

**One United Nations Programme and
Common Budgetary Framework
Bosnia and Herzegovina
2015-2019:**

United Nations Development Assistance Framework



2017 UN Country Results Report

April 2017

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Reporting Context

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is comprised of ten UN Programmes and Specialized Agencies (FAO, ILO, IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UNEP, WHO, UNESCO, UN Women, UNV), and UNICTY. Several regionally-based UN Agencies are also operational in BiH such as UNIDO, IFAD, and IAEA.

The work of the UNCT in BiH is guided through the 2015-2019 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) endorsed by the BiH Council of Ministers on 14 May 2015 and officially signed on 15 June 2015. Thirteen outcomes have been agreed within the 2015-2019 UNDAF, in four strategic focus areas that respond to country needs and make use of the UN's comparative advantages: Rule of Law and Human Security, Sustainable and Equitable Development and Employment, Social Inclusion (education, social protection, child protection, child protection and health), and Empowerment of Women.

Full implementation of the UNDAF will require an estimated total of USD 264,592,034. This includes an indicative USD 54,871,620 from regular or core resources and a projected USD 78,533,932 from other or non-core resources. The total estimated funding gap is USD 131,186,482 which is expected to be mobilized during the UNDAF implementation.

BiH is an official Delivering as One (DaO) country. In line with this status and provisions stipulated in the agreed 2015-2019 UNDAF is operationalized through biennial Joint UN Work Plans, one for each of the four UNDAF Focus Areas reducing the transactions costs for the BiH authorities and other partners in BiH. Currently the UNDAF implementation is operationalized through 2017-2018 Joint UN Work Plans endorsed by the Joint BiH/UN Steering Committee (JSC) in March 2017. The JSC is co-chaired by the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the BiH Minister of Finance and Treasury and includes the UNCT as well as nominated representatives of the BiH authorities. With the overall responsibility of coordinating and monitoring the UNDAF implementation in BiH, the JSC provides strategic guidance and oversight during the 2015-2019 UNDAF implementation, endorses the Joint UN Work Plans and reviews the annual reports.

The UNDAF 2015-2019 is implemented as an integral part of planning and programming by BiH partners at all governing levels, including line ministries, parliaments, the judiciary, CSOs, as well as the private sector. In adherence with the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action, the UN works and coordinates with international development partners, such as the Bretton Woods Institutions and bilateral and multilateral donors, to ensure that the UNCT's development cooperation is aligned, harmonized and managed for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

Within this context, the UNCT prepares a joint UN Country Results Report on the annual basis informing the JSC and other partners in BiH of the achievements and progress made in implementation of the 2015-2019 UNDAF for BiH. This report summarizes and highlights the key development results achieved in BiH in 2017 with the UN support during the third year of the UNDAF implementation.

2017 BiH Context

Following the EU's positive assessment of BiH's application for the EU membership, EU initiated a comprehensive assessment process. Questionnaire consisting of 3,242 questions (16% political, 2% economic, 82% EU acquis-related) was received by the EU Commission, putting at test the functionality of the multi-levelled Coordination Mechanism, as well as the actual substantive preparedness of the country concerning the accession criteria and the 33 EU policy chapters. Together with the Commission's missions and consultations reports, the responses will inform EC's "Opinion" document with a set of next-steps recommendations and a clearer view to country's readiness to open the accession negotiations.

While reforms implemented in 2016-17 are yet to show meaningful impact, economically, BiH is starting to show signs of growth. Strong fiscal consolidation in 2015 resulted in a fiscal surplus of 0.6% of GDP. BiH is recording a record FDIs in 2017, according to the BiH Agency for Foreign Investment Promotion, with the expected figures to reach USD 950 Mil, which is the level of the annual state-level budget.

Still, fiscal accounts are likely to have deteriorated in 2016 and 2017 to a deficit of 0.6% of GDP due to a stable revenue-to-GDP ratio, combined with an increase in social spending and some recovery in capital spending. Recent Debt Sustainability Analysis confirms BiH is moderately indebted country with public debt to GDP ratio slightly above 40 percent of GDP.

Although beginning to decline, unemployment remains high, despite significant improvements in the labor market. The unemployment rate fell to 20.5% in 2017, driven by a fall in the activity rate and a slight rise in the employment rate. Unemployment among the youth has also decreased from 54.3 to 45.8 % in 2017. Supported primarily by rising domestic demand, economic growth is projected to strengthen from 3.1% in 2016 to 3.5% by 2019. By World Bank projections, this is considerably lower than the estimated 6% growth needed for BiH to catch up to EU income levels by 2037 and close the gap with other transition economies that are already EU members.

Advancement of the development agenda in the country, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in particular, still requires substantial efforts and engagement within the BiH context, despite limited progress noted in 2017. Political discourse in the country lacks sufficient strategic discussion and focus on prioritizing development and reform processes in BiH. As such, BiH lacks a country-wide agreement on development priorities, and implementation of the Reform Agenda remains incomplete. However, several key sector-based strategies such as transportation, environment and rural development were adopted despite significant political disagreements and delays unlocking the international financial assistance, primarily from the EU IPA funds. The BiH Platform for the Development of Preschool Education for 2017-2022 was adopted marking another significant achievement in 2017. Some other sector-based strategies such as agriculture, employment, education, etc. and are still pending formal endorsement and access to additional international financial assistance.

Thematic Area 1: RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN SECURITY

Thematic area 1 or UNDAF Pillar 1 aims to contribute to improved rule of law and human security through promoting access to justice, non-discrimination and equality, focusing on peaceful resolution of conflicts, reconciliation, respect for diversity, as well as strengthening community security, including effective management of explosive remnants of war and strengthened prevention and preparedness for disasters.

UNDAF intended results

- Ensure access to justice through mechanisms for peaceful resolution of conflicts, reconciliation and respect for diversity;
- Ensure access to rights of persons with refugee status in line with the international standards;
- Strengthen prevention, prosecution of traffickers and protection of victims of human trafficking;
- Increase prevention of narcotic trafficking, cultivation and processing of distribution cases;
- Reduce explosive war remnants and surplus armaments;
- Strengthen prevention, early detection and processing of corruption cases;
- Improve capacities for prevention of armed violence;
- Invest in prevention of disasters caused by natural and man-made hazards.

UNDAF related Outcomes: 1,2,3.

Development trends and challenges identified

The rule of law and the judicial system remains a challenging sector. The public administration is still in dire need for further reforms and non-harmonized legislation between different levels of governments in BiH impedes UN's further targeted assistance in this field.

2017 saw a rise in the number of refugees and migrants detected on the territory of BiH, following the emergence of a transit route through the region. Among them are vulnerable categories, in particular, unaccompanied and separated children. During the year, 376 persons applied for asylum which was significant increase comparing to 2016 (79 persons). In addition, many migrants engage migrant smugglers in order to transit the Western Balkan region. The Ministry of Justice of BiH started with the provision of free legal aid to asylum seekers and irregular migrants. However, the establishment of the Office for Provision of Free Legal Aid within the Ministry of Justice is still pending. While authorities relatively well managed to cope and admit limited number of asylum seekers in the Asylum Centre, the capacity of the asylum center was exceeded at the end of 2017. Continuing challenges include the identification of asylum seekers and migrant vulnerabilities, as well as the referral of vulnerable asylum seekers and migrants to adequate services due to a lack of clear procedures and insufficient capacity building of centers for social welfare to work with asylum seekers and migrants in vulnerable situations, including unaccompanied and separated children.

In December 2017, Federation of BiH (FBiH) amended the Law on Federal Administrative Fees providing for reduced naturalization fee for refugees (reduced from BAM 450 to 100). There were no systemic changes of legislation related to Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and returnee population in 2017 but coordination and streamlining of Annex VII issues was further enhanced. The 2016 Report on the Realization of the Revised Strategy of BiH for Implementation of the Annex VII of the Dayton Peace Agreement was adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH and is pending a review by the Parliamentary Assembly.

The lack of a strategy or action plan for the implementation of justice reform at entity level still puts constraints on holistic sustainable improvements of the justice for children system. Additionally, there is a need to strengthen the capacity of the social welfare sector in terms of human and financial resources as well as their capacity to work with at-risk children and families through case management and specialised services. While the BiH Council for Children strengthened its coordination of child rights monitoring in BiH, obstacles in coordination between governance levels still exist, especially with regard to the country's obligations for CRC monitoring.

While the notion of the need to better protect and serve children in contact and in conflict with law is widely perceived amongst professionals, modest progress has been made in applying key child friendly justice principles.

Actions of the government regarding the enhancement of the legal framework for victims of wartime torture are still influenced by political processes. To the UN's knowledge, since January 2017, the FBiH Commission for Granting victim status for Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) survivors received 39 cases and decided on 21. In Brcko District (BD), the equivalent Commission was operationalised in autumn 2017, and has since then decided positively on 3 out of 9 received cases. The harmonization of the laws in BiH is highly dependent on the budgetary potential of the governments and the constitutional limitations in regard to the mandates of relevant bodies in charge for drafting the CRSV related legislation.

While the key focus of the UN peacebuilding and reconciliation activities in the previous period i.e. fostering dialogue was enhanced to an extent possible, an overall framework of a substantive discussion for the common future was lacking. In spite of contextual limitations, the BiH Presidency clearly articulated its desire to continue partnering with the UN in the joint peacebuilding initiative Dialogue for the Future (DFF) referring to it as a positive practice that requires further investment of time, determination and dedication. This is why, in an unprecedented leadership move, the BiH Presidency identified education and culture as areas that require further attention in terms of peacebuilding and reconciliation, with a specific focus on youth and clearly articulated its desire to continue partnering with the UN in the next joint UN peacebuilding initiative.

In 2017, UN's involvement in the field of local community safety and security was limited, due to insufficient financial access to target communities, establish trust with local actors, stakeholders, and organisations, and to reach and motivate those most vulnerable to destructive influences. Long-term commitments of the BiH stakeholders' through participation in initiatives introduced in the areas of border security and anti-money laundering/combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT), and enhancing inter-agency collaboration and coordination are essential to ensuring mitigation of a particular security-related risks and sustainability of efforts of all partners.

In 2017, relevant BiH authorities, particularly the BiH Ministry of Security, increased their awareness and recognition of violent extremism as a threat to national and community security, and prevention efforts were prioritized. With the support of UN, the Ministry of Security of BiH took the leading coordinating role for the implementation of the BiH Strategy for Prevention and Combating Terrorism and the Action Plan. In 2017, BiH adopted Organized Crime Threat Assessment (OCTA) document 2017-2020, followed by the Strategy for Combating Organized Crime in BiH for the period 2017-2020 representing a clear sign of commitment of BiH institutions to work on preventing the execution of such criminal offences. Additionally, draft document of the National Strategy on supervision over narcotic drugs, prevention and suppression of the abuse of narcotic drugs in BiH has been completed and forwarded to the approval procedure by the BiH Parliamentary Assembly¹.

As per official data, BiH is responsible for the management of approximately 19,900 tonnes of ammunitions located in 12 storage sites throughout the country. All ammunition currently in stock is not only over several decades old but also at the end of its life cycle and represent safety, security and development concern for BiH and, due to delays in institutional decision-making, BiH ammunition disposal approaches were often hampered. Furthermore, BiH is still faced with the presence of illicit arms which favours organised crime, domestic violence and terrorism and as such constitutes a key security risk that slows down the path to economic development. Noteworthy, BiH passed the Strategy for Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons for the period 2016–2020 which constitutes the continuation of efforts of the BiH authorities to reduce the risks that small arms and light weapons represent for all aspects of security.

A general assessment of the mine situation in BiH identified 1,369 communities as affected by landmines, explosive remnants of war (ERW) and cluster munition. This assessment also states that landmine/ERW and cluster munition contaminated locations directly affect approximately 545,000 citizens, which is 15% of the country population. BiH, as a signatory to the Ottawa Convention, will be unable to fulfil its Article 5 obligations to achieve mine free status by 01 March 2019. Consequently, BiH will draft its second Extension

¹ Official page of the Council of Minister BiH
http://www.vijeceministara.gov.ba/saopstenija/sjednice/saopstenija_sa_sjednica/default.aspx?id=27264&langTag=en-US

Request to achieve mine free status by 2025 which is in line with the new BiH Mine Action Strategy 2018-2025.

Climate change and high exposure to natural and man-made hazards further hurdle the country socio-economic development. The 2017 World Risk Report ranks BiH as a country of high exposure to natural hazards. According to the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery², more than 20% of Bosnia and Herzegovina's territory is prone to flooding, which, on average, annually impact about 100,000 people and about US\$600 million in GDP. Despite evident historical trends also captured by the Third National Communication on Climate Change for BiH³, the frequency of disasters has not yet prompted adequate government approach for climate-induced disasters, including preventive measures. Given the climate change projections for the region, by the end of the century, the Western Balkans can expect an increase in the frequency, unpredictability and intensity of flooding, drought, heatwaves and wildfires. This will have an adverse effect on the GDP of each country, multiple sectors and, more importantly, the lives and livelihoods of people.

Key achievements

Following the development and adoption of two new Free Legal Aid (FLA) Laws including State level FLA Law⁴ and Canton 10 Law on FLA⁵, the UN supported two new FLA agencies, which were established and fully equipped - at state⁶ and Canton 10 levels. Throughout 2017, the UN supported the provision of FLA services to 18,825 citizens (52% men and 48% women). Accordingly, the total number of outreached FLA beneficiaries since 2014 reached directly 96,516 people, while FLA services are available for nearly 900,000 people country-wide.

Based on continued advocacy and expert support, six bylaws related to the 2016 Law on Asylum were adopted and entered into force in 2017. In order to fill in the gaps, where comprehensive free legal aid is not provided, UN continued its support in provision of free legal aid to vulnerable individuals, including asylum seekers, persons granted international protection, persons at risk of statelessness, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees; 2,498 vulnerable individuals benefitted from UN funded free legal aid to resolve their status issues and access fundamental rights. In terms of advancement of human rights and Annex VII implementation, UN and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) helped streamlining resolution of the remaining Annex VII of Dayton Peace Accord issues through support to organisation of two thematic Annex VII sessions gathering executive authorities and legislators; each resulted with sets of recommendations for improved human rights and Annex VII implementation in the areas of social housing and health care, including call for legislative changes.

The justice for children system was further strengthened through improved legal policy frameworks, e.g. children in detention in the Republika Srpska (RS) are now allowed to enrol in elementary education; capacities of over 1,000 professionals working with children in contact with the law, were enhanced; the successful modelling of a secondary prevention programme in 29 primary schools, was implemented, benefitting over 13,000 children, of which 6 per cent (214 girls and 542 boys) were identified as at-risk, and of these 193 (53 girls and 140 boys) provided with support services; availability of 5 diversionary measures out of 7 prescribed by the legislation in 26 municipalities is ensured, providing a solid foundation for further replication and country-wide scale up. Child rights monitoring (CRM) in BiH was further strengthened through the implementation of the Action Plan for Children 2015-2018. With UN technical support, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees prepared the 5th and 6th Combined Periodic CRC (Convention on the Rights of the Child) Report which was adopted by the BiH Council of Ministers in November 2017. A multi-sectoral working group initiated the development of the Best Interests of the Child Guidelines in BiH, which had been a recommendation by the Committee on the Rights of the Child back in 2012.

In response to the increased number of refugees and apprehended migrants detected on the territory of BiH, the UN began operating two mobile protection teams in BiH in coordination with Service for Foreigners' Affairs and contributed in the development of a Questionnaire for Vulnerable Categories of

² <https://www.gfdr.org/bosnia-and-herzegovina>

³ http://www.ba.undp.org/content/bosnia_and_herzegovina/en/home/operations/projects/environment_and_energy/--third-national-communication-of-bosnia-and-herzegovina-under-t.html

⁴ <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/aktuelnosti/vijesti/default.aspx?id=5509&langTag=bs-BA>

⁵ <http://www.livno-online.com/zupanija/18091-skupstina-hbz-a-usvojila-prijedlog-zakona-o-pruzanju-besplatne-pravne-pomoci/>

⁶ <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/aktuelnosti/vijesti/default.aspx?id=5910&langTag=bs-BA>

Migrants in the Western Balkans. The UN contributed to the capacities and coordination of front line governmental and non-governmental actors to better address and monitor the needs of migrants in vulnerable situations, including Victims of Trafficking (VOTs) issues. In coordination with government stakeholders, a mobile app tailored for vulnerable migrants is being developed that will ensure access to information on VOT risk factors and services available for vulnerable populations across all countries. 150 officials and NGO representatives benefited from organised capacity building events, targeting all actors involved in asylum procedure to ensure efficient access to territory and adequate reception conditions for asylum seekers including vulnerable individuals, such as unaccompanied asylum seekers and migrant children. 415 officials from different level of authorities and aid providers benefited from eighteen capacity building events related to improvements of civil registration, residence and citizenship legislation which will contribute to improved civil registration and reduce number of persons at risk of statelessness.

Survivors of CRSV across the country are informed on procedures and manners for acquiring the rights based on existing legal framework. In RS, the Government adopted the final draft of the Law on Protection of Victims of Torture. Upon adoption in the RS National Assembly, the new laws will enable the possibility for acquiring the rights in this entity for the first time after 2007. Two governmental bodies (Commission for granting the status of victim) in FBiH and Brčko district are operationalized and started processing CRSV applications.

Through joint BiH Presidency and the UN efforts, the country-wide youth platform bringing together more than 1,500 young people continued to function in 2017.⁷ By engaging with youth leaders, parents, and local actors, the UN contributed to strengthening the resilience to violent extremism among up-to 1,000 young persons in 15 targeted communities across Bosnia and Herzegovina identified as being at-risk of radicalization and violent extremist influence.

UN's Container Control Programme (CCP) continued to assist BiH to strengthen cargo controls as to prevent illicit trafficking in smuggled goods. Throughout 2017, seven capacity building events have been organized in BiH for approx. 70 customs and border policemen and officials from other institutions in BiH. The UN supported enhancing technical skills of some 50 law enforcement officers in controlling cross-border transportation of cash, and 20 law enforcement experts on administrative and normative aspects of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) that fully incorporates the rule of law and respect for human rights.

In 2017, the UN continued to work on the above human security issues, with focus on reduction of surplus ammunition and remnants of war (including mine-action) and enhancing governments' capacities. This resulted in decrease of the quantity of unsafe ammunition by 45% since 2013 (to 9,364 tonnes) and shortened the disposal process from 10 to 5 years. Over 1,600 tonnes of unsafe ammunition were disposed as a result of cooperation among all relevant stakeholders, guided by the Master Plan in the area of ammunition reduction. The UN contributed to the implementation of the Small Arms and Light Weapons Strategy by destroying more than 8 million pieces of small arms ammunition. In cooperation with several ministries of interior in BiH, the Ministry of Security BiH and the Ministry of Defense BiH, the security and safety of BiH citizens in over 80 local governments has been increased through the UN significant achievement reflected in the disposal of 5,186 small arms light weapons - SALW (2,835 long and 2,351 short barrelled weapons) and 5,615 SALW parts and components⁸.

In the area of disaster risk reduction (DRR), the UN has supported strategic planning, institutional cooperation and strengthening local communities' resilience. The key results include 24 DRR-featuring local strategic frameworks as well as the establishment and capacity-building of the Civil Protection Network within the Association of Municipalities and Cities of FBiH, as well as further strengthening of the Civil Protection Network in RS. These mechanisms enabled sharing and solving of DRR-related issues, as well as increased local governments' resilience and coordination. Identified strategic priorities within local strategies were then translated into actions, which resulted in increased citizens' resilience through capacity development and engineering works on floods (7,000 people and agricultural land protected) and landslides (100 people and 3 roads in 5 municipalities) prevention.

⁷ http://ba.one.un.org/content/unct/bosnia_and_herzegovina/en/home/presscenter/speech-of-un-resident-coordinator-at-sdg-conference-in-sarajevo.html

⁸ <http://msb.gov.ba/vijesti/saopstenja/default.aspx?id=16250&langTag=bs-BA>

Furthermore, draft strategies incorporating sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and rights initiated are addressing emergency response at the onset of every humanitarian situation. On the basis of completed Readiness Assessment for implementation of Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for Reproductive Health, conducted by state and entities' health authorities and health professionals in cooperation with UN, and continued provision of trainings, first line responders are capacitated to provide a set of life-saving actions that must be undertaken in a coordinated manner in the event of a humanitarian crisis.

Thematic Area 2: SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Thematic area 2 or UNDAF Pillar 2 aims to decrease economic, social and territorial disparities between units of local self-governance, enhance legal and strategic frameworks to ensure sustainable management of natural, cultural and energy resources and to enable greater access to productive employment and income opportunities.

UNDAF intended results

- Ensure integrated and inclusive development at local level;
- Increase coverage of households with public water and sanitation services;
- Enhance farmers' and SMEs long-term competitiveness;
- Increase of budgetary allocations for environmental protection and energy efficiency;
- Ensure strategic approach and establish mechanisms to improve employment measures, specially targeting youth.

UNDAF related Outcomes: 4, 5, 6.

Development trends and challenges identified

The implementation of the Reform Agenda - agreed by all political forces in 2015 and representing the backbone of the new EU approach, is painfully slow, with only 46% realization so far.⁹ The economy is still weighed down by a huge public sector that consumes nearly 50% of the GDP to sustain itself and has elbowed out productive public development investments. Yet, a positive sign in 2017 has been a 3% economic growth. Due to the different approach and lack of consensus from the involved stakeholders, several processes have been delayed, particularly initiatives related to the state level (e.g. state strategy for diaspora engagement), but also the processes related to the work of the financial mechanism through which the interventions targeting local government services and rural development have been financed in the RS Entity.

With 20% of its GDP spent on energy, BiH is characterized as a country with high energy inefficiency. At the same time, the country has one of the most significant energy conservation potentials in the region and could base its further mid-term economic development and generation of new employment on implementation of energy efficiency measures in the residential and public sector. In 2017, BiH adopted the first country's Energy Efficiency Action Plan (2016 – 2018), defining measures and programs at the level of the entire country. The country also adopted the Environmental Approximation Strategy supported through IPA I funding while other sub-sector strategies are in place, such as Climate Change Adaptation and Low Emission Development Strategy, Action Plan for Flood Protection and River Management, Revised Strategy and Action Plan for Biological and Landscape Diversity in BiH 2015-2020 which is in the process of adoption. In 2017, the country submitted to the Third National Communication on Climate Change and the Second Biannual Update Report on Greenhouse Gas Emissions to the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change.

The Environmental Approximation Strategy adopted by the BiH Council of Ministries offers some vague solutions regarding the process of reporting on greenhouse gases (GHG) only. The biodiversity in the country faces various pressures of development in terms of land use change, pollution, over-exploitation of resources and sustainable use of essential resources and ecosystem services remains a considerable challenge. The

⁹<http://www.posaonarodu.ba/files/preview/80/1101>

economic and societal factors that influence air pollution continue to grow and the design of an air pollution abatement strategy as well as integrated air quality management should be recognized as urgent by the governmental stakeholders and public.

As a follow-up of the newly adopted Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer, introducing HFCs on the list of controlled substance, ratification process initiation and setting up policy measures in this area of intervention will be a priority in ensuring future BiH compliance towards Montreal Protocol treaty binding obligations post 2020.

In terms of nature conservation, the country is still lacking wider acknowledgment of the economic and social benefits arising from sustainably managing fragile ecosystems. Even if in 2017 the country complied with its reporting obligations for some Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and developed the key environmental indicators, there are still no provisions regulating the steps necessary for compliance and enforcement with most of the international environmental agreements, including reporting obligations for a country's follow-up on its implementation.

In the areas of radiation emergency preparedness and response system, the country has prepared a State Action Plan for a Nuclear and Radiological Emergency (SREP). However, the implementation of the Plan and the establishment of an adequate system for radiation emergency remains challenging. In order to reduce the gravity of radiological injuries in the event of radiological and nuclear emergencies, establishment of a system of nuclear and radiological emergency with adequate organization, equipment and trained personnel, as well as testing the system through drills and exercises is a priority for the coming period.

The main challenge UN faced in the area of science were related to the full decentralization of the addressed subject matters at different governing levels in BiH. In the area of culture, the Action Plan for Implementation of the Strategy of Cultural Policies in BiH has been adjusted and extended until the end of 2018 while the new RS Cultural Strategy, was finally adopted by the RS Parliament in 2017.

The overall business environment in BiH remains weak: The World Bank Doing Business 2018 Report ranks BiH 86th, five places down from the previous year. The complicated political, judicial system and complex bureaucracy constitute large barriers for investments and the establishment of new enterprises. One of the biggest challenges now is to improve the dialogue between public and private sector on investment-related issues and to deliver results in areas such as procurement reform, enhancing tax administration, and improving business registration. Rural development, as a generator of income for farmers, new job opportunities and investments, continues to be central to the lives and livelihoods in many communities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. With adoption of the new BiH Strategic Plan of Rural Development by the Council of Ministers (as well as by Entities and Brčko District's governments), the country will systematize its work in this sector and get access to EU funds (financial support under IPA II 2018-2020). Other challenges are related to gender mainstreaming in rural business development, ensuring financial contribution from local governments and woman associations, as well as farmers' organizations participation.

Key achievements

Strategic planning has become one of the UN signature results, with the new FBiH Law on Development Planning and Management,¹⁰ and 76% of local governments and 100% of cantons having strategies as part of a coherent development framework. A comprehensive development management system featuring performance-based financing has also been introduced in 18 local governments, as a scalable model.

Having in mind the importance and scope of public water supply and sanitation services, the UN continued supporting partner local governments in their efforts to reduce non-revenue water losses and improve sustainability of local utilities. Overall, implementation of strategies contributed to better service delivery (public water and sanitation, waste, roads, business infrastructure, health, education, culture and sports, etc.), benefiting more than 200,000 citizens (47% women). This added to a total of 1.5 million citizens (approximately a third of the country's population) with better quality of life of since 2015.

The UN initiated dialogue and sensitization of the private sector in terms of their engagement in the implementation of the Agenda 2030 in BiH and contributed to improved private sector competitiveness,

¹⁰<http://www.fbihvlada.gov.ba/bosanski/zakoni/2017/zakoni/16h.html>

through direct support to agricultural households and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). 2,200 agricultural producers/farmers benefitted from production inputs, training and technical assistance, which directly enabled them to improve income streams and livelihoods. A total of 249 loans in the amount of KM 3,35 million was invested in agriculture and 503 starter packages (gherkins, cherries, strawberries and raspberries) that have been distributed to farmers exclusively selected from poor households. More than 200 MSMEs (out of which 33 agribusinesses) benefited from improved business enabling environment, including strengthening of market linkages, business infrastructure, as well as support to investments. Through supported transfer of knowledge from diaspora, 16 MSMEs in BiH, benefitted from new skills, management or production know-how, and productive business connections that contributed to their competitiveness, market growth and jobs.

The UN also provided support to the BiH authorities to get a better understanding of the profile of the BiH diaspora, their connections to the homeland, as well as their potential and willingness to contribute to the country development. A comprehensive mapping of BiH diaspora was conducted in 10 key destination countries, while an State-administered diaspora web-portal was developed to provide for information sharing, communication and diaspora crowdsourcing.

The UN continued to support energy management and climate change mitigation and adaptation policies, laws and actions in BiH. Achievements relate to the adoption of the Third National Communication Report and the Second Biennial Unit Report¹¹ to the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change. UN also contributed to the revision of the RS Law on Water, the adoption of the FBiH Law on Energy Efficiency and the design of the first Study on Typology of Public Buildings Stock.¹² Progress has also been made in climate resilient flood risk management, including through the development of flood hazard and risk maps in 14 localities¹³ and the launch of the water information system.¹⁴ 32 public buildings entered the heating season with improved energy efficiency benefiting more than 57,000 people and reducing heating costs by over 30%. The UN's efforts have contributed to decreased energy consumption in public buildings from 220 kWh/m² to 215 kWh/m². Also, the UN made a breakthrough with the US\$17.3 million grant from the Green Climate Fund expected to leverage US\$105.2 million from governmental, IFIs and donor sources, offset over 2 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions and create 5,000 jobs. Furthermore, UN helped the introduction of the Energy Management Information System for energy consumption monitoring in 70% of the cantons.¹⁵ The UN also contributed to the creation of 248 green jobs.

During the 2-year implementation of the “National Cleaner Production Programme: Bosnia and Herzegovina”, 16 enterprises with about 2,500 employees in the food, textile, printing, metal and construction service industries in BiH were assessed, with the following benefits identified: average savings per company: EUR 212,150/y; total decrease in water consumption: 74,000 m³/y (equivalent to approximately 800 households in the country); total decrease in energy consumption: 103,000,000 (Mj/y) (equivalent to annual electric energy consumption of approximately 6,000 households); total decrease in waste generation: 9,100 (t/y) and total decrease in CO₂: 43,540 (t/y). Based on the company assessments and the country's sector specific needs, manuals for implementation of the Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production (RCEP) strategies in the airport and wood processing industry were prepared. In terms of social aspects, the programme fostered job creation among youth through the provision of training to students' and participation in company assessments, integrating gender aspects by ensuring equal access of both men and women to the benefits and activities of the programme.

In 2017, the UN organized the third Environmental Performance Review (EPR) of the country. This process covered issues of specific importance to the country related to legal and policy frameworks, greening the economy, air protection, water and waste management, biodiversity and protected areas and protection of the Adriatic Sea. Recommendations generated through the Review were adopted by the Committee on Environmental Policy at its 23rd session in November 2017.

The core set of selected environmental indicators was developed encompassing a total number of 59 indicators on climate change, biodiversity and land degradation, aiming to enhance a systematic collection and analysis of environmental information for national reporting purposes as well as for compliance with international

¹¹ http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/reporting_on_climate_change/items/8722.php

¹² <http://crp.org.ba/project/first-typology-public-buildings-bih-presented/?lang=en>

¹³ http://vrb.pmfbl.org/pgis/mapa/welcome_no_ie.php

¹⁴ <http://ags10.gdi.net/VodeBiH/TIS.Web/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fVodeBiH%2FTIS.Web%2fdefault.aspx#/home>

¹⁵ <http://www.is.ba/ISGEBIH3/login.xhtml>

Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). A UN Air Quality Initiative and Response (UN AIR) platform within the UNCT was established with an objective to engender action towards cleaner air for all in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In supporting the country to develop and strengthen capacity for emergency preparedness and response (EPR) to a nuclear and radiological emergency, assessment was conducted on the needs and requirements for Bosnia and Herzegovina to establish a national radiation monitoring network and to propose a suitable solution for international monitoring data exchange. Based on the recommendations, a procurement was initiated for an automatic Gamma Dose Rate Monitoring System which shall provide for early detection of airborne radioactive contamination and measure the ambient equivalent dose rate in air through remote gamma monitoring stations.

In the area of culture, in 2017, the UN supported relevant state, entity and cantonal authorities to adopt the Action Plan for Implementation of the Strategy of Cultural Policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the RS Cultural Strategy. In the area of science, the UN supported elaboration of the BiH Strategy of Science Development and will continue supporting the new Action Plan for the period of five years, starting from 2018.

UN employment and rural development interventions have made notable contribution to livelihoods and job creation. UN supported drafting of the FBiH Employment Strategy 2017-2020. In 2017 and contributed to creation of 1,449 new jobs (30% women), which sums up to 3,649 new jobs generated since 2015, exceeding the UN 2019 target of 3,000 new jobs created. In addition, with the UN support to employability, access to employment and income opportunities of 361 unemployed people (42% women) have been strengthened through institutionalization and capacity development of 15 local employment partnerships. Through UN-implemented initiatives, 550 people benefited from improved livelihoods in 2017. Assistance to private sector yielded new investments worth over US\$10 million, while over 200 companies benefitted from improved business infrastructure, international quality standards, workforce development, or production facilities.

Effectiveness of bipartite and tripartite social dialogue processes (including labour institutions, workers organizations/trade unions and employers' associations) in the country was improved through strengthening capacities of social partners in design, implementation and monitoring of employment strategies and programmes related to the Economic Reform Programme. Country reports with concrete recommendations on efficient coordination mechanism for youth employment, labour market inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers have been produced to support design and implementation of better services for vulnerable groups (unqualified youth, women (re)entering labour market after period of unpaid family duties, persons with disabilities, Roma minority).

The UN work on the promotion of the Via Dinarica mega trail has placed BiH on the world tourism map as a nature-based tourism hotspot, changing the war-related image of the country and bringing economic opportunities for rural communities. The UN also supported entrepreneurship development, including through piloting a crowdfunding academy, expected to nurture business ideas and obtain funding for their kick-off. In addition, by working on skills development and the empowerment of primary and secondary school girls in web design, coding, programming and entrepreneurship, the UN is contributing to increased confidence of girls to pursue studies and a career in the field of ICT.

Thematic Area 3: SOCIAL INCLUSION: EDUCATION, SOCIAL PROTECTION, CHILD PROTECTION AND HEALTH

Thematic area 3 or UNDAF Pillar 3 aims to support all children and young people to benefit from education tailored to their needs and abilities, strengthen legislation, policies, budget allocations and inclusive social protection systems to proactively protect the vulnerable as well as to prevent and respond to cases of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, and strengthen provision of public health services, including management of major health risks.

UNDAF intended results

- Increase enrollment of all children, including children with disabilities, and Roma children in preschool, primary and secondary education;
- Increase number of schools with programmes tailored to needs and abilities of children with disabilities
- Adjust teaching content to include life skills education, including sexuality education in line with international standards
- Establish monitoring systems and coordination mechanisms for social protection to address bottlenecks and barriers for the most vulnerable children and families
- Promote adoption and budgeting of policies for Persons with Disabilities (PwD), targeting elderly, youth, Roma and other disadvantaged population;
- Ensure access to registration and social protection to persons at risk of statelessness;
- Strengthen response systems in cases of violence against children;
- Strengthen public health system capacities with focus on immunization, prevention of cardiovascular diseases and child wellbeing services.

UNDAF related Outcomes: 7,8,9,10,11.

Development trends and challenges identified

The education system in BiH is highly decentralized with 14 Ministries of Education and responsibilities for education devolved to the entities, cantons, district and one municipality. Under this structure of the education system, any country-wide reform requires consent of each entity and canton. Such structure of the education system constitutes, in practice, a serious obstacle to the enjoyment of the right to education by all children in BiH. Inclusive Education concept as well as the introduction of new curricula components is hampered by weak education planning systems, inadequate accountability of school managers for quality, and inefficient financing in the sector which does not support inclusive and quality education. Competencies of teachers remains a common challenge at all levels of education and requires more capacity building to ensure a higher quality, inclusive, relevant, comprehensive education approach.

Education in BiH saw no substantial progress in 2017, with the exception of the preschool sector. Key state-level strategies in the field of education expired, i.e. Strategic Directions of Development of Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2008–2015, Strategy of Entrepreneurial Learning in Educational System in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2012–2015, and Strategy of Development of Secondary Vocational Education and Training in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2007–2013, and new ones have not been developed or approved yet. Public sector spending on education remains relatively high at some 5 % of the GDP, but the resulting output (in terms of learning outcomes) is one of the weakest in the region. There is no recent solid evidence on the status of learning of BiH students, although the country made progress this year in preparing for the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) tests in 2019. The education system overall does not cater to modern teaching methods, nor does it equip young people with skills for the job market or with life skills.

Pupils and teachers continue to experience ethnic and religious segregation, intolerance and division. In 2017, secondary students in Jajce municipality succeeded in avoiding being segregated into two ethnically-based schools. Furthermore, every third Roma child or a child with disability has experienced some form of discrimination during their education (Voices of Youth, 2016).

Preschool attendance rates for children 5 years old and above in Bosnia and Herzegovina are around 54% in 2016/17 (UNICEF, 2017) a major increase since 2011/12 when they were at 31%. However, this is still extremely low, and BiH continues to lag behind many countries in Europe. Children from rural areas make up 0.5% of children attending preschool and children from families with unemployed parents make up only 2%. Although the current legal framework governing the preschool education system in BiH is supportive of further development and expansion of early childhood education programmes and approaches, severe financial constraints at the level of government and scarce resources of parents make the continuation of reforms - and actually increasing access to preschool - dependent on external funding. In most municipalities, preschool education is often financed by municipal budgets, which contributes to unequal access in the country. Moreover, the non-existence of free-of-charge preschool programmes and services make it challenging for parents to enroll their children without further support. Parents of Roma children and children with disabilities often feel stigmatized and discriminated upon entry to the formal school system, and this can further prevent parents to enroll their children in preschool education.

Constrained economic progress and unreformed social protection systems make prolonged poverty a growing issue for many vulnerable groups such as children, women, older persons, people with disabilities, and those living in rural areas or with minority backgrounds in the country. The World Bank estimated the national poverty rate in 2016 to be 17% (using the national poverty line). In consequence, vulnerable groups struggle with continued hardship, including limited healthcare and issues related to other social benefits. According to the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 2015, a total number of 561,284 beneficiaries (without significant gender differences) received one of the forms of social protection, out of which 143,552 (26%) were minors/children and 417,732 (74%) were adult beneficiaries. Limited capacities of most of the Centers for Social Work (CSWs) also limit the proper functioning of the social welfare system and addressing the needs of vulnerable families (technical, material, human and financial). Funding of social protection initiatives, for all vulnerable groups, remains a challenge, both in terms of insufficient funding but also its lack of sustainability and predictability especially at local levels.

As regards persons with disabilities, 8.3% of BiH population has some type of disability. Equalization of rights of persons with disabilities, as well as higher awareness and improved access to all segments of society, in particular to education, employment and healthcare remains a challenge for the coming period. Following years of advocacy, demographic challenges relating to low fertility, ageing population and the continuous and rising emigration have already started affecting social and health systems in the country but are not yet addressed by relevant development policies. The number of pensioners in BiH is constantly increasing: in FBiH, in December 2016, the number of pensioners was 409,335, and in RS, the total number was 257,609. The ratio between the number of pensioners and the number of active insured persons is almost equal which indicates the system's economic unsustainability.

According to the BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, in December 2016, in BiH, displaced status was held by 32,611 families, a total of 98,574 displaced persons, out of which 38,345 or 40% were displaced in the territory of FBiH, 59,834 or 58.8% in the territory of RS, and 395 or 0.5% in the territory of Brčko District BiH (DEP Report on Social Inclusion, 2017). Concerning the number of refugees and migrants arriving in and/or transiting through BiH, the latest arrivals are originating mostly from North Africa, and travelling into BiH through Greece, Albania, and neighboring Montenegro. Border police detained 735 irregular migrants in 2017, compared with fewer than 100 in all of 2016. Concerns emerged with regard to the capacities of relevant authorities in BiH to provide for their protection and care at this scale. For example, reception conditions of vulnerable asylum seekers remain weak due to lack of capacities at local level, both financial and human resources, as well as lack of willingness by some government authorities to provide the required level of support/assistance to this population as per international standards.

New evidence generated in 2017 indicated that some groups of children remain marginalized and stigmatized in BiH. A Situation Analysis of children without parental care found that there are about 1,640 children without parental care in BiH, of which an estimated 17.7% are children with disabilities. Economic factors drive one third (33%) of placements of children into alternative care. The analysis found almost half (48.5%)

of children without parental care were in institutional care, which is least suited for their development and wellbeing, 35.5% in kinship care and 9.8% in foster care.

A study on social norms related to violence against children and inclusion of children with disabilities (UNICEF KAP Study, 2017) confirmed that violence against children, as a method of disciplining children, is a very common practice among parents because they do not perceive corporal punishment or psychological abuse as violence, but as a means of educating and raising their children. Critical gaps remain in the area of violence against children in the domestic legal framework. Social norms detrimental to children's wellbeing and development remain widespread, in particular the general public's acceptance of violence against children, including corporal punishment and peer violence, and the general preference of institutional care placement in lieu of family- and community-based alternative care placements, in particular for children with disabilities.

Despite the progress on child care reform, there is still need for greater commitment and more resources for preventing unnecessary separation of children from their families in the first place. Progress in transforming selected residential care facilities and deinstitutionalizing children from these has been rather slow, hence stronger advocacy is required to ensure further commitment, resources and technical assistance to cost and implement institutional transformation plans in 2018.

Access to quality health care continues to be a growing issue for various groups in the country, particularly for vulnerable groups, such as children, persons with disabilities or the elderly that are not covered by healthcare. Despite efforts made in 2017, BiH was not able to make progress towards a state-level health strategy, a requirement for its eventual access to the European Union. The alarmingly high rate of unvaccinated children poses a great risk for many children, especially with epidemics on the rise in neighboring Balkan countries; the rate for measles containing first dose in BiH was estimated at 68% in 2016, a major decline from 91% in 2012. Additional challenge is the lack of trust among parents in the benefits of immunization and the lack of confidence among pediatricians to provide clear evidence-based information. However, progress has been made in the overall upgrading of health-related equipment such as radiotherapy, nuclear medicine and diagnostic radiology, which fulfills the requirements of international standards of medical services. Additionally, after years of efforts to combat HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB) in the country, both diseases have been curbed, with HIV prevalence being the lowest in Europe (less than 1 %) and a significant drop in TB cases by more than 50% (907 infected people). Health systems are weakened by a shortage of health workers and other professionals trained in providing quality general and specialized health services, partially due to insufficient training or inappropriate distribution of professionals. In terms of healthcare quality, there remains a large need to improve the quality, continuity, and standardization of health services through revisions of strategies and policies for health care as well as the standards in healthcare.

The issue of air pollution gained in prominence in 2017. According to 2017 WHO statistics, Bosnia and Herzegovina has the highest European mortality rate attributed to air pollution. According to the WHO's database of annual air pollution readings (2017), Tuzla was the second most polluted city in Europe. However, public health institutes in the country currently do not collect data on health impacts of air pollution and communicate environmental health risks to the public only sporadically.

Key achievements

In terms of Inclusive Education (IE), further progress was made in 2017 both at policy and school level. At policy level, the Ministry of Civil Affairs, together with the UN, organised a conference in June 2017 to launch General Comment 4 related to Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). About 80 decision-makers and stakeholders were sensitized to the key principles, concepts, definitions and implementation strategies underpinning Inclusive Education and the obligations of state parties to ensure a progressive realization of IE. The conference resulted in a Call for Action that was used as a basis for education stakeholders in December to identify priority areas for government policy work in the next years. At local level, the second phase of inclusive education training was initiated in the ten model schools, which consists of four modules: differentiated instruction, peer support, working with parents and the teaching basic number ideas to pupils experiencing difficulties in learning mathematics. After completion of all modules, teachers are expected to be certified by the respective Ministries of Education, and Protocols for Inclusive Education will be introduced in each school. In addition, the UN obtained agreement from two universities to mainstream IE into pre-service training by their teacher training faculties in 2018. In preparation for BiH taking the Programme for International Student Assessment

(PISA) test for the first time in 2018, a pilot was successfully conducted during 2017 with UN technical and financial support mainly related to database management.

The process of empowerment of youth and adolescents through education also made progress. The Healthy Lifestyles Curriculum on reproductive health was expanded to Bosansko Podrinjski Canton and will serve as extended education compulsory for children from 6th to 9th grade in primary schools. Besides regular education, a lot of attention was put into reaching out to vulnerable groups in Visoko, Kakanj, Tuzla, Vukosavlje, Prnjavor, and Živinice especially Roma adolescents, on issues of early marriages through theatre-based education, created by Roma community members. The UN also supported the development of capacities of national professionals with a new pilot programme – Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence that addresses the strengthening of the social emotional skills with groups of pupils in order to develop resilience to rebuff and delay the onset of drug use. Programme included 27 elementary schools from Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar and Bijeljina reaching the total of 1604 students.

In 2017, significant progress was made in terms of the policy environment in preschool education with the formal adoption by the BiH Council of Ministers of the Platform for the Development of Preschool Education in BiH for 2017-2022. This is a significant result since it is the first state level strategic framework in the education that has been adopted in many years.

With UN support, a new training programme on Early Childhood Intervention for preschool teachers was designed at the request and in partnership with two Ministries of Education (-RS at the entity level and in Sarajevo Canton). These two Ministries of Education initiated the development of two new bylaws: one on a programme for children with disabilities in preschool institutions, and one on professional development of teachers. This is an important first step towards the official recognition of teachers who are applying new methods as well as for the institutionalisation of training programmes designed to increase teachers' skills in working with children with disabilities.

In order to reduce financial barriers to preschool education for families living in poverty (mostly Roma families), Kakanj municipality changed their fee structure for preschool education increasing the municipal contribution and decreasing the financial contribution from parents; this was advocated for by the UN and Roma NGO partners as part of a wider effort to promote more equitable access to preschool education for Roma children in four municipalities. Furthermore, as a result of sustained advocacy efforts, the Roma Early Years Network (REYN) was formally established in BiH. This network connects over 450 individual early childhood practitioners who work with Roma children, their families and communities in 32 countries across Europe, the Caucasus and the Americas.

In 2017 the three statistical institutes finally reached agreement on a master sample for household-based surveys in BiH. This will be the basis for the sampling strategy for the 2019 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) which will be a critical data source for a large number of SDG indicators, as well as other household surveys to take place in the country.

Within the context of implementation of the Revised Strategy for Annex 7 Implementation within the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), the UN achieved a number of results in 2017. Following the adoption of the Law on Asylum in 2016, one bylaw related to access to social welfare of persons granted international protection was adopted and entered into force in 2017. The UN supported the development of the legal framework for social housing through intensive cooperation with local authorities at all levels. At the end of 2017, 4 local governments and one canton (Prijedor, Banja Luka, Srebrenica, Mostar and Bosnia Podrinje Canton) had signed the Social Housing Strategy documents. At the same time, the RS Ministry for Refugees and DPs and Brcko District government has initiated the drafting of the laws on social housing. The capacities of the Centers for Social Work (CSWs) and the municipal departments for social care were upgraded through the implementation of the Annex 7 project targeting IDPs and returnees in 6 BiH municipalities in 2017. CSWs took part in implementing the methodology for targeting the most vulnerable families and individuals by supporting the establishment of municipal commissions for social protection and inclusion, who are responsible for assessing IDP and returnee families' needs, planning referrals for social protection and other services, coordinating across sectors and monitoring the impact of the interventions. Local Action Plans were developed for facilitating social inclusion and integration of the targeted populations of IDPs and returnees in the 6 municipalities. In 2017, the UN provided economic assistance to 404 families of IDPs and returnees in

27 municipalities (331 returnee families and 73 IDP families). In addition, 43 women victims of war received language and nursing trainings in order to facilitate their employability.

The UN continued to support Roma communities and populations that are at risk of statelessness to access their social rights through facilitating access to documentation and the provision of free legal aid. More than 50 undocumented Roma were assisted by UN funded free legal aid to confirm their birth/citizenship.

In terms of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, the UN helped to ensure that all persons in BiH granted international protection had access to social welfare. Migrant protection and assistance mobile teams were engaged in the safe transport of migrants in vulnerable situations to and from services and accommodation facilities, psychosocial assessment of and support to newly arrived migrants to assess vulnerabilities and direct assistance needs, the implementation of an Emergency Direct Assistance Fund to address urgent basic needs of migrants in vulnerable situations on the territory, referrals to relevant institutions for medical assistance, interpretation services, and assistance voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) counselling sessions and the direct facilitation of AVRR movements. During the year, 699 services, and referrals to services were provided to 290 vulnerable foreign nationals. To improve access of children seeking international protection, two capacity-building events were organized jointly with the Ministry of Security focusing on improved reception conditions of these vulnerable children (39 social workers and 50 other partners involved in asylum procedure benefitted from this training). 15 persons granted international protection were supported to access social welfare assistance.

Building on the results achieved in 2016, the UN expanded its activities related to grass roots social cohesion through civic participation, with the direct engagement of more than 136 local communities (mjesne zajednice level) in 24 municipalities and cities involving over 500,000 citizens in the country. In 2017, the UN initiated and organized 132 local community forums with active participation of 3,808 citizens (of which, 1,143 women) with the aim to identify local community priorities with regards to infrastructure, sport, culture, social inclusion, empowerment of women, ecology, innovation and the use of ICT. In order to implement these priorities, the UN awarded 104 local communities and 23 civil society organisations (CSO) projects that contributed to the improvement of services and access to services for citizens with a focus on socially excluded persons (related to health, water, sanitation, energy efficiency, sports and culture, road communication) which directly benefitted 125,604 citizens. Modern and realistic visions of future gender-sensitive models of local communities in BiH were shaped through 22 vision setting meetings with the participation of more than 700 participants (38% female) and were verified nationally in December 2017. This, coupled with the concept of grass-roots community hubs (12 were opened so far with the plan for additional 10 in the following period), exemplifies the UN's support to local activism powered by youth, women, civil society and businesses.

At the municipal level, in 2017, the UN scaled up its Social Protection and Inclusion (SPI) model to an additional 5 municipalities, resulting in more than 350 vulnerable children and families benefitting from the services introduced under this model, ranging from day care services for children with disabilities and counselling to referrals to ensure access to education and health services. By the end of the year, integrated SPI systems had been strengthened in 49 BiH municipalities and cities (34 per cent of all local governments in the country). In 2017, 5 municipalities designed several new Special Focus Projects in consultation with local Employment Bureaus, social service providers and beneficiaries, to specifically address the unemployment of the most vulnerable groups, including through joint mobilization of the business sector. With UN technical assistance and advocacy efforts, social protection legislation was revised and strengthened in both entities in 2017. Entity governments, in cooperation with the UN developed social Strategies for Improving the Position of Older Persons that are aimed at combating social exclusion and isolation faced by older persons, which are in the process of adoption. Moreover, the network of Health Ageing Centres was expanded in Sarajevo, with the City of Bijeljina committing to open one more centre in their community. A new Federal Law on Financial Support to Families with Children was developed in FBiH, which introduces two types of cash benefits that would for the first time be budgeted from the Federal level and harmonized throughout FBiH: a child cash benefit and a maternity allowance for unemployed mothers. FBiH and RS adopted respectively the new 2016-2021 and 2017-2026 Strategies on Disability. The UN in close cooperation with the state and entity statistical institutes supported the FBiH Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in defining the monetary social security minimum, to be used as a basis for defining the eligibility criteria for a number of cash benefits.

Considerable progress was made in further developing a sound system of foster care. Social workers from 17 municipal CSWs in the RS enhanced their skills in general foster care education and supervision. The UN and partners advocated for the adoption of the FBiH Foster Care Law, which was passed in February 2017, laying a good foundation for the formalisation of foster care. In partnership with the Foundation Op Kleine Schaal, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) SOS Children's Villages and Hope and Homes for Children, the UN supported the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in certifying a total of 23 trainers from six Cantons to provide foster parent in-service training and foster care training to other professionals. 90 foster/adoptive families were recruited and trained, four foster children were placed in families, and one child adopted.

In collaboration with international NGOs and local CSOs, including members of the Network for Ending Violence against Children (NEVAC), the UN took further steps to improve the legal protection of children from all forms of violence and the public availability of data on violence against children. Community-based systems were strengthened in 7 municipalities through improvements in multi-sectoral coordination in the response to and referral of cases of violence against children and prevention of violence in 21 primary schools. Child-Friendly Guidelines for the Prevention of Violence Against Children (VAC) in BiH were published and 80 professionals trained in identifying and responding to cases of online VAC. Together with the CSO Romalen, the UN strengthened the knowledge and skills of 47 Roma community leaders and Roma mediators with regard to child protection, while 37 Roma families were made aware of the detrimental impact of VAC, domestic violence and child marriage on the development and well-being of children as well as and non-registration of births, and informed about where and how to access support services.

Following the successful completion of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) grants for HIV/AIDS and TB, at the request of the GFATM and BiH Government, the UN agreed to continue its assistance to the Country Coordination Mechanism through the transition period until 2019. In addition, Government authorities of three FBiH cantons requested UN assistance in the continuation of harm reduction activities and the provision of opioid-substitute therapy (OST). In 2017, a total of 841 ex-injection drugs users were enrolled in harm-reduction (HR) activities and OST (800 male and 41 female). These activities were fully funded by the local governments.

With the aim to improve access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, and to inter alia address demographic challenges faced by the country, entities' health authorities developed draft sexual and reproductive health and rights strategic frameworks for their subsequent integration in the relevant health sector strategies in the coming period. The pool of family physicians who are providing family planning counselling was expanded by 94 additional professionals in Sarajevo Canton, Zenica-Doboj Canton and Banja Luka region.

Inter-sectoral policies addressing major cardio-vascular disease risks at population level (tobacco control laws/action plans) were developed and continue to be supported with effective pilot programmes (tobacco cessation for health professionals smokers) and evidence (ready-to-eat food study in Sarajevo and Banja Luka). Policy-makers in BiH have been continuously exposed to PH best-practice international guidance and evidence, including Health 2020 Policy Framework and Strategy and accompanying policy documents. The access to standardised, evidence-based, preventative Cardio-Vascular Disease (CVD)/Cardio-Vascular Risk Assessment and Management (CVRAM) services in Family Medicine (FM)/Primary Health Care (PHC) in BiH was increased to approximately 65% (for total population of BiH), i.e. approx. 64% for population in RS, approx. 65% for population in the Federation of BiH (FBiH) and approx. 76% for population of Brcko District of BiH (BDBiH). By the end of 2017, 2,520 family medicine doctors and nurses in the country were trained in CVRAM and have started to provide standardized services.

At the request of the Ministerial Health Conference and the BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs, the UN supported and managed the development of a comprehensive costed multi-year immunization plan at the state level. The plan is the first of its kind for BiH and is significant in bringing all government levels together to agree on the priorities for the immunization programme. In partnership with the Medical Faculty at the University of Sarajevo, the UN supported 4 rounds of one-day trainings for about 150 health professionals who enhanced their knowledge on evidence-based medicine related to immunization and significantly increased their confidence in immunization communication. Baby Friendly Hospitals (BFH) standards in RS were adopted by the RS Government in 2017. UN support for roll out of these standards in RS consisted of supporting 4 hospitals to conduct a baseline survey of breastfeeding mothers, creating protocols for the hospitals to ensure

that standards are followed, and preparing staff and management to provide support to new mothers with counseling and IEC materials. In FBiH 14 out of 18 maternity wards have been accredited and one maternity ward in Brcko District. The UN provided further support to scale up the Nutrition-Friendly Kindergarten Initiative. In 2017 all preschool directors (or designates) from 41 municipalities in the RS were sensitized on the importance of the new RS legislation on nutrition in preschools, and four kindergartens were accredited as Nutrition Friendly. Overall, 270 children in FBiH and 368 children in RS directly benefitted from healthy and nutritious meals necessary for their healthy growth.

The UN contributed to enhancing the capacities of psychologists and other relevant military staff in the field of mental health care. With the Ministry of Defense (MoD), the UN helped develop monthly and yearly working plans were developed to ensure realistic goals and the smooth implementation within the MoD budget earmarked for mental health care of the Armed forces BiH (AF) personnel.

To improve clinical management of patients with non-communicable diseases, support has been given to enhance nuclear medicine capabilities of Positron Emission Tomography-Computed Tomography (PET/CT) imaging. This has been done through the provision of various specialized training opportunities to medical practitioners, as well as the provision of technical advice and equipment, such as a dual-head SPECT/CT Gamma camera system (to be installed at the Institute of Nuclear Medicine, Clinical Center University of Sarajevo). Furthermore, medical physicists from the five main centres in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been technically supported through various training opportunities and expert advices, which has contributed in enhancing safety and effectiveness of diagnostic radiology examinations in the country.

Thematic Area 4: EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Thematic area 3 or UNDAF Pillar 3 aims to enable more women take part in decision making in political fora and in the economy and to ensure effective mechanisms are in place to prevent and timely respond to gender-based violence and provide comprehensive care and support to survivors.

UNDAF intended results

- Strengthen institutional mechanisms aimed at promoting participation of women in decision-making processes;
- Offer economic benefits to women through employment and income generation activities;
- Incentivize strategic and systematic approaches to preventing and combatting violence against women
- Provide comprehensive care and support to survivors of conflict related sexual violence
- Ensure increase in budgets for services to prevent and respond to gender-based violence

UNDAF related Outcomes: 12, 13.

Development trends and challenges identified

There has been no significant change in women in leadership roles. The 2016 elections saw a drop in women Mayors, to only six in 145 local governments. Furthermore, although the advanced national Law on Elections was aligned twice with the Law on Gender Equality, Women continue to be under-represented in the legislative branches of government, with 13% to 23% in entity and state parliaments, but women are almost absent from the cantonal, entity and state governments, with between 0% and 22% representation.

Recent years have seen parliaments in State, and entity level increasingly demonstrate awareness and relevance of gender equality in deliberations, processes and budgeting approval. However, implementation of Gender Responsive Budgeting into institutions represents a challenge since planning departments are missing knowledge on gender and gender responsive budgeting, that directly influence planning and execution processes.

Labour laws improved to be more gender aware in 2013 but consistent implementation appears to be questionable. There is continued recognition by municipalities that women play an important role in socio economic development illustrated by increased attention to new and more inclusive municipal development plans, increased support to women's civic engagement and to supporting the establishment of women led businesses.

Violence against women and girls and domestic violence are widespread social problems in BiH, constituting serious violations of fundamental human rights. Relevant institutions in all parts of the country have failed to fully implement the provisions of laws on protection from domestic violence and implement their necessary provisions, and thus do not provide the legal security, equal treatment and protection of rights of the women and children who are recognized as the most frequent victims of family violence. First study on the Prevalence and Characteristics of Violence against women in BiH (2013) estimated that 47.2% of women in BiH aged 15 and over have experienced some form of violence: physical, psychological, sexual or economic. In some locations there is evidence of organised action against Gender Equality 'prevention of violence' efforts by CSOs and local government, essentially an objection to efforts that encourage young men and boys to challenge stereotypes, to be more considerate, sensitive and to support women and girls. Increasingly this action is directly challenging the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. Coordination among the wide range of partners engaged in multi-sectoral platform response to violence continues to be difficult.

2017 has seen further growth in the ownership by government institutions of response to support survivors of violence, especially at municipal level where there is increased attention on enhancing both quality and timeliness of response to survivors of domestic violence and Conflict Related Sexual Violence. Increased ownership has resulted in government led institutionalization of multi-sectoral platforms or referral mechanisms at both the Cantonal and Municipal level. Importantly, increased attention is now being paid to strengthening the social response to Violence Against Women, notably in prevention of violence, including raising issues in educational curricula, among media professionals or engaging boys and men.

Key achievements

2017 saw significant and consistent application of gender equality through budgeting processes following UN support. The Budget Management Information System (BMIS) now incorporates gender indicators. This resulted in mandatory inclusion of specific gender indicators in the programmes of all line ministries before their submission to the BiH Ministry of Finance. 2017 budget plans for 12 Programmes from 9 Ministries are gender responsive, a direct result of detailed engagement by 88 Members of Parliament and recommendations from gender responsive budget analysis. Four municipal gender action plans were adopted in 2016 and implemented in 2017 through comprehensive municipal development plans and programs.

In parallel, there has been significant success in establishing sustainable women's economic opportunity and empowerment, working with municipalities, leading to women starting up 14 businesses as entrepreneurs, in agriculture and cash generating projects with higher value products in ten municipalities¹⁶. There is local evidence this has empowered women to become more confident in public life, with 29 taking on board local leadership roles, after engagement in one of the twenty CSO projects that involved over 700 women beneficiaries across 136 municipalities. In 2017, 67 highly vulnerable women victims of war and sexual and gender-based violence (from internally displaced and returnee populations) were empowered to participate in the BiH economy thanks to income generation support provided by the UN. Significantly increased awareness in the importance of including women in Information Communication and Technology especially by private sector and educational institutions was established by IT Girls, successfully creating a brand for change.¹⁷

Significantly, gender equality concerns and priorities have been well captured in the municipal vision for community development in sixteen¹⁸ municipalities, new models for community cooperation were developed and tested in ten municipalities¹⁹, with public institutions and women associations strongly supporting the process. Through opportunities and spaces provided by the community level interventions, 60% of women participants attended the start-ups with ideas coached to sustainability stage. Over 266 women engaged in the visioning process to support community change and evolution. New community models were tested with 10 institutions and women associations countrywide.

The UN Joint Programme "Seeking Care, Support and Justice for Survivors of Conflict Related Sexual Violence in BiH" had significant impact. Three models for supporting survivors into sustained income generation with personalized psychosocial support were proven, they directly supported 90 women and men and 150 family members. Most important is the positive affect it has had in raising survivors' self-esteem and sense of purpose, empowering them to play an active role in family and community. The RS Gender Center ensured the right to economic programmes is captured in the draft Law on protection of victims of war torture, paving the way for formal institutionalization of this approach. Similar plans are envisaged for government-led economic empowerment in Brcko District.

2017 has been a very successful year that has seen strengthening of multi-sectoral platforms to prevent and improve quality and timeliness of referral for women surviving violence across the country with significant advances in both entities and Brcko District. In FBiH and RS, cantonal and municipal multi-sectoral referral platforms that respond to and prevent domestic violence have seen significant advancements thanks to UN support. In FBiH, they are established in eight²⁰ out of ten Cantons, with BiH Gender Centre leadership they are now fully operational in Canton 10 and Central Bosnia Canton. In RS they now exist in the majority of municipalities and thanks to RS Gender Centre support are fully established in 11 municipalities²¹. In order to improve quality of prevention and response to domestic violence; policy, referral mechanisms, guidelines and training materials on multi-sectoral cooperation aligned with the Istanbul Convention, were fully established and implemented in both entities and Brcko District at cantonal and municipal level. Coordinated, multi-sectoral platform support to prevention and response to Gender Based Violence was improved for asylum seekers, refugees, and persons granted subsidiary protection which are now better placed to offer protection; and better able to put in place plans and support mechanisms to both combat trafficking and reduce Sexual Gender Based Violence incidents. By provision of essential tools, the capacity of free legal aid providers has been strengthened to respond to the needs of survivors of domestic and conflict related sexual violence.

¹⁶ Businesses in Lubinje and Visoko; 12 Cash generating projects in Zepce, Jablanica, Stari Grad-Sarajevo, Zenica, Tesanj, Sanski Most, Olovo and Laktasi.

¹⁷ Mostar, Sarajevo (Centar, Novi Grad, Novo), Zenica, Prijedor.

¹⁸ Pale FBiH, Olovo, Rudo, Stari Grad Sarajevo, Jablanica, Nevesinje, Ljubinje, Sanski Most, Kotor Varos, Laktasi, Tesanj, Zepce, Bijeljina, Petrovo, Gracanica, Gradacac

¹⁹ Bijeljina, Brcko, Gracanica, Gradacac, Gradiska, Kljuc, Kotor Varos, Laktasi, Petrovo, Sanski Most, Stari Grad Sarajevo, Tesanj, Zepce

²⁰ Sarajevo Canton, Una-Sana Canton, Posavina Canton, Tuzla Canton, Zenica-Doboj Canton, Bosnia –Podrinje Canton, Central Bosnia Canton, Canton 10.

²¹ Bratunac, Milici, Zvornik, Visegrad, Sokolac, Pale, Istocno, Novo Sarajevo, Istocni, a Stari Grad, Grad Istocno Sarajevo.

Capacity of the Health sector significantly strengthened to respond to the needs of survivors of gender-based and conflict-related sexual violence (19 municipalities with strengthened medical²², 19 with strengthened psychosocial services²³). Also, 22 municipalities with improved capacities for referral coordination of cases of gender-based and conflict-related sexual violence; 16 municipalities with sensitized first-contact responders, providing services to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and alleviating stigma²⁴; and 17 municipalities with faith-based organizations sensitized for initial provision of support to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence²⁵. Targeted psycho-social support and care was provided to 70 internally displaced, returnee women victims of war, asylum seekers and refugee survivors of sexual gender-based violence.

The landmark Joint Declaration by the Inter-Religious Council BiH, to denounce stigmatization of survivors of conflict related violence was a major breakthrough, further elevated by the joint support from the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the UN Secretary General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Bosnia and Herzegovina is the first country to have prepared a Stigma Alleviation Programme in line with Principles for Global Action on tackling the stigma of Sexual Violence in Conflict. As a direct result of these efforts, pilot municipalities of Bijeljina, Goražde and Sanski Most have taken direct ownership over of stigma prevention and a solution through direct community engagement, localizing the Declaration.

UN Delivering as One

In support of the BiH efforts to localize and implement the 2030 Agenda in BiH, the UNCT has managed to finalize and launch towards the end of 2017 the 2-year *SDGs Rollout Support and Private Sector Engagement* with funding secured through the Swedish Embassy/SIDA in BiH. Through this project, the UNCT will be able to assist the relevant BiH authorities with application of relevant tools and approaches to engage the SDGs localization more effectively and with establishment of linkages between the private sector and the SDGs.

The Peacebuilding Fund approved funding for the Joint UN Programme that extends the BiH Presidency-led *Dialogue for the Future* platform, established through an earlier Fund investment. The new project places youth at the center of inter-communal cooperation and dialogue at the local, Entity, and State levels, and offers the only mechanism for direct interaction with the Presidency on reconciliation. Responding to a request by the Presidency to support regional dialogue, the project also includes participation of youth and others from neighboring states and paves the way for a Western Balkans regional dialogue project in 2018. The Peacebuilding Fund has also committed to providing funding support for the regional stream of the Dialogue for the Future to be initiated in 2018.

In the area of disaster risk reduction, the UNCT has initiated system-wide consultations with Government as the first step within the 4-year horizon of the Joint UN Programme, *Disaster Risk Reduction for Sustainable Development*, with the preliminary indication of funding support provided from the Swiss Embassy in BiH. The expected launch of this Joint UN Programme will enable the UN to build upon the highly successful partnership with the BiH authorities and international community during the flood recovery response in 2015. More importantly, it would enable the UN to assist the BiH authorities in their efforts to strengthen institutional capacities and coordination mechanism across government levels, implement concrete multi-sectoral risk reduction and preparedness measures within risk-exposed localities, and reduce social and economic vulnerabilities of citizens affected by disasters and climate change in BiH.

²² Banja Luka, Bihać, Bileća, Brčko, Bugojno, Foča, Gacko, Goražde, Kozarska Dubica, Livno, Mostar, Nevesinje, Novi Grad, Novi Travnik, Odžak, Orašje, Prijedor, Sanski Most and Trebinje.

²³ Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Doboj, Goražde, Gradiška, Jajce, Kakanj, Ključ, Kneževo, Laktaši, Maglaj, Mrkonjić grad, Sanski Most, Sarajevo, Široki Brijeg, Tuzla, Vitez, Zenica and Žepče.

²⁴ Bihać, Bosanski Petrovac, Bužim, Cazin, Goražde, Ključ, Odžak, Orašje, Sanski Most, Sarajevo, Široki Brijeg, Tuzla, Velika Kladuša, Vitez, Zenica and Žepče.

²⁵ Banja Luka, Bihać, Bijeljina, Brčko, Bugojno, Foča, Gacko, Goražde, Livno, Mostar, Novi Travnik, Orašje, Sanski Most, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zenica and Žepče

The UNCT was also successful in raising additional funds to assist the BiH authorities in addressing of the key development challenges, namely, strengthening women's leadership and participation in the political life of BiH. To that end, a 3-year project was developed, *Women in Elections in BiH*, and launched in November 2017 whose primary objective is to secure an enabling environment for getting more women elected across board, in all spheres of decision-making process in BiH, and to enhance women's engagement in public life and position within the elections cycles in 2018 and 2020 by strong advocacy interventions for women's equal rights and political participation. This is to be achieved by applying a two-pronged approach, vertically by proposing structural adjustments to accommodate greater numbers of women in politics, and horizontally, by nourishing the next generation of women leaders in communities through tailored networking and capacity building initiatives.

The UNCT managed to secure additional funding from the UK Embassy in BiH for continuation and expansion of the UN targeted support to the victims of the *conflict-related sexual violence* and to the relevant BiH authorities in provision of adequate and quality services to the victims. The UNCT also secured some funds from Sweden to support the continuation of the innovative joint initiative, IT Girls, which will enable better coordinated, more scaled up interventions in 2018 to promote the empowerment of adolescent girls through IT.

UNDAF Financial Table by Pillar and Outcome

Pillar/Outcome	2015/2016 TOTAL	2017-2018 Planned	2017 Actual	2015-2017 TOTAL
PILLAR 1: Rule of Law and Human Security	61,933,368	25,016,916	7,416,147	69,349,515
Outcome 1	10,575,208	6,155,820	1,961,763	12,536,971
Outcome 2	3,072,279	4,281,096	1,480,169	4,552,448
Outcome 3	48,285,881	14,580,000	3,974,215	52,260,096
PILLAR 2: Sustainable and Equitable Development and Employment	46,272,388	70,413,047	34,155,145	80,427,533
Outcome 4*	28,092,065	44,852,739	21,004,236	49,096,301
Outcome 5	11,126,292	14,087,987	8,038,499	19,164,791
Outcome 6	7,054,031	11,472,321	5,112,410	12,166,441
PILLAR 3: Social Inclusion: Education, Social Protection, Child Protection and Health	30,492,139	24,623,665	9,012,607	39,504,746
Outcome 7	2,041,977	969,000	318,464	2,360,441
Outcome 8	722,130	1,410,000	123,965	846,095
Outcome 9	15,023,899	17,279,455	3,896,550	18,920,449
Outcome 10	582,900	1,870,000	1,020,179	1,603,079
Outcome 11	12,121,233	4,505,210	3,653,449	15,774,682
PILLAR 4: Empowerment of Women	6,069,757	2,194,005	1,543,846	7,614,603
Outcome 12	2,642,293	682,803	305,876	2,948,169
Outcome 13	3,427,464	1,511,202	1,237,969.68	4,665,434
TOTAL (USD)	144,767,652	122,247,633	52,127,745	196,896,397

* IFAD figures incomplete.