The COVID-19 pandemic continued throughout 2021, putting an unprecedented burden on Kosovo’s health and other social service systems. Kosovo experienced its fourth and most severe wave of the pandemic to date during the months of August–September 2021. About 165,000 cases and 3,000 COVID-19 related deaths were registered for a population of 1.8 million since the onset of the pandemic, despite mitigation measures and vaccine introduction, with almost half of the population fully vaccinated (43.5%).

A new government assumed power in March. Kosovo remained one of the poorest places in Europe, with an estimated population poverty headcount ratio at 25% for 2020 and 23% for 2021. The GDP per capita, at just one-fourth of the EU average, is projected to grow by 7.5 percent in 2021. Kosovo’s legal framework is mostly in line with international standards on the rights of the child, but implementation remains limited and partial statistics hamper policy development and monitoring.

It’s estimated that Kosovo spends some 8.5% of its GDP on social protection, compared to 28.1% on average in the EU. Access to health, education and other social services remains limited for disadvantaged children. In 2021, for the first time the Kosovo institutions introduced a universal child benefit of 20 EUR/month to children aged 0-2, which will be expanded for older groups from 2022, currently covered under the Economic Recovery Package.

The child mortality rate is 16 per 1,000 according to 2019-2020 MICS (estimated at 5-years-preceding the survey), and four times higher than the EU average. It is nearly twice as high for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities (27 children per 1,000). Disparities in immunization rates are also striking, with only 38% under age 2 fully immunized for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities versus 73% among the general population. Overstretch in health personnel due to the COVID-19 response continued impacting the routine immunizations. Young children also face increasing risks of deprivation, abuse and neglect in the home as parents’ economic, social and mental health situations were affected by the pandemic. MICS data reveals that only 15% of 3-4 year-old children attend early education programmes, a situation which did not improve significantly in 2021. Early stimulation at home is limited, with significant disparities between geographical areas and for children with disabilities.

According to MICS, the net-attendance-ratio in primary education is 96% (84% for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities), but learning levels are low. Kosovo ranked third from bottom in 2018 PISA and MICS data shows that less than half of children aged 7-14 demonstrate foundational reading and numeracy skills equivalent to Grade 2. Simulations estimate an average drop of 9 PISA points in the Western Balkans and learning inequalities widening from 1.5 to 2 years for just the first three months of school closure in 2020. In Kosovo, this would mean a reading score below its 2015 level (347 PISA points).

Children faced continued education disruption throughout 2021 with a late start of the academic year and schools operating in shifts and utilizing blended learning. The pandemic is likely to have exacerbated existing education and social inequities and disproportionately hit the most vulnerable groups, with long lasting impact on education, mental health and future income. The link between poverty and low foundational learning revealed in MICS confirms that the most vulnerable children are those most likely to face long lasting impacts of schooling interruptions.

While there is no specific data on adolescent mental health, studies show internationally the medium-term impact of school disruption on adolescents and increased risks of repetition and dropout out for students indicating mental distress. Children with disabilities are at particular risk of psychological distress due to routine disruption and lack of treatments as services operate under reduced capacities with staff being allocated to the pandemic response. The pandemic is also likely to have exacerbated existing gender-based inequalities with adolescent girls being at higher risk of anxiety, depression, sexual and reproductive health concerns and unequal...
gender roles at home, and boys more at risk of undertaking risky behaviour and being obliged to engage in child labour following pressure to contribute to family income. The Human Capital Index, for which Kosovo ranks 80 out of 157 places, shows that a child born in Kosovo will be 57% as productive by the age of 18 as s/he could be if s/he enjoyed complete education and full health, which is lower than the average for Europe and Central Asia.[15]

Low learning outcomes are negatively impacting school to work transition for youth. In 2021, the proportion of 15-year-olds not in employment, education or training reduced by almost ten percent to 29.8% and the unemployment rate for youth increased to 48.6% (53.5% for women).[16]. Young people risk being limited to informal labour with low earnings, limited access to social protection and little opportunity for social mobility. Inequalities between groups, particularly young people from minority communities, rural areas or with disabilities would have also likely increased.

In 2021, Kosovo hosted 41 asylum seeker, refugee and migrant children. In addition, Kosovo also hosted Afghan evacuees in transit, including children, while their final destination was being determined.

Implications for UNICEF programming include support for children and youth throughout the life cycle and support to Kosovo institutions for the pandemic responses that contribute to long term system strengthening and capacity development at national and municipality levels in health, education, child protection, social protection and monitoring of child rights.

[1] All references to Kosovo should be understood in the context of UNSCR-1244(1999)
[10] UNICEF (2020) Living the Pandemic as A Newborn, Adolescent and Youth

Major contributions and drivers of results

2021 was the first year of implementation of the UNICEF Kosovo Programme (2021-2025). UNICEF continued diversifying its partnerships with public and private donors and mobilized USD 6.6 million in additional resources for its overall response, a 59% increase compared to 2020 (and a 244% increase compared to 2019, pre-pandemic). The spending in 2021 amounted to a total of USD 4.8 million.

Young children and their parents

UNICEF continued the support to the Universal Progressive Home Visiting (UPHV) programme as part of the Primary Health Care (PHC) system which forms an integral part of the continuum of maternal and childcare services. The programme is currently being implemented in 27 out of the 38 municipalities.

In 2021, UNICEF focused on the consolidation and expansion of the programme through support to the planning and budgeting capacities of the Ministry of Health (MoH). In partnership with the MoH, a
costed Action Plan (2021-2024) for the UPHV programme was developed to outline the activities and resources necessary for expanding the programme Kosovo-wide. The plan also included, the new allocation of 760,000 EUR to strengthen transportation capacities for increasing the coverage of the programme. To inform the scale-up process, UNICEF commissioned a costing study to support national and municipal policy decision making processes and inform budget planning and the design of cost-effective implementation options for the UPHV programme.

In 2021, the programme reached over 14,000 children aged 0-3 and about 2,500 pregnant women through 25,000 home visits in 27 municipalities. Overall, 6% of the visited children were from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The walls of over 140 PHC centres were branded with UPHV programme brand and messages to increase community awareness of the programme and its benefits. The disruption of face-to-face service delivery due to pandemic restrictions paved the way for new approaches, including the introduction of telehealth counselling for the first time. To respond to pandemic-related interruptions in routine immunization services, UNICEF, in collaboration with the National Institute of Public Health (NIPH), supported a door-to-door catch-up routine immunization campaign, with a focus on communities and locations with historically low vaccination rates. 5,877 children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian and other vulnerable groups were identified and then vaccinated through catch-up immunization sessions organized by the PHC centers.

UNICEF continued its strong support to the COVID-19 emergency response by providing technical support to MoH for introduction and rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine. The National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for the COVID-19 vaccine was finalized, a digital vaccine registration and appointment module developed, and health professionals were trained on vaccine administration. UNICEF provided vaccination sites in 30 out of the 38 municipalities in Kosovo with medical and non-medical equipment to ensure adequate functioning. A total of 739,620 donated vaccines were delivered through the COVAX Facility, including the first vaccines offered in Kosovo, and covering 21% of the total population with two doses of the vaccine. Additionally, 1.3 million syringes and other non-medical equipment were also procured in support of the vaccination process. Following the support with the Vaccine Cold Chain Assessment in 2020, UNICEF supported the MoH and NIPH to strengthen the cold chain system through delivery of 16 refrigerators by the COVAX Facility to vaccination centers.

UNICEF also worked with the MoH to increase demand for and access to the COVID-19 vaccination, including for the most marginalized and vulnerable people. About 27,000 people received COVID-19 vaccination information through door-to-door campaigns, resulting in the vaccination of 5,498 people against COVID-19 (49% female and 51% male) including 2,731 people from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities (48% female and 52% male). To further increase the uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine UNICEF worked with the MoH on risk communication while communities were also engaged through evidence-based communication interventions.

UNICEF has continued its strategic engagement with the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) and other key stakeholders in support of national efforts to improve the structure, coverage and quality of Early Childhood Education (ECE).

At national level, UNICEF supported the revision of the draft Law on ECE. It will be reviewed and adopted by Kosovo Assembly in 2022, and is expected to form a strong legal foundation for financing and expanding the provision of more inclusive and equitable ECE services. Technical support was also provided to the development of the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan (2022-2026) and its strategic objective on ECE, which aims to expand supply, improve demand and enhance quality through professional development and a new curriculum. In the context of the continuing pandemic, UNICEF also supported the maintenance and expansion of the distance learning ECE platform to provide activities for parents to increase stimulation and early learning at home and for educators to facilitate learning in the classroom. Overall, 24,000 children aged 0-6 benefited from the platform’s materials and 147 educators strengthened their knowledge and skills on ECE learning. UNICEF also successfully supported the participation of the Association of Private Preschool Institutions (APPI) in ECE policy formulation and national decision-making.

At local level, UNICEF worked with municipalities to promote school readiness through continued support to 16 community-based ECD Centers, two of which were established in 2021. UNICEF
contributed with ECE supplies, capacity building of educators and worked in close cooperation with parents and service providers to improve the quality of the learning experience. Overall, 405 children aged 3-5 attended these ECD Centers 11% of whom were from Roma, Ashkali or Egyptians communities.

In tackling gender related norms associated with limited engagement of fathers in parenting and children’s early education, UNICEF supported the development of the training module for educators to facilitate fathers’ engagement in early education. Following this, a first cohort of 49 educators enhanced their skills and knowledge on fathers’ role and the contribution of both parents in early development and education.

To support inclusive learning for children with disabilities, UNICEF supported the MESTI to deploy 35 teacher assistants in primary schools, seven of them were included on the payroll after the initial assignment, demonstrating the potential for scalability and sustainability of the approach. From the MESTI's side, to support the inclusion of children with disabilities in education, MESTI committed to increasing the number of teacher assistants by 400% (to 500 in total) across municipalities by 2024.

**Participation and empowerment of adolescents and young people**

The Kosovo programme continued to advance access to digital education, and to enhance adolescent and youth participation and empowerment by supporting their skills development and strengthening professional and civic platforms for participation. A key programming priority has been to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on learning and to contribute to the broader digital transformation of education in Kosovo. UNICEF supported the MESTI with the development of shkollat.org, a Kosovo-wide e-learning platform that integrates the Learning Passport repository of formal, online education learning materials (grades 1-9) and non-formal skills development programmes for youth. Learning Passport, is now accessible to all formal education students. About 200,000 email accounts have been created to provide access to shkollat.org and 8,458 video classes are available through the Learning Passport.

To support MESTI with the uptake of the platform in schools, UNICEF supported the deployment of shkollat.org in four municipalities by providing training for 2,000 teachers, securing internet connectivity for 13 schools, and increasing access to IT devices for teachers (305 laptops distributed) and marginalized children and youth, including those with disabilities (629 tablets distributed). UNICEF also contributed to an enabling environment for digital education in the long term via its support to the pillar on the digitization of education as part of the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2022-2026.

UNICEF prioritised its advocacy efforts towards the safe reopening of schools and supported the MESTI in revising and disseminating the Guidelines for the Organization of Learning for Safe School Reopening to reflect the changes in conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic. UNICEF also distributed masks and disinfectant to 1,020 (95%) schools in Kosovo, ensuring a safer return to schools for more than 300,000 students, as well as teachers and support staff.

Another key programming priority has been increasing young people’s skills. UNICEF expanded its skills building flagship initiatives, UPSHIFT, PONDER and PODIUM, formally accredited in 2020 by the MESTI, through uploading their content onto the Learning Passport and bringing the programmes to six upper secondary schools with 169 teachers trained. Youth engagement also took place through the five Innovation Hubs in five supported municipalities. Overall, 6,785 adolescents and young people were reached and connected through UNICEF’s 21st century skills-based programmes. Additionally, 1,027 (52% girls) completed a skills development programme for problem solving, critical thinking, team working, entrepreneurship, goal setting and/or interpersonal communication, including through the implementation of 64 youth-led initiatives on issues such as the environment, gender equality, mental health and e-education. Among other, young girls and boys chose to work on issues related to gender based and domestic violence, early marriage and girl’s empowerment as part of their youth-led initiatives. These solutions aimed at sensitizing the communities around gender norms and discriminations faced by girls and women. For example, the ‘Return to Your Dream’ initiative, implemented by young women from a Correctional Center, included advocacy materials and
an art exhibition as a campaign to raise girls and women’s voices against domestic violence.

Youth participation was also supported through the promotion of volunteering. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (MCYS) to expand volunteering opportunities through the MYCS Youth Month initiative. UNICEF supported the launch event, bringing together around 200 young people to present 15 youth-led projects. Seven volunteering campaigns on environmental issues and e-learning were implemented by 30 young people (19 girls and 11 boys) during the month. These activities contributed to strengthening the coordination capacity of the MCYS and its ability to mobilize youth.

Young people’s skills for work were further enhanced by UNICEF’s efforts to bridge the school to work transition. The 644 young people (62% young girls) of the second cohort of the Kosovo Generation Unlimited programme (K-GenU) accessed three-month paid internships in a range of sectors and businesses. UNICEF expanded the range of partnerships with private and public sector organizations under K-GenU, with a total of 146 entities offering internships in 2021. This resulted in 157 young boys and girls, 24% of the cohort, being retained for further employment. Through the Techstitution programme, 541 young people also developed job-specific skills for ICT related fields and were supported to develop social change community products or digital solutions.

Lastly, adolescents and youth girls and boys have benefited from increased opportunities to access information and voice their opinions through U-Report. A total of 1,760 new users signed up for U-Report in 2021, and the overall reach of the polls for 2021 was 11,689 U-Reporters. The U-Report polls covered a wide-range of issues, such as COVID-19 and vaccine acceptance, social inclusion, and climate change. Feedback from U-Reporters was also used by the national authorities to inform the development of the new National Development Strategy (NDS).

Social inclusion and child rights monitoring

In 2021, UNICEF prioritized technical support to strengthen the normative framework in child and social protection. UNICEF contributed to the finalization of the draft Law on Social and Family Services, the finalization of the Draft Law on Local Government Finance, and the harmonization of 10 Administrative Instructions for the establishment of coordination mechanisms and integration of the child protection system. UNICEF also contributed advocacy and technical expertise to the Ministry of Finance Labor and Transfers (MFLT) for the creation of a Specific Grant for Social Services under the Law on Local Government Finance, and for the preparation of the financial analysis and funding formula for the budget allocations under this mechanism. In the area of social inclusion, UNICEF has provided expertise to the MFLT and Disability Person’s Organizations to review the draft “Law on Categorization of Persons with Disabilities” that aims to provide the foundation for the implementation of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health approach in Kosovo, and will strengthen the capacities of the multidisciplinary teams for evaluation of children with disabilities.

In order to protect the rights of refugee, migrant and asylum-seeking children in Kosovo, UNICEF, together with UNHCR and IOM, provided support to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) for the development of Best Interest Assessment and Best Interest Determination (BIA/BID) Guidelines in compliance with international protection standards. UNICEF also supported the provision of psycho-social support and educational activities to all 41 children registered in the Asylum Center and their 69 parents by psychologists as well as ensuring the capacity development of social workers, police officers, customs officers, Asylum Center staff and teachers on provision of quality integrated services for children on the move.

Evidence-based planning and policy formulation was strengthened by efforts to inform the development of the NDS 2022-2030 by a thorough analysis of disaggregated data from the 2020 MICS and the 2019 UNICEF Situation Analysis of Children and Women. The NDS development and prioritization process was also based on the findings of the first nationally-led evaluation of the Human Capital Pillar of the NDS 2016-2021. The evaluation, led by the Strategic Planning Office/Office of the Prime Minister (SPO/OPM) and supported by UNICEF, provided evidence to inform the development of the new NDS (2022-2030). The evaluation findings highlighted the need to shift the focus from economic growth to a more holistic human development agenda, to ensure a participatory
approach to development of the NDS for increased ownership and accountability to results as well as to use the NDS as a tool for steering integrated planning and sectoral strategies. These findings, among others, have been incorporated and addressed as part of the development of the upcoming NDS. UNICEF also prioritized the participation of youth in the shaping of the NDS 2022-2030 by supporting the SPO/OPM with adolescent and youth consultations, using the U-Report platform to collect information on key priorities for the Kosovo’s development agenda and conducting additional online and in-person consultations with adolescents and young people, particularly from vulnerable and marginalized groups. The involvement of young people in the NDS development process contributed to enriching the quality of the preparatory analysis and ensuring it adequately reflected the concerns and priorities of youth.

To address information gaps and strengthen child-related data systems, UNICEF Kosovo supported the Office of Good Governance/Office of the Prime Minister and the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) in initiating a child-related data mapping exercise to inform the development of the national database for child rights monitoring and reporting. The KAS was supported for collecting and reporting data on child mortality. Through UNICEF support, the MoH also unified and digitalized the immunization data under the Health Information System. Similarly, UNICEF Kosovo provided technical support to MESTI for alignment of the pre-university education system with the International Standards Classification of Education (ISCED 2011) and the upper-secondary educational programmes according to ISCED Fields of Education and Training (ISCED-F 2013).

UN Collaboration and Other Partnerships

UNICEF continued to play a catalytic role in the UN Development System reform efforts in Kosovo. UNICEF supported the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Common Framework for 2021-2025 as chair of the Results Group for Inclusive Social Services, and as co-chair of the Social Cohesion Results Group. UNICEF also leads the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) group, ensuring effective results-based planning, monitoring and reporting on the UN’s joint efforts in Kosovo.

As part of the MEL group, UNICEF, jointly with other UN agencies, supported the SPO/OPM, the KAS, and the Kosovo Assembly with a Rapid Integrated Assessment on data availability for, and policy alignment with, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This assessment will inform mainstreaming of SDGs within the NDS (2022-2030) and other strategies and policy documents. UNICEF worked closely with UN agencies to maximize results for children. UNICEF partnered with WHO throughout the pandemic response with joined-up support to MoH; with UNHCR and IOM in the development of BIA/BID guidelines for refugee, migrant and asylum-seeking children; and jointly marked the International Volunteer Day with MCYS, the Development Coordinators’ Office and UNV. Two UN Joint Programmes were completed in 2021, one related to pandemic response and one on youth participation and peace building; the latter was also evaluated in 2021 to inform future joint programmes. Further collaboration with UN Agencies took place on the use of U-Report for the identification of young people’s priorities and challenges and the amplification of youth voices in programme implementation on issues concerning them.

UNICEF continued to work closely with Kosovo institutions at national and local levels to uphold the rights of children and adolescents. Historical partnerships with line ministries such as MESTI, MFLT, MoH, MCYS, MIA were pursued and adapted to new ministries’ portfolios following the establishment of the new government. Other partnerships with Kosovo institutions such as the SPO/OPM, KAS or the NIPH, were strengthened in key programming areas. At local level, UNICEF expanded partnerships with municipal authorities and service providers in education, health, child and social protection.

UNICEF diversified its partners portfolio by establishing new partnerships with traditional and non-traditional partners for advocacy, policy influencing and programme implementation. During 2021, partnerships with private sector entities were significantly strengthened, with 146 private and public
entities providing internship opportunities for youth under the K-GenU. For the first time UNICEF also established partnerships with diaspora entities to provide internship opportunities for adolescents and youth and support for child rights advocacy. UNICEF ensured a comprehensive participation of civil society in the new program cycle through the launching of a call for applications for implementing partners, which resulted in new partnership agreements with 16 CSOs and academic institutions. Another key strategy was also to leverage partnerships with coalitions to advance legal reforms, such as the Coalition of NGOs on Child Protection or the Kosovo Disability Forum. UNICEF also initiated the advocacy platform “TeamRijad” which gathers decision makers, the private sector and influencers to advocate with one voice for better inclusion for children with disabilities.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

The continued challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 resulted in the adaptation of working and delivery practices, providing new opportunities and paving the way for new approaches. UNICEF’s fast support in response to the school closures and learning disruptions has contributed to the creation of digital solutions for children, as a first step towards the digitization of education. The ECD digital platform and shkollat.org, with the Learning Platform technology integrated to it, provide distance and blended learning opportunities for young children and compulsory school-age children and adolescents. These platforms have the potential to contribute to better education processes and outcomes, by developing teachers’ digital skills and understanding of blended learning pedagogy, by providing additional educational opportunities for children and adolescents, and by improving the content of education delivery at home and in preschool settings, particularly in the case of the ECD platform. Obstacles to distance learning during the pandemic included lack of infrastructure and low teacher capacities, which impeded optimal use of the digital solutions developed. UNICEF has learned the importance of bridging these gaps by combining partnership development for devices and connectivity with local level partnerships with municipal authorities, schools, teachers and parents for supporting take-up and use. To this end, the need for a strategic approach to education digitalization has been a critical lesson learned and UNICEF is now supporting the MESTI to shape the digitalization of education pillar of the new Kosovo Education Sector Strategy, currently under development.

Similarly, the adoption of teleconsultation for the UPHV programme enabled the programme to reach more pregnant women and children aged 0-3 and resulted in increased frequency of communication and interaction between nurses and parents. Given the need to find cost-effective and sustainable ways for the programme to meet its performance standards, when used in complement to traditional in-person home visits this approach offers great potential for the future of the UPHV implementation beyond the pandemic. Programme implementation this year also highlighted several lessons related to partnerships for children and adolescents. Bridging the school to work transition gap requires extended and non-traditional partnerships with a range of public and private organizations, businesses, and umbrella organizations. Encouraging results from 2021, with 24% of young interns employed following their internship, demonstrate that building a wide movement for work experience can be a successful strategy to support the employment of young people, including from marginalized groups. In a volatile political context, frequent government changes have been associated with priority shifts, which pose a risk for the implementation of programmes and policies at scale and that require national financial and political support to be successful. UNICEF has learned that ensuring the continuity of political priorities across governments requires a long-term strategic engagement with the institutions, and technical staff, and other stakeholders. Joint advocacy with civil society has also proven instrumental to ensure continuity of the legal framework development process across governments and to maintain key issues on the national agenda, such as child protection or the rights of children living with disabilities.
In the context of programme implementation, the use of an open call for expression of interest by CSOs, academic and research institutions proved to be critical to expand UNICEF’s partnerships and diversify the implementing partners for the Kosovo Programme (2021-2025).

The support to the planning and evaluation process of the NDS (2016-2021) revealed that the first national-led youth accompanied evaluation of the Human Capital Pillar of the NDS contributed to instilling a culture of evaluation at national level. Combining the evaluation exercise with capacity building on Results Based Management and evaluation principles sparked interest across institutions and line ministries, for a more integrated planning, monitoring and evaluation process of strategies and policies.

The engagement of young people in the NDS evaluation process, the organization of youth consultations to inform the development of the new NDS (2022-2030) were recognized as meaningful by the SPO/OPM, that could pave the way for the replication of such activities for future legal, policy development and national decision-making processes.

The benefits to data collection using a blended approach that combines in-person and virtual interviews and focus groups are many. A blended approach enables reaching out to more key informants, ensuring geographical representativeness and participant diversity, and keeping costs low. UNICEF has learned valuable lessons on how to secure, maximize and facilitate remote participation of key informants which will be used in future evaluation and research exercises. Furthermore, engaging key institutions in data collection and analysis activities is not only meaningful for producing useful evidence and information to inform policy decision-making processes, but also instrumental in pointing to the gaps in existing data systems and data collection and reporting processes. The data collection process led by the KAS for the TransMonEE regional initiative revealed the lack of flexibility or the incompleteness of existing data systems that hinders their ability to generate a wide range of information. Valuable lessons were drawn from the exercise, resulting in the identification of key priorities for data quality improvement and new entry points for strengthening further the administrative data collection and reporting processes.

Lastly, programme implementation in 2021 demonstrated the importance of effective and efficient management for achieving planned results which was further strengthened through responsive, transparent, and accountable internal governance, and the development of a results-oriented, efficient and effective management culture. For instance, simplifying processes by using the E-Tools platform, including the pilot of electronic Programme Documents, increased office efficiency and effectiveness by streamlining the field activities monitoring and reporting. A key lesson learned is the importance of continuous capacity development for national and local Implementing Partners, civil society organizations and UNICEF staff for UNICEF’s on financial and risk management procedures and processes. The office will continue its focus on risk management through enhanced oversight and assessment, such as building the capacity of Implementing Partners and further leveraging E-tools for the management of the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT).