent capacity building in the forms of training and coaching, but also mapping and coordination of the respective clusters.

By providing insights into child rights issues in the crisis context, UNICEF Ukraine collaborated successfully with the Human Rights Monitoring Mission deployed by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) throughout 2014. A number of inputs generated through UNICEF monitors deployed in the affected areas were picked up and flagged in the high-level quarterly OHCHR reports.

In 2014, UNICEF Ukraine made a distinct push to integrate communication for development (C4D) strategies into each of the child protection output areas. In addition to addressing detrimental practices by parents in child rearing and health, this drive focused specifically on ensuring the principle of non-discrimination and fighting stigma against disadvantaged groups of children. Another tool in the fight against stigma and discrimination was a series of OneMinuteJunior video-making workshops facilitated by UNICEF Ukraine, in which children in detention and disabled children were able to make their voices heard in a participatory way.

UNICEF Ukraine continues to support the Government of Ukraine in the development of a new National Plan of Action for the implementation of recommendations of the Committee on the

**Gender Mainstreaming and Equality**

Gender is addressed as a crosscutting and central issue within the United Nations-Ukraine Partnership Framework, as inequalities are still pervasive in Ukrainian society. As a member of the United Nations Thematic Working Group on Gender, and within the emergency context, UNICEF Ukraine actively participates in the gender-based violence protection sub-cluster and initiated an internal discussion on the most effective engagement in this area based on the UNICEF comparative advantage.

UNICEF Ukraine continued to prioritize gender mainstreaming in its programme work. Two UNICEF Ukraine staff members participated in the gender mainstreaming training in 2014. Following this, one of the staff members was assigned to promote and ensure gender mainstreaming in the programme areas. Gender-sensitive data disaggregation was ensured for the development of the child rights monitoring mechanisms in collaboration with the Organization for Security and Coordination in Europe (OSCE) and the HRO, as well as with Save the Children for the emergency response. The same principle was applied in the development of a child rights monitoring tool for detention facilities, in collaboration with the HRO and the State Penitentiary Service.

The UNICEF Ukraine HIV/AIDS Programme addressed gender inequality in access to HIV services, contributing to one of the priority issues outlined in the UNICEF Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2014-2017. According to the evaluation commissioned by UNICEF Ukraine, barriers to accessing services are greater among females who inject drugs, particularly mothers or pregnant women, than among men. Barriers may include avoidance of contact with services because of fears regarding child custody, an absence of gender-specific services, family and childcare responsibilities and additional stigmatization/discrimination due to pregnancy.

Reflecting on this evidence, the Programme introduced a gender-sensitive model wherein the obstetrician/gynaecologist, neonatologists, HIV specialists and social workers from harm reduction NGOs worked as a multidisciplinary team guided by case managers. The programme evaluation revealed that service access barriers experienced by drug dependent pregnant women, including gender-specific barriers, were effectively removed, resulting in a decreasing trend of mother-to-child transmission rates among pregnant drug addicted mothers in the pilot sites.

Three UNICEF Ukraine national staff members are involved in the programme, which has a total annual budget of US$ 1,110,400 for the period of January 2012 to December 2016.

**Effective Leadership**

The 2013 Annual Management Plan (AMP) was reviewed in April, the delay resulting from pressing priorities resulting from the unfolding emergency. The majority of the recommendations for improvement, obtained in a review of more than 100 indicators included in the results matrix, were implemented in 2014. Most prominently, the Country Programme succeeded in strengthening communication for social change, an integrated element of the overall programme, donor mapping and targeting, the efficiency of monthly and annual programme coordination and reviews, and the timeline and relevance of the AMP development.

The unfolding emergency forced UNICEF Ukraine to scale back on the formalization of strategic partnerships to be developed as per the 2014 AMP. However, a number of ad-hoc partnerships...
in private sector fundraising and advocacy emerged in the context of the emergency response and as an outcome of the efforts made in previous years. United Nations coherence witnessed a significant boost, also as an outcome of the emergency response, beyond the targets set in the 2014 AMP.

The Country Management Team (CMT) met regularly in 2014 and provided the main platform of oversight for the development and revision of the Crisis Response Plan (CRP). In managing the risks arising from the emergency, the CMT took timely decisions on working modalities during peak days of the crisis, updating and implementing the Business Continuity Plan (BCP), addressing staff morale, obligations, humanitarian principles and the Core Commitments for Children (CCCs), as well as pressing issues resulting from the implications of the currency depreciation, including local salaries and staff well-being.

Other significant decisions by the CMT included: 1) improving procedures on the reallocation of funds between programme components; 2) improving the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT) micro assessment and partner compliance monitoring by outsourcing arrangement; and 3) deciding on the modalities of the mid-term management review (MTMR) process/methodology, particularly for the MTR, which was postponed to mid 2015 due to the situation in the country.

Following a recommendation for 2014, UNICEF Ukraine forcefully embraced the development of a dedicated emergency work plan, aligned with the CCCs, which were reflected in the CRP and the HAC.

In the framework of the humanitarian response, UNICEF Ukraine introduced a number of new risk-mitigation processes: a weekly, dedicated meeting reviews and monitors the performance of the emergency component based on six standard monitoring tables addressing critical risk areas such as funding, grant implementation, partner-relations, supplies, human resources and external communication. Challenges remain with the recruitment of 18 additional emergency staff (as per the November 2014 Programme Budget Review (PBR)), which only started in the last quarter of 2014. The late start led to overstretching of staff involved in the process, a risk area to be addressed more effectively in 2015. Overall processes and workflows will be reviewed in 2015 and a peer review may be organized to pave the way to a more formal, yet unscheduled audit.

The security plan, emergency lists, Early Warning Early Action (EWEA), risk profile and Warden System Tree lists were regularly updated.

**Financial Resources Management**

With the increase in emergency-related other resources (OR) amounting to close to US$ 10 million by the end of the year, the financial resources available to UNICEF Ukraine almost tripled in 2014. Administrating these funds led to a significant increase in workload, including for accounting, liquidations of cash assistance, etc. At the same time, human resources allocated to the operations section to handle this workload remained unchanged at the end of 2014, which put a significant strain on key positions.

In 2014, UNICEF Ukraine conducted a mid-year review, which allowed for a diligent reprogramming of financial resources in accordance with the objectives, which were adjusted to the changed programme environment. All the grants expiring in 2014, including regular resources (RR) and institutional budget, were fully spent by the end of December 2014.
Emergency-related funding has been implemented in accordance with the plan and within grant expiry windows.

The CMT continued to function effectively as a central body for finance and budget control and management, reviewing management indicators, including donor reports monitoring, budget implementation control and monitoring of direct cash transfer (DCT) liquidations. UNICEF Ukraine remained without any serious deviations observed or flagged within the CEE/CIS Monthly Monitoring Report throughout the year.

Major cost savings were achieved due to a 22 per cent reduction in the cost of rent for the office premises.

The bank reconciliation process is well established. It observes the required segregation of duties (SoD) principles, and has functioned reliably, with no critical deviations or challenges.

The Table of Authority (ToA) was reviewed by the CMT in mid-2014. In order to increase efficiency, the payment approval process was decentralized to involve more programme staff in the process. In addition, the bank reconciliation approval shifted from the Representative to the Operations Manager.

**Fund-raising and Donor Relations**

UNICEF efforts to leverage funding for the on-going regular Country Programme were met with a significant increase in efforts to mobilise resources for the emergency response from March 2014. By the end of 2014, almost US$ 10 million had been mobilized for activities included in the 2014-2015 HAC, almost dwarfing the average US$ 4 million annual budget for the regular Country Programme.

Fundraising efforts led to several new or renewed donor relationships, including with the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), the Kingdom of Norway, the Kingdom of Sweden, Japan, the Republic of Estonia, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Canada. The inter-agency Strategic Response Plan (SRP) was launched in December 2014, calling for a total of US$ 189 million, out of which approximately US$ 32.4 million is attributable to the UNICEF Ukraine results for the 2015 HAC. UNICEF Ukraine also benefitted from the support of the UNICEF Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS) at the onset of the crisis through two Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) loans in March and July.

Through good international and regular social media coverage and donor briefs, UNICEF Ukraine increased the visibility of its emergency programmes and was successful in outlining resource requirements through the 2014-2015 HAC. In late 2014, UNICEF Ukraine joined CEE/CIS in fundraising and advocacy events in Geneva, including briefings to the Geneva-based press corps and donor governments as well as National Committees.

Grants that expired in 2014 were committed at 100 per cent and the overall implementation rate (regular and other resources) was over 95 per cent.

All donor reports were processed through the CMT-endorsed quality assurance mechanism and passed the quality benchmarks by the time of submission. Overall, 100 per cent of donor reports were submitted on time, including those of UNICEF Ukraine, CEE/CIS and the Public Sector Alliances and Resource Mobilization (PARMO) Division.
**Evaluation**

The UNICEF Ukraine Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP) 2012-2016 is implemented through subsequent sets of annual IMEPs. At the end of 2014, the IMEP implementation rate stood at 56 per cent, which was far below the expectation. This disappointing result is in part attributable to the onset of the emergency response and the shifting of programme priorities. It does, however, also reflect the shutdown of government partners during large parts of the crisis in 2014.

In 2014, UNICEF Ukraine implemented one formal evaluation of its PMTCT approach, which is an integral part of the respective Theory of Change. UNICEF Ukraine also participated in two multi-country evaluations, on RKLA1 (A Child’s Right to a Family Environment) and RKLA2 (Justice for Children). While the country visits of the evaluation team were cancelled due to the security situation, UNICEF Ukraine contributed information and data on juvenile justice system reform and its efforts in the respective areas.

UNICEF Ukraine made full use of the established regional quality assurance mechanisms for evaluation. Although the PMTCT evaluation was completed, it was not completed through the quality assessment system and therefore has not been uploaded onto the evaluation repository. UNICEF Ukraine complied with the UNICEF Evaluation Policy, ensured competitive selection, proactively provided complete and comprehensive information to the evaluator, and facilitated fair participation by stakeholders, including beneficiaries. As an integral part of the NAP, there are high expectations for an application of the findings of this evaluation in the national policy development process.

Out of the six Theories of Change reflecting the core areas of the Country Programme, three assessments were conducted to evaluate the validity of the assumptions and to assess progress. Together with the SitAn and the Post-Conflict Needs Assessment (PCNA), these findings will form one of the backbones of the mid-term review.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

In 2014, UNICEF Ukraine continued to focus on efficiency gains in all possible areas and achieving cost savings. The major achievements were:

- The reduction of rent for the office premises, achieved through the negotiation of a 22 per cent decrease, which is significant.
- Virtual no-cost modalities for training (e.g. Dynamic Leadership Certificate (DLC), specialized online courses, Webex sessions), meetings, teleconferences, interviews and other kinds of briefings/discussions;
- Avoiding additional workload and consumption of related administrative maintenance resources through the utilization of common services (i.e. travel, procurement, human resources expertise).

The ‘best value for money’ principle, reflected in the optimal combination of the whole life costs and quality, has been continuously observed in procurement in relation to:

- Acquiring the goods and services competitively unless there is no clear evidence to the contrary (i.e. sole source, continuation of the service, tender offer remaining valid as per the regulations);
- Avoiding unnecessary purchases (i.e. requests for goods and services certified by the Deputy Representative confirming the relevance for the country programme);
• Ensuring that the beneficiary needs are met and not exceeded (i.e. receiving clear specifications from partners);
• Section collaboration, where applicable, to ensure joint orders (i.e. for events, delivery, etc.)
• Aiming at streamlining the procurement process (i.e. procurement plan) and finance process (i.e. non-delayed payment upon the confirmation of goods received).

Supply Management

The total value of programme supplies inventory controlled by UNICEF Ukraine and recorded as being physically in the warehouse was US$ 23,776.35, all prepositioned for emergencies.

The total value of programme supplies issued from the local warehouse and recorded in VISION was US$ 438,555.38.

The total value of supplies managed in the UNICEF Ukraine controlled warehouse in 2014 was US$ 462,331.73.

Driven by a six-fold increase in emergency-related programme supplies, the supply component of the country operation almost doubled in monetary value. This came on top of a significant turnover of in-kind donations from corporate partners and the Private Sector Division in Geneva.

To enhance the supply function, UNICEF Ukraine leveraged support from UNICEF Georgia, which released an experienced supply assistant for 10 months as surge capacity.

Effective cooperation with the State Emergency Service (SES) allowed for the free use of SES warehouse facilities.

Due to the challenging regulations governing humanitarian assistance, the majority of emergency supplies were locally procured, which facilitated good value for money and timeliness.

Major challenges in 2014 were: 1) requests for advance payments due to high exchange rate fluctuation; and 2) a clear lack of interest from local suppliers to participate in official tenders and bidding. Nevertheless, UNICEF Ukraine benefitted from the successfully completed tendering procedure of a United Nations sister agency, which paved the way to the cost-efficient contracting of supplies.

UNICEF Supply Division Copenhagen facilitated the purchase of information technology (IT) equipment for additional staff currently under recruitment, as well as some highly specialized emergency-related supplies.

Security for Staff and Premises

Amidst the volatility in central Kiev, where UNICEF Ukraine is located, the safety and security of the staff and premises were strengthened after the following timely measures were taken:

• Enhancing premises entrance security through: 1) installing a digital lock on the entrance door, thus limiting access to the premises; 2) upon agreement with the IMF, located on the same premises, placing armed guards at the entrance. These guards were granted free of charge by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Conducting regular briefings/sharing of the relevant security information to keep the staff updated and aware of the steps required under different security-affected conditions. The office security focal point remains accessible 24/7 for addressing any security incidents and/or escalating them to the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS). UNDSS provided detailed security briefings for all new staff and experts on mission. Respective Security Operation Procedures for crisis-affected zones were disseminated immediately upon their release/update.
- Close monitoring of security training validity. The security focal point monitored the validity of Basic II and Advanced Security in the Field training courses. All staff travelling to crisis-affected zones were also required to pass the Landmine Safety course. Basic first aid training was arranged for all staff.
- Ensuring the availability of security-related equipment: armoured vehicles, satellite phones, communications terminal, personal protective equipment (PPE), emergency trauma bags (ETB), Global Positioning System (GPS) navigation units and very high frequency (VHF) radios. Under the guidance of the Regional Chief of Operations and Principal Security Advisor, UNICEF Ukraine transferred one armoured vehicle from Georgia to Ukraine for programme criticality trips to crisis-affected zones, in accordance with security procedures. Procurement of another vehicle has been budgeted. Cooperation with other United Nations agencies in Ukraine was actively used to identify the most competitive offers for purchasing an armoured vehicle.
- In the framework of Minimum Operational Security Standards (MOSS) requirements, a new Iridium 9555 satellite terminal was procured and activated. The Iridium vehicle docking station was installed on one of the vehicles (mostly used by the head of the office). A Broadband Global Area Network (BGAN) satellite terminal was established as a backup connectivity channel. PPE and ETB were procured through the Supply Division, using the funds allocated by Headquarters Security, to ensure sufficient coverage for UNICEF Ukraine staff. Office cars were equipped with GPS navigators. VHF radios were procured for ensuring mission safety.
- In the area of data security, all office virtual server data backups on external USB drive were conducted regularly, on a daily bases, and the monthly replacement of the USB drive in the bank safe was ensured.

**Human Resources**

UNICEF Ukraine continued to rely on a mix of permanent, fixed term and temporary assignment contracts for its human resources in 2014, and drew on individual and institutional contracts to allow for the flexible provision of human resources and outsourced services if, when and where needed.

The performance management cycle is monitored and enforced by the CMT. In 2014, UNICEF Ukraine achieved a 100 per cent completion rate for all steps of the performance evaluation report for all staff.

Implementation of the office training plan decreased slightly (group training 25 per cent completion, individual training 69 per cent completion), mainly due to the significantly increased workload and expectations for each individual staff member.

A long-planned CEE/CIS-led competency-based interview (CBI) training was postponed three times, either due to the security situation in Kyiv or to the high emergency-related workload of office staff, and did not materialize in 2014. Low availability of CBI-certified panel members is a critical issue to be addressed in 2015.
In order to boost the emergency programme’s capacities for delivery, UNICEF Ukraine successfully relied on the temporary deployment of six programme specialists from stand-by partners, such as RedR, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), and Canada’s Civil Reserve (CANADEM). This proved to be of critical importance to providing sufficient implementation capacities on short notice.

With a view to ensuring long-term capacities to deliver emergency-related programme results, UNICEF Ukraine reviewed the Country Programme Management Plan and developed an organogram aimed at building the necessary implementation capacity in the main office, as well as in one zonal office and up to three antenna offices in eastern Ukraine. The staffing and operations concept, which was approved by the PBR on 18 November, caters directly to programme implementation and monitoring, and includes the strengthening of capacities of the office’s operations and human resources management.

Recruitment for the abovementioned new positions put a maximum strain on the small human resources/administration section. To mitigate this operational risk, support was sought through the temporary deployment of operations managers from Belarus and Macedonia, as well as the deployment of finance/human resources assistants from Turkmenistan.

Confronted with a new reality in 2014, a dedicated training on emergency programming was delivered with the support of the CEE/CIS Emergency Advisor in April/May, enabling the staff to develop and strengthen skills and competencies needed to ensure effective humanitarian action and early recovery in line with the CCCs. In addition, all staff completed practical first aid training in September.

With the significant depreciation of the local currency (UAH), UNICEF pro-actively participated in the United Nations inter-agency Local Salary Survey Committee, which was chaired by the UNICEF Deputy Representative. While a temporary solution to the de-facto loss of local staff income was found and agreed, a long-term rebasing of local salaries is yet to be identified in early 2015.

The Local Staff Association and the GCC played a vital role in addressing uncertainty, anxiety and grievances among office staff following the events in Kyiv in early 2014 and the unfolding emergency in eastern Ukraine. Through targeted appeals by the LSA and UNICEF Ukraine management, staff members were encouraged to participate in the Global Staff Survey.

**Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology**

Aimed at efficiently and effectively supporting business continuity, the information and communication technology (ICT) function focused on the maintenance and improvement of reliable and secure infrastructure and granting access to corporate applications. As such, the office ICT environment was modified and updated through the installation of Microsoft Office 2013 within the Microsoft Office 365 migration; the replacement of the Domino mailing system with Office 365 through migration of user accounts; the installation of Lync and OneDrive software; the establishment of the BGAN satellite terminal as backup connectivity channel; the reconfiguration of corresponding office network settings; the activation of BGAN terminal SIM; and the request for a static internet provider from the satellite provider, as a part of emergency preparedness. ICT preparedness for configuring the additional offices in Kiev and Kharkiv was also ensured.
Unified communications and collaboration, for example, utilising open-source and mobile tools with partners by holding Skype conferences and arranging remote financial assessment, have enabled UNICEF Ukraine to guarantee cost-effective and quality communication both within the office and with partners, policymakers and beneficiaries, resulting in time- and cost-savings. At the same time, utilization of social media, including Facebook, Twitter, VKontakte, and YouTube, enhanced the efficiency of communication, information sharing and visibility, and supported the human resources function through vacancy advertisements.

Over 43,000 people started following UNICEF Ukraine social media accounts to learn more about children’s rights and the work of UNICEF Ukraine. The average engagement of Facebook audiences was 34.5 per cent throughout the year. The most popular tweet, with 3.6 million potential impressions, was an infographic about the UNICEF Ukraine emergency response. In order to streamline the ICT process across United Nations agencies and thereby improve the United Nations crisis response, UNICEF took chairmanship of the ICT Working Group in June 2014.

Programme Components from RAM

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 Programme Support

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Ukraine effectively implemented the Programme Management and Operations Support Strategy in 2014, which resulted in:

- Maintenance of the effective and results-ensuring governance system through the effective functioning of office committees, mid-year budget review and optimization through important cost-saving initiatives; the promotion of participatory decision-making; updating the risk profile; and performing as effectively as possible to grant support in the course of the on-going deepening crisis activities.
- Management of key processes through VISION.
- Shaping of the UNICEF Ukraine team to be prepared and professionally equipped to provide the crisis response. Based on the needs, UNICEF Ukraine brought in the Child Protection Emergency Specialist and WASH Manager. Given the funds availability constraints, UNICEF Ukraine took advantage of selecting experts on mission through stand-by partners.
- Ensuring further focus on cost savings.
- Participating in the Local Salary Survey Committee with the respective inputs provided towards the preparation of the Comprehensive Salary Survey and approval of non-pensionable bonus. The latter, however, encountered serious challenges due to the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) claiming that Ukraine still did not meet the required criteria, which can be considered disputable, as per the respective manual. The staff received a nine-month bonus, which partially covered the salary loss during the crisis period.

OUTPUT 1 Governance and Systems

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The oversight structures were represented by the annual management and mid-year reviews, the CMT meetings, programme and operations meetings and emergency meetings. The
monitoring mechanisms were rationally distributed between the aforementioned meetings, with the CMT overseeing the implementation rates and accountability structures (Table of Authority, enterprise risk management), field trip reporting and open temporary assignments, and addressing the operational components, such as financial control, human resource management, supply/contract management, IT and others separately. All of the established office committees for 2014 functioned well.

Business continuity and emergency preparedness remain critical due to the unpredictability of the security situation and the further deepening of the crisis in eastern Ukraine.

Emergency preparedness was monitored.
- Maintaining the vehicle fleet to comply with security requirements for arranging missions to authorized crisis-affected areas. In order to be fully MOSS-compliant, UNICEF Ukraine is considering the procurement of another armoured vehicle.
- Availability of satellite phones (two more are planned to be purchased) and necessary security equipment (helmets and jackets)
- Staff compliance with security certification (Basic and Advanced Security in the Field, Landmines)

UNICEF Ukraine has reviewed the risk profile with clear categorization as related to the regular programme and crisis response.

OUTPUT 2 Financial Resources and Stewardship

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Effective and efficient management and stewardship of financial resources was significantly impacted by external factors, which UNICEF Ukraine took into account when reviewing its operations strategy (including the crisis response): 1) local currency depreciation and growing inflation; and 2) critical changes in the banking system with a strong impact on the market activities. The budget was regularly monitored using reports in the VISION system and Performance Management Dashboard web module.

Most of the planned financial spot checks were done, albeit with some delays due to conflicting prioritizing activities and a busy schedule of partners. UNICEF Ukraine management (OPS Manager and Deputy Representative) attended the HACT training, which helped clarify a number of HACT-related governance issues, including audits. Scheduled audits were re-phased to 2015. A tender for identifying two auditing companies was held, resulting in the signature of a two-year long-term agreement. Planned financial assessments were done with due quality and timeliness. The Office has been continuously looking into cost savings in all possible areas.

UNICEF Ukraine signed a lease agreement through 31 December 2015 for additional office space in very close proximity to the current office, to avoid affecting business continuity. The cost of the lease is in line with the current planned expenses.

OUTPUT 3 Human Capacity

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Ukraine did its best to shape the team to be professionally equipped to provide the crisis response. On 18 November, UNICEF Ukraine received approval from the CEE/CIS PBR for expanding the team with the emergency component by 18 staff members. Recruitment has been actively on-going.
UNICEF Ukraine has an established local training plan that was formed on the basis of the individual development plans discussed and approved within the Performance Appraisal System (PAS) planning. The training plan completion rate (individual trainings) was 69 per cent. PAS discussions were timely, as much as possible, with the necessary focus on staff development and workload under the current conditions, as staff members are significantly affected by the deteriorating crisis situation (morally and in terms of workload).

UNICEF Ukraine staff participated in the Regional and Global Staff Surveys, with the follow-up actions initiated for the former.

The salary devaluation issue has been a main staff concern. As mentioned earlier, staff members have been approved partial compensation for salary loss due to the UAH depreciation. A Comprehensive Salary Survey is planned for early 2015.

OUTCOME 2 Government of Ukraine is supported in its effort to reduce social exclusion and disparities at the national and sub-national levels.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Following years of UNICEF work on advocacy, transfer of knowledge from international best practices and demonstration within Ukraine, the coalition agreement signed within the new government is inclusive of many best practices that UNICEF has been pushing for through all tiers of its on-going Country Programme. Much in line with the signed European Association agreement, the Government set pledges to act on: “improving social insurance mechanisms,” “enhance social protection of low-income population,” introducing “compulsory state health insurance as part of the social insurance system” and “develop the network of non-profit institutions that serve the needs of socially vulnerable groups in social services”.

The above marks a significant step towards achieving the objectives of RKLA 8, to ensure a child’s right to social protection, and embraces a number of singular results on the output level, such as the development of standards, the identification of a funding mechanism and the transformation of the Government’s accountability role in the provision of services.

Apart from further assisting the implementation of the reforms, UNICEF will step-up its monitoring of the effectiveness of measures introduced to reach those groups of children that are most marginalized and at risk. A UNICEF study initiated in 2014 on trends in child poverty in Ukraine is expected to bring about new evidence in this regard by early 2015.

Despite being difficult to quantify now, the current crisis is likely to fuel social disparities and vulnerabilities among marginalized groups of children and their families. The precarious economic situation of the country, could, however, prove to be a contributing and enabling factor to improving the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of the child protection system.

Meanwhile, demands on the Government and civil society as duty bearers to provide social protection for children in Ukraine changed in 2014. Approximately 180,000 children have been displaced from their places of residence in eastern Ukraine with their families and, due to their specific vulnerabilities, are at the centre of attention both domestically and abroad. Through the United Nations inter-agency compact, UNICEF has pro-actively and continuously lobbied for social protection and social justice within the new legislation, defining the rights of internally displaced persons, as well as regulating the provision of benefits and services within the areas currently not under the control of the Government. The governmental decision to stop benefits
and all social and communal services within the non-controlled areas as of the end of 2014 comes as a clear setback. At the time of writing this report, UNICEF is readying mechanisms to monitor the situation of critically at-risk children inside the non-controlled territories through its own established system of field monitoring as well as through contracted partner NGOs. The situation of children left behind in institutions as well as in penitentiary facilities is of critical concern.

In an effort to prevent, mitigate and reduce social exclusion and disparities within the current emergency, UNICEF has strengthened its partnerships with local and regional players and counterparts at the city and oblast level in eastern Ukraine. Making use of the cluster approach, UNICEF has taken up a key role in coordinating government and non-governmental players in setting up a monitoring system on the violation of children’s rights, in particular as it relates to the effect of the armed conflict.

OUTPUT 1 The Ministry of Social Policy, in collaboration with relevant development partners, ensures a functioning governance system (including coordination, monitoring, reporting and follow-up) over the key institutional changes at national level that are needed to address outstanding CRC Recommendations 12, 14 and 18 (CRC/C/UKR/CO3-4).

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In 2014, several important advancements were made regarding the governance system for social sector reform. In the context of the ongoing administrative reform to ensure implementation of child policy priorities, in particular the Child Care Reform (CRC Recommendation No. 12), the roadmap for changes in the Public Finance Management system was further advanced to enable a market of social services and to develop integrated community-based services for children and families (as per the Rolling Work Plan (RWP) target and contributing to RKLA 1, Child’s Right to Family Environment and the Strategic Plan outcome on child protection). Specifically, through collaborative work between the Ministry of Social Policy, the Ministry of Finance, the Academy of Financial Management, and NGOs, UNICEF Ukraine succeeded in establishing a mechanism that provides flexibility in funding community-based social services rather than institutional care. At the same time, establishing the enabling framework and building the capacity of service providers through other initiatives, including the development of case management guidelines and instructions, and social services standards, comprehensively supported the Government to advance Child Care Reform. The engagement of the local and regional administrators and decision makers was assured to strengthen local governance to effectively support children and families with children (RWP target).

In order to ensure effective implementation of the National Plan of Action (NPA) for Children (CRC Recommendation No. 14), UNICEF Ukraine advocated for and convened stakeholders, including from civil society, to conduct comprehensive reviews and roundtables. The review of the implementation of the 2013 NPA for the CRC conducted by a consortium of NGOs (endorsed by the Parliament Committee on Family, Youth, Sports and Children and the Ministry of Social Policy) provided the basis for the 2014 NPA (approved by the Cabinet of Ministry Decree). The comprehensive review of the implementation of the United Nations CRC Concluding Observations was conducted as per the RWP target, which formed the basis of the planning process of the NPA 2015 and the State Programme on Child Rights Protection 2016-2021. Despite strong advocacy by UNICEF Ukraine, no financial provision from the State budget was allocated for the 2014 NPA; UNICEF Ukraine will continue to advocate for the appropriate allocation of the State Budget to the 2015 NPA.
In an effort to assist the Government to improve its policies on resource allocation for children based on actual needs and to ensure that poverty reduction reforms focus on social assistance, benefits to low-income families and child protection (CRC Recommendation No. 18 and contributing to results in RKLA 8, Child’s Right to Social Protection, and the Strategic Plan outcome on social inclusion), UNICEF Ukraine conducted poverty research that provided analysis of the socio-economic situation of vulnerable populations, as well as a forecast of the poverty trend to inform the Government’s poverty reduction policies and programmes.

Bringing a broader number of partners on board, UNICEF Ukraine enhanced the coordination, monitoring, and reporting functions of the governance system, particularly in the realm of justice for children and crisis-response. Through its leadership role within the Child Protection Working Group, UNICEF initiated the establishment of an emergency child protection monitoring system in late 2014. The system is expected to monitor and report cases of the most severe violations of children’s rights, such as drafting of child soldiers, sexual exploitation, and also separation from families and abductions. Newly established partnerships with the Organization for Security and Co-operation, Save the Children and the HRO also led to the development of child rights monitoring mechanisms and tools, which were critical to situation monitoring in the crisis affected areas and have informed preventive measures and interventions. A coordinated and coherent monitoring of the rights of children in detention facilities, based on a tool developed, is now possible thanks to the collaborative efforts of the State Penitentiary Service, the Prosecutor General’s Office, the HRO and UNICEF Ukraine. To generate effective up-to-date evidence-based advocacy tools, the Situational Analysis of Children and Women was conducted (publication expected in spring 2015), taking into account the disaggregated data that came out of the Ukraine MICS 2012 published last year (RWP target).

There have been advancements on the policy front that have contributed to RKLA 1, Child’s Right to Family Environment, and RKLA 2, Child’s Right to Access Justice, as well as the corresponding Strategic Plan outcome on child protection. The enabling environment for the protection of children from sexual exploitation and abuse was enhanced through the development of the draft law on legislative changes for the protection of children from sexual exploitation and abuse, with joint collaboration between the Ministry of Social Policy, the Ministry of Justice, and key NGOs. In addition, UNICEF Ukraine contributed to the improvement of conditions of confinement of children in correctional facilities, in line with international and national standards, by providing technical assistance in developing the Special Report of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) Observance of the Human Rights of Minors at the Correctional Facilities of the State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine.

OUTPUT 2 The Ministry of Social Policy oversees fully funded policy framework that focuses on the protection of families and prevention of institutionalization of children

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Ukraine’s crisis and the government restructuring, combined with a weak economy that pre-existed the crisis, inhibited a constructive and cohesive reform response. Central budget cuts reduced the number of social workers by two-thirds, to 7,000. The current situation makes social service reform more crucial in the protection of the most disadvantaged children and families. The following progress and achievements within social sector reform, as well as advancements in the normative environment for internally displaced children and families, contributed to achieving the objectives of RKLA 1, Child’s Right to a Supportive and Caring Family Environment, and RKLA 8, Child’s Right to Social Protection, as well as the Strategic Plan outcomes on child protection and social inclusion. In addition, high level advocacy and supply-
side capacity building within the justice system led to contributions in the area of RKLA 2, Child’s Right to Access to Justice.

In order to advocate for social protection and social justice for internally displaced families, under the new IDP law passed in late 2014 and the regulatory framework, UNICEF Ukraine participated in a number of consultations and ensured the provision of entitlements of payments and receipt of services, especially for the most vulnerable children, such as children with disability. UNICEF Ukraine also lobbied strongly for the continuation of medical care for children on antiretroviral therapy and those to be vaccinated according to the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) calendar, regardless of their location and the temporary nature of their dwelling as IDPs. This resulted in the continued access to care and payments for all eligible registered IDPs.

A policy framework for social services for children and their families was agreed upon in concept by key stakeholders, which led to the Ministry of Social Policy, Ministry of Finance, the Academy of Financial Management, UNICEF Ukraine and NGOs establishing a mechanism that provides flexibility in funding community-based social services rather than institutional care, a key bottleneck to social services reform. The mechanism will be tested regionally in 2015.

Besides the funding mechanism at the community level, a key component for re-directing social services to a more results-focused response was the availability and use of needs assessment tools. Unified needs and safety assessment instruments were developed with technical assistance from UNICEF Ukraine to boost the capacities of social workers to ensure children and families’ safety and needs. These instruments were endorsed by the Government and rolled out in parallel with the capacity building of 60 regional specialists. Another achievement in addressing the capacity of service providers was the development of case management instruction, which will support the operationalization of more cohesive social work. UNICEF Ukraine is now one step closer to developing an operational concept governing the application of a case management response by the Ministry of Social Policy.

The UNICEF Ukraine evidence-based advocacy on monitoring the rights of children in juvenile detention facilities led to a stronger and wider dialogue and collaboration among the State Penitentiary Service, Prosecutor General Office and the HRO on the realisation of the rights of children in conflict with the law. Further, joint monitoring with the HRO of all seven correctional facilities for minors resulted in a specialized report on the National Preventive Mechanism, in which key challenges in the justice system for minors in conflict with the law were identified, with high level advocacy conducted with the HRO and supply-side capacity building of prosecutors’ skills to conduct regular monitoring.

In order to tackle negative social norms by enhancing understanding of children in detention as ‘children and not criminals,’ One Minute Junior workshops were held, in which the voices of children in detention were heard by a growing audience of the public and professionals. The UNICEF Ukraine public information campaign to address stigma and discrimination against vulnerable families and children was designed based on the findings of the national-level Knowledge, Attitude, Practice and Behaviour survey conducted on family-type care and attitudes regarding different types of families.

**OUTCOME 3** Protective and Inclusive Services: More excluded children, adolescents and women benefit from quality health and social services.
Analytical Statement of Progress:
With the appointment of a new government following parliamentary elections, few improvements in terms of quality services for children and women on the ground could be tracked in 2014. However, recent ministerial appointments, combined with a general pro-reform political climate, are providing a conducive environment for this pillar of the Country Programme.

The political crisis earlier in the year and the subsequent events in eastern Ukraine did, however, have a heavy impact on children’s access to services. Whereas in principle all internally displaced children could access schools in the place of their temporary dwellings, many displaced families did not enrol their children in new schools for a number of reasons, such as uncertainty on the length of their displacement, fear for children’s safety, and fear of bullying and stigmatization. UNICEF started a dialogue with the MoE on ways to overcome these problems and trained more than 400 school psychologists on practical ways to address the conflict and displacement-related problems that children are experiencing.

After the reduction in the number of social workers earlier this year, the remaining governmental social workers bore the brunt of dealing with scores of displaced persons seeking advice and assistance, and their social and psychological problems. Through leading the process of field coordination in the areas of child protection and social assistance, UNICEF enabled local NGOs, groups and individuals to better address the magnitude of the problem, especially in those areas with the highest caseload of IDPs, such as Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk. At the same time, UNICEF supported a number of NGOs to run ‘one-stop shops’ for IDPs to receive packages of supplies, legal advice on their status, registration and social assistance, as well psychological support for families and children. The latter contributed to the UNICEF objective to create a market of services supplied by non-government service providers, a key pre-requisite for decreasing the number of children deprived of their family environments due to unavailability (RKLA 1) of social services for families in crisis.

The newly appointed Minister of Health is forcefully advancing health sector reform. UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) have been tasked with providing procurement services for drugs and vaccines until the existing problem of procurement of vaccines and health-related commodities has been fixed. In response, UNICEF has rolled out a three-way approach. An initial consignment of polio-vaccines will be made available by UNICEF in the beginning of 2015 to stop the most urgent gap and while the dialogue on the modalities of the procurement service is continuing. While a regular supply of vaccines covering all children within the given fiscal space is being realized through the UNICEF procurement services, UNICEF will provide guidance, technical assistance and capacity development to the Ministry of Health to establish a vaccine procurement system, which will ultimately enable the country to procure vaccines in a sustainable and cost-effective way. Meanwhile, the integration of an element of health communication into the Ministry of Health public health initiative, which was agreed to following a positive review of the UNICEF pilot project in three oblasts during the summer, will help to increase the demand for vaccine services among parents.

OUTPUT 1 The Ministry of Social Policy oversees the availability of and access to selected social services for marginalized children and their families, including those services provided by non-governmental organizations

Analytical Statement of Progress:
There were positive advancements in social sector reform, both in terms of progressing the national innovation model of the public finance mechanism and minimum social service packaging/standards (RKLA 1, Child’s Right to a Supportive and Caring Family Environment,
and the Strategic Plan outcome on child protection), as well as ensuring social protection in the crisis context to increase access to services by marginalized children and their families (RKLA 8, Child’s Right to Social Protection, and the Strategic Plan outcome on social inclusion).

Within the crisis context, UNICEF Ukraine contributed to improved access to social benefits and services for the most vulnerable families by contracting NGOs to provide social and psychosocial services as independent service providers in crisis-affected areas, working in tandem with and boosting the capacities of government social workers. Protection and services, including provision of supplies, legal advice on their status, registration and social assistance, as well psychological support for families and children, were provided to internally displaced women, adolescents and children at support centres opened in cities with larger numbers of IDPs through leveraged partnerships. To maintain the focus on the best interest of the child, UNICEF Ukraine also cautioned the Government on the relocation and evacuation of children from institutions within the conflict area in eastern Ukraine.

Coordination of the education response within the crisis context was enhanced through the establishment of the Child-focused Coordination Forum, an interagency coordination platform led by the HRO, the MoES, and UNICEF Ukraine to ensure the right to education for children in affected regions (RKLA 4, Child’s Right to Inclusive Education, and Strategic Plan outcome on education). As a result, emergency assistance, including delivery of school supplies and training of over 400 school psychologists on practical ways to address conflict and displacement-related problems among children, was provided in a coordinated manner. In an effort to address the issue of 270,000 children without access to school (for various reasons), UNICEF Ukraine also started a dialogue with the MoES on ways to overcome these problems.

The National Innovation Programme is taking shape, albeit slightly delayed, with the new funding mechanism developed and modelling to take place in 2015 (RWP target). Regarding packaging minimum social services (RWP target), in order to establish a more cohesive social work and to enhance the capacity of service providers, the standard on psychosocial rehabilitation for children with dependency and testing standards on representation and social prevention were developed with NGO service providers, with costing of the services and recommendations to enhance effectiveness submitted to the Government. Collaboration between the Government and NGOs was fostered to ensure that the policy frameworks for the social service standards are relevant, effective and practical for implementation. Likewise, there is now an increased understanding of a more consistent determination of whether a child is in imminent danger (and hence requires removal from the family) and a strengthened decision-making standard for children entering state care, which resulted from dialogue promoted between national and local government partners for consistency in policy development and implementation and outreaching to social workers on the use of the newly developed unified safety and needs assessment tools.

Overall, 100 social workers were trained on early intervention practices and interventions for integrated care approaches for drug-dependent/HIV-affected families. This training became possible because of research supported by UNICEF Ukraine in which service innovations to advance systematization of community-based specialized services for marginalized children and families were identified, in particular the family-focused ECD services within a transformed baby home and social service practices for drug-dependent/HIV-affected pregnant women and mothers (contributions to RKLA 5, Right to be Born and Remain HIV-free, the Strategic Plan outcome on HIV/AIDS, and RKLA 7, Young Child's Right to Comprehensive Well-being). In order to develop and cost best practices in social services for three vulnerable groups (RWP
Due to UNICEF Ukraine advocacy, the Ministry of Social Policy closed four social rehabilitation schools for children in conflict with the law. UNICEF Ukraine, in partnership with the Ministry and NGOs, continued to monitor the 170 children who left these schools, building social workers’ capacities to use the established unified needs assessment tools and better define the children’s and families’ requirements. The findings will then support the Ministry to enhance social services for marginalized children and their families.

National research conducted by UNICEF Ukraine on barriers and motivators among the general population regarding family-type care and parenting revealed that while the public understands the family as the best place for children (98 per cent), there remains high intolerance towards vulnerable child groups. The findings will inform policy making and interventions, in particular to address stigma and discrimination against the most marginalized children, so that an enabling environment can be developed in which the excluded population can access quality health and social services.

OUTPUT 2 Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Policy, in collaboration with relevant NGOs, enable the provision of HIV prevention services including PMTCT, harm reduction and voluntary counselling and testing for excluded groups and report on the groups' access to and use of the services.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In 2014, Ukraine continued to make progress towards the elimination of mother-to-child-transmission (eMTCT) of HIV and HIV prevention (RKLA 5, Child’s Right to be Born and Remain HIV-free, and the Strategic Plan outcome on HIV/AIDS), with all the target indicators articulated in the RWP 2012-2014 met. One of the significant achievements was the inclusion of the ICM into the NAP 2014-2018. The NAP 2014-2018 was approved in October 2014, largely due to the sound advocacy of UNICEF Ukraine and partners. The ICM, which is a model of integrated medical and social services (including antiretroviral therapy and opioid substitution therapy) for excluded most-at-risk drug addicted pregnant women, developed by UNICEF Ukraine and other partners, was identified as a best practice by the Ministry of Health based on evidence of results in the formal evaluation (RWP target), and was included in the NAP 2014-2018 for national scale-up (RWP target). Early infant diagnostics of HIV was implemented in six target oblasts using the Dry Blood Spot (DBS) method (RWP target), providing increased access to timely ART treatment to children. The next step is the national scale up the method.

Another significant result of UNICEF Ukraine evidence-based advocacy and technical advice was the strengthened focus on the MARA population within the policy framework (RWP target). MARA are now explicitly mentioned as a defined target group in the National HIV Prevention Strategy for Key Populations, currently being drafted by the Government. Based on the analysis of legal/policy bottlenecks hampering access of MARA to services conducted by the State AIDS Service, the MoH and UNICEF Ukraine, the NAP 2014-2018 included provisions tailored to the specific needs of MARA HIV testing and counselling (HTC), as well as access for children in difficult life circumstances to HIV prevention interventions. HTC services were scaled up across the country, with two thirds of the youth-friendly clinics now providing HTC to adolescents. The engagement and achievements of UNICEF Ukraine around MARA and youth-friendly clinics contributed directly to the Strategic Plan outcome on social inclusion and RKLA 10, Adolescent’s Right to a Second Chance, which endeavours to establish models of health and social services for vulnerable adolescents through referral services, including case
management. The MARA Stocktaking Assessment, also conducted in 2014, will support a programme design and contribute to further advocacy, policy dialogue and promotion of equitable results. To increase HTC among young people, UNICEF Ukraine developed a targeted behavioural change social media campaign, Get Tested, which addresses the behavioural bottlenecks to knowledge and practice on HTC. The campaign, due to launch in January 2015, plans to reach over 2 million adolescents with key messages and about 10,000 adolescents directly engaged through social media and the internet.

In order to better equip service providers with knowledge, data, and best practices, a regional knowledge hub on MARA has been established. Evidence generated across the service delivery models in the country will also contribute significantly to the rollout of the UNICEF and UNAIDS initiative, All In!, for adolescents and HIV in Ukraine.

In the crisis context, UNICEF Ukraine advocacy with UNAIDS has mainstreamed HIV into all activities related to the emergency response and early recovery. Working with the Ministry of Health, needs around antiretroviral therapy and opioid substitution therapy in the affected areas were carefully monitored and prevention and preparedness actions were coordinated with partner/sister agencies. In addition, realizing the increased vulnerability of young people to contracting HIV as a consequence of the armed conflict, UNICEF Ukraine started a dialogue with the MoES on introducing peace and reconciliation into the standard curriculum.

**OUTPUT 3** Health professionals mobilize demand and provide quality prevention mother and child health services

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

In 2014, UNICEF Ukraine continued to achieve progress towards establishing best practices in counselling around antenatal care and immunization (RKLA 6, Child’s Right to Health, RKLA 7, Young Child’s Right to Comprehensive Wellbeing, and the Strategic Plan outcomes on health and nutrition). Due in large part to evidence-based advocacy, the strategic importance of health promotion communication was advanced with the Health Expert Advisory group and the Ministry of Health. Following the mid-term assessment of the Swiss Development Cooperation-funded model project, Health Promotion and Communication in Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health, which found the Project was both effective and sustainable, the Minister of Health expressed the intention to take up the model and include the preventive health promotion communication approach in the strategic plan within the health sector reform (RWP target). While the National Programme Health 2020 has not yet been approved, health promotion communication is streamlined as an important approach within the new health system reform strategy developed by the Health Strategic Advisory Group established by the Ministry of Health.

The Project demonstrated that building the capacity of primary health care professionals to provide standardised preventive health services and counselling and streamline parenting messages through standardised education contents will lead to more parents in Ukraine having correct knowledge and positive attitudes and receiving quality counselling on reproductive health, child health and disease prevention from health professionals. One result of the UNICEF trainings has shown a decrease in immunization refusals (up to 20 per cent depending on the locality).

The sustainability potential of the capacity development model of interpersonal communication employed by the Project is promising. The institutionalization of the counselling modules in the postgraduate education curricula has been achieved, the education contents of parenting school
standard have been tested and according to the Ministry of Health, will most likely be adopted as a national standard in the coming years, which will promote consistency for the responsible parenting messaging nationwide.

While the Project started in 16 rayons/areas of Zhitomysrska, Rivnenska, Ivano-Frankivska oblasts and the Crimea Autonomous Republic (AR Crimea), the AR Crimea and the Rivne region were subsequently dropped from the Project sites, the former region for security reasons and the latter region due to low ownership and priority of health promotion and communication among the regional stakeholders. Odessa and Lviv regions were selected by the Project Steering Committee based on strict criteria (namely local ownership and interest in health promotion and communication activities) to replace the two sites.

UNICEF Ukraine also demonstrated leadership in ensuring that children are protected from polio and paved the way for the improvement of vaccine procurement and planning in the country. In the context of the crisis, combined with the looming weak economy that pre-existed before the crisis, an increasing number of people had been cut off from basic services, particularly in the crisis-affected regions, and there was an increasing risk of polio outbreak. In response to the general low immunization coverage, weak vaccine procurement modalities, lack of vaccination supplies, and serious risk of polio outbreak, UNICEF Ukraine advocated for improved vaccine procurement and planning, including provision of vaccines, building the capacity of the health care providers, and changing behaviour and attitudes towards immunisation, with substantial funding secured from the Canadian Government and USAID. UNICEF Ukraine, WHO and USAID also initiated technical assistance to facilitate the implementation of the Vaccine Procurement Action Plan to strengthen the vaccine procurement system and establish the polio advocacy strategy/kit (RWP target). Joint advocacy contributed to the adoption of simplified procedures for state registration of WHO-prequalified vaccines to increase the national market of available vaccines.

Also on the demand-side, UNICEF Ukraine and the Ministry of Health launched an information campaign on immunisation against polio, reaching: parliament members with advocacy messages on adequate supply of vaccines and procurement system reform; over 10 million people, including mothers of children aged 0-5 years on vaccination and polio prevention; and around 100,000 internet users, who shared positive messages on immunisation through social media networks.

There is as yet no legal basis for mandatory salt iodization in Ukraine and the daily consumption of iodised salt constituted an extremely low 26 per cent nationwide in 2014 (RWP target). A new UNICEF partnership with bread producer Formula Smaku led to a joint promotion of iodine deficiency disorder prevention and iodised salt and bread with iodised salt consumption through information materials.

**Evaluation**

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**Lessons Learned**

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