United Nations Children’s Fund  
Executive Board  
Second regular session 2020  
8–11 September 2020  
Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Country programme document  
Serbia**

Summary  
The country programme document (CPD) for Serbia is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and approval at the present session, on a no-objection basis. The CPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of $4,250,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $25,000,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2021 to 2025.

* E/ICEF/2020/17.  
Programme rationale

1. Serbia is a candidate for European Union membership and a leading actor in Western Balkan cooperation. Serbia is committed to its European Union perspective and ongoing socioeconomic reforms and has made important progress in the realization of child rights. Per capita gross national income is $6,390.³ Serbia has eliminated its public deficit and reduced unemployment, but growth rates of 3 to 4 per cent are not bringing living standards closer to European Union levels.² Youth employment is 20.9 per cent.³ The socioeconomic impact of the current coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic will create new challenges.

2. The population of 7 million⁴ is ageing and shrinking due to emigration and negative natural growth. The ratios of children (0–17 years) and youth (15–24 years) in the population — 17.3 and 10.6 per cent, respectively — are declining.⁵ The total population may shrink to 6.2 million by 2041.⁶ The Government acknowledges the need to continue to mitigate the long-term economic effects of the current population dynamics by (a) supporting children and families, starting from the early years; and (b) equipping, motivating and retaining its young people, starting from adolescence. Now is a unique moment to focus on inclusive services and opportunities for these two underserved age groups.

3. The current decentralization process will gradually make the subnational level the appropriate level for the harmonization of public policies. This offers a strategic opportunity to influence planning and budgeting to reduce inequalities and accelerate efforts towards the Sustainable Development Goals from a child-sensitive perspective.

4. Despite ongoing reforms, substantial inequalities remain. In 2018, 7.8 per cent of children were living in absolute poverty and 28.8 per cent were at risk of poverty.⁷ In 2018, 96,000 children (0–18 years) and 40,000 youth (19–24) lived in absolute poverty.⁸ Social protection expenditure has stagnated. More than half of households with three or more dependent children are at risk of poverty (53.6 per cent).⁹ According to the multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) data,¹⁰ children in rural areas and Roma communities are among those more likely to experience poverty.

5. Other disadvantaged groups are children with disabilities and refugee and migrant children. In 2019, the number of refugees and migrants stranded in Serbia fluctuated at around 4,000, and approximately 33,000 new arrivals were recorded.¹¹

³ Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS), 2019
⁵ SORS, Key facts about the Republic of Serbia, 2017.
⁹ See footnote 7.
¹⁰ Multiple indicator cluster survey 2019 data presented in this document are preliminary and subject to change, if required, upon the completion of data processing and reporting.
Of these, about 40 per cent were children, the overwhelming majority of them unaccompanied and separated.

6. Infant and child mortality rates remain higher than the European Union average, at 4.83 per 1,000 live births and 5.55 per 1,000 live births, respectively, with regional disparities. The under-5 mortality rate among Roma children in the 2019 MICS is 9 per 1,000 live births. This is still higher than in the general population, although significant progress has been observed since 2014. Progress in reducing perinatal mortality (8.2 per 1,000 live births in 2018) has been relatively slow, reflecting gaps in standardized reporting, the equipment available at regional perinatal centres, the education of medical staff and safe medical transport for prematurely born children.

7. Vaccination rates decreased in the last years, following decades of high coverage. The rate for measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) fell from 95.7 per cent in 2010 to 81 per cent in 2016. The Government responded actively to a measles outbreak in 2017, and the MMR vaccination rate rose to 93.4 per cent in 2018. However, significant geographical variations persisted. While showing progress since 2014, timely and full coverage in Roma communities of only 63.2 per cent in 2019 is still cause for concern. Vaccination hesitancy persists, with 18 per cent of parents hesitant about immunizing their children in 2017. Serbia lacks an electronic immunization data system. Vaccine supply forecasting and planning require improvement.

8. In early childhood development, service provision is fragmented across sectors, and particularly affects the most vulnerable populations. The traditional, patriarchal parenting model is common and gender stereotyping is widespread. Moreover, in the absence of official data, estimates by health professionals from primary health care centres suggest that as many as 12.5 per cent of children were exposed to developmental risks and disability in Serbia in 2017. There is an urgent need to improve the provision of specialized health care for children with disabilities, particularly outside major cities. The new integrated service model based on family-centred approach offers an opportunity but is facing professional resistance to change.

9. The Government recognizes that investment in early childhood education is of strategic importance for achieving child rights with equity, but provision and capacity remain limited, particularly for the most vulnerable. Only 62 per cent of children aged 3 to 5.5 years are enrolled. Despite improvements, only 10.5 per cent from the poorest quintile, 7.4 per cent from Roma communities and 46 per cent from rural areas attend early education (MICS 2019). While one year of free, compulsory preschool education is provided for children aged 5.5 to 6.5 years, almost 20 per cent of Roma children aged 5.5 to 6.5 years do not attend (MICS 2019). The main barriers to universal access to preschool programmes include insufficient affordable provision due to a lack of public financial and physical resources in local self-governments and particularly in rural areas; the low capacity of preschool programmes to respond to the different needs of children and parents; and a lack of awareness among parents of......

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the importance of preschool education for child development. \[^{16}\] Efforts to address these barriers should continue.

10. Participation in primary and secondary education is high (95.5 per cent in primary school in 2017). \[^{17}\] However, children with disabilities, Roma children and children from very poor households and rural areas benefit less than other children from inclusion in mainstream quality education (e.g., MICS 2019 data show that only 27 per cent of Roma girls attend secondary education compared with 93 per cent of girls in the general population, although the gender gap in the Roma population has declined significantly since 2014). Inclusive education for children with disabilities, introduced in 2009, has made progress, but is still not well understood by all teachers and schools. The number of children attending special schools has declined by 25.3 per cent since 2010. However, new forms of segregation are emerging and there is evidence that a significant number of pupils attend special classrooms in mainstream primary schools.

11. The 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment \[^{18}\] shows that nearly 4 in 10 15-year-old students do not achieve even the basic level of reading, mathematics and science literacy (more than 50 per cent for children with low socioeconomic status). The government is determined to prioritize education reform.

12. Labour market participation is particularly low among vulnerable groups of young people. Opportunities for skills acquisition are limited, especially in rural areas.

13. Digitalization has been one of the government priorities in the past few years. Internet among males is 98.4 per cent and 96.3 among females aged 16 to 24 years, \[^{19}\] giving them the chance to participate, engage and fulfil their potentials. However, research shows that children are digitally skilled rather than digitally competent. In 2018, one pupil in three had experienced an unpleasant event on the Internet in the past year.

14. The development of an effective system for upholding children’s right to protection continues to require UNICEF engagement and expertise. The impending adoption of national strategies on the development of the social welfare system and the protection of victims of crimes will create opportunities in this area.

15. There were 8,927 reported cases of domestic violence against children in 2017, up from 3,637 in 2013. \[^{20}\] Child neglect and physical and emotional violence are the most common forms and affect girls and boys equally. For sexual violence, 88 per cent of reported victims are girls. The percentage of victim-reported violence remains low (7.5 per cent). \[^{21}\] Social services have fragmented budgets and coordination is limited.

16. There are 6,179 children in government residential institutions and foster care. \[^{22}\] Family-oriented and family-like solutions are officially favoured, but a

\[^{21}\] Ibid.
\[^{22}\] RISP, 2018.
transformation encompassing regulation, human resources, monitoring and the availability of services to support family-oriented solutions is still awaited.

17. Although crimes and convictions involving children have fallen, there were 3,465 juvenile criminal reports and 1,633 convictions in 2017. Diversion was used in only 9.5 per cent of cases, up from 4 per cent in 2013.\textsuperscript{23} Measures for protecting child victims/witnesses from secondary victimization are not systematically applied.

18. The rights, well-being and engagement of young people is an emerging UNICEF priority and a particular concern in Serbia due to population dynamics and the dearth of services and opportunities, particularly for the most vulnerable. The number of adolescents hospitalized for mental health reasons has increased.

19. Despite legal provisions, young people’s participation in local and central government processes is weak. Children and young people are not sufficiently visible in national plans, budgets and policies.

20. The use of evidence for monitoring and adjusting policies for children is limited. In 2017, Serbia spent 4 per cent of its gross domestic product on education, 8.5 per cent on health and 1.75 per cent on social welfare benefits,\textsuperscript{24} but it is unclear how much of government spending benefits the most marginalized children.

21. Serbia is addressing environmental issues within both United Nations and European Union frameworks. However, the Environmental Performance Index\textsuperscript{25} places it only eighty-fourth among 180 countries. Moreover, national climate, energy and environment analyses have lacked a child-focused lens. Baseline analysis in 2020 will generate actionable recommendations regarding impacts on children, including options for expanding public and private partnerships.

22. The 2019 UNICEF-Serbia country programme evaluation found that communication for development efforts needed to be integrated into the country programme. Stereotyped gender roles, discrimination against Roma children and children with disabilities and parents’ and caregivers’ low awareness of child rights and positive discipline obstruct progress for children, especially the disadvantaged. Social norms hinder child and adolescent participation in decision-making in families, schools and communities.

23. The country programme evaluation also found that models and interventions developed for children have not always been scaled up successfully. Rigorous costing and documentation of pilot initiatives and subsequent policy analysis and budget allocations are required, together with enhanced partnerships with international financial institutions and the private sector. The evaluation also underlined the comparative advantage of UNICEF in working across sectors and in helping to bridge the gap between national and subnational levels of governance.

24. In light of the above, the country programme will focus on: (a) young child health and wellbeing; (b) quality and inclusive pre-university education, including early childhood education and care (ECEC); (c) child protection; (d) young people and (e) social policy, public financing and child rights monitoring.

\textsuperscript{23} All figures SORS 2018.
Programme priorities and partnerships

25. The overarching goal of the country programme, consistent with government priorities and the UNICEF Strategic Plan, is to contribute to national efforts to progressively fulfil the rights of all children in Serbia, especially the most disadvantaged and excluded, and enable them to develop to their full potential in an inclusive and protective society respectful of their voices. Particular attention is paid to the 0 to 6-year age group and to young people. Every opportunity will be embraced to support gender equality in line with the Gender Action Plan.

26. The programme will contribute to the vision of the Government’s 2025 National Investment Plan and its priorities related to human development as well as the Government’s COVID-19 recovery measures. It will also contribute to the Government’s 2025 multi-annual planning document, the 2030 education strategy, the public health strategy, the strategy to fight violence against children, the youth and sports strategy, the upcoming social welfare strategy and the digitalization and innovation programmes of the Government. The programme is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), 2021–2025.

27. The programme is aimed at contributing to ongoing decentralization processes and to making them more effective for children in conjunction with national-level standards and regulatory frameworks. For modelling, local self-governments will be identified through data, analysis and consultations with national and subnational actors.

28. Seven core change strategies will be applied at the national and subnational levels to address barriers to child rights: (a) evidence generation and use; (b) investing in systems approaches to programming for at-scale results for children; (c) policy advocacy; (d) winning support for the cause of children; (e) leveraging resources and partnerships for effective, scalable and sustainable interventions; (f) unlocking the untapped transformative potential of the private sector (within the business-for-results framework); and (g) harnessing innovation.

29. Shared-value partnerships and alliances will continue to be fostered with national and local government counterparts, civil society and knowledge partners. Partnerships with traditional and online media outlets will be critical for programme advocacy. Children and young people will be further enabled to express their concerns and ideas through social media and digital platforms.

30. Building on the close engagement of UNICEF with the private sector, partnerships with businesses and chambers of commerce will be strengthened to scale results for children. Aims will include influencing businesses’ operations and building their capacity to apply the Children’s Rights and Business Principles; advocacy for children with and by the private sector; public-private partnerships for social services; and the mobilization of business assets, including technical expertise, innovation, research and marketing outreach.

31. As the success of country programme interventions depends on the behaviour of duty bearers, who are conditioned by social expectations, increased emphasis will be placed on social and behavioural change, especially for positive parenting and combating violence against children.

32. Disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness and response will be mainstreamed into the programme components, considering the Government’s high capacities in these areas.

Young child health and well-being
33. Building on the results previously achieved, this programme component will support the design, implementation and monitoring of national policies to ensure comprehensive support for early childhood development (ECD), especially for the most disadvantaged children.

34. In partnership with the Ministry of Health, the capacity of the health system to support positive parenting, to ensure early detection and intervention for children at risk of developmental difficulties and to monitor the development of young children will be strengthened. Simultaneously, collaboration with the social protection and education sectors will continue with respect to parenting support services and early childhood interventions. This will include the validation, costing and dissemination of lessons learned from previous UNICEF-supported modelling of inter-sectoral ECD services to facilitate nationwide adoption and scale-up.

35. The capabilities of the health system and other systems to provide quality outreach and home-visiting services to vulnerable children and families will be strengthened. With the support of the LEGO Foundation, the capacities of 60,000 families to apply positive parenting practices will be enhanced.

36. UNICEF will support the generation of evidence and the costing of the investments needed in the organizational and professional capacities of maternal and neonatal services to ensure a continuum of care, particularly in the districts with the highest perinatal mortality. This work will be complemented by investments in social norms campaigns.

37. To contribute to maintaining high immunization coverage, UNICEF will provide technical advice for overcoming bottlenecks in vaccine procurement, improving data management and increasing demand by eliminating misconceptions and will support the equipping of health professionals to respond to vaccine hesitancy.

Quality and inclusive pre-university education, including early childhood education and care

38. In partnership with the Ministry of Education, this programme component will uphold the rights of boys and girls, particularly those affected by poverty and exclusion, to quality inclusive education. Specifically, it will increase the level of access and quality of ECEC and enhance the quality and inclusiveness of primary and secondary education so that vulnerable children, including children living in poverty, Roma girls and children with disabilities, benefit equally.

39. The early childhood education system will be strengthened, building on previous country programme results and scaling up the delivery of quality services. With equity as an overarching goal, preschool quality and access will be improved by further developing the capacities of the Ministry of Education, other public bodies, regional school administrations and preschool institutions and improving national and local intersectoral coordination. In partnership with the World Bank, the competence of teachers to apply modern pedagogies in inclusive preschool environments will be enhanced. Innovative financing and service models (potentially including public-private partnerships) will be identified for equitable access to quality preschool.

40. Efforts will continue to support primary and secondary schools and strengthen educators’ pre- and in-service training for the scaled-up delivery of quality, learner-centred, competency-based and above all inclusive education that takes a holistic approach to child and adolescent development, including social and emotional skills.Technical cooperation will encompass: (a) developing, piloting and scaling up school improvement approaches to transform schools into learning organizations; (b) modernizing teaching practice; (c) developing a range of support mechanisms for
schools and teachers; and (d) developing and implementing innovations, including digital technology applications.

41. The efficiency and effectiveness of budgetary allocations and expenditures will be analysed to inform advocacy for more equitable spending on education and improve services and outcomes.

**Child protection**

42. This programme component will build on national frameworks and previous results to enhance and scale up arrangements for upholding children’s rights to be free from violence, neglect and abuse, live in a family environment and have access to justice.

43. In partnership with the Government, systems will be strengthened, and cross-sectoral collaboration facilitated to prevent and respond to cases of violence, neglect, abuse and family separation. Existing institutions will be reconfigured to prevent family separation, particularly for children with disabilities. Multisectoral referral mechanisms and violence prevention programmes will be promoted. Evidence-based advocacy will be conducted to leverage resources for foster care and other alternatives to institutionalization. The capacities of professionals working with children and their families to prevent and address discrimination and violence and to apply cross-sectoral approaches, will be strengthened. Through communication for social change, parents and children will be empowered to claim their rights and demand quality services and to provide a protective and supportive environment for children. Efforts to build the capacity of key institutions for a sustainable response to child-related migration challenges will be accelerated.

44. Technical assistance and knowledge will be provided to (a) increase the use of child-friendly and gender-sensitive proceedings by the police, courts and prosecutors; (b) equip free legal-aid providers to assist the most marginalized children and families; and (c) review regulations and build capacity for diversion measures and the protection of child victims and witnesses, including by modelling early and intensive rehabilitation programmes.

45. Evidence-based advocacy will be conducted for increased cash benefits for the most vulnerable families with children and for redirecting financial and human resources towards alternative family and community-based childcare and protection services at the decentralized level, emphasizing secondary and tertiary prevention.

**Young people**

46. This programme component is aimed at contributing to the empowerment and resilience of young people, particularly the most disadvantaged.

47. In partnership with the Government, the private sector and international financial institutions, non-formal skills programmes will be modelled for the acquisition of transferable, digital, greening and entrepreneurial skills, especially for the most marginalized. The UNICEF value proposition regarding skills will complement other partners’ efforts.

48. UNICEF will support the Government's efforts to promote healthy lifestyles. Adolescent-friendly mental-health services will be modelled, building providers’ capacities.

49. Opportunities will be expanded for young people to be heard, engaged and connected, including through youth networks, local government-participation mechanisms, volunteerism and U-report for a peaceful, tolerant, inclusive society and for building trust in the region.
50. Evidence-based advocacy will be conducted for the prioritization of young people’s needs in policy and budgeting processes across sectors.

**Social policy, public financing and child-rights monitoring**

51. This programme component will support all the rights of all children, including the most disadvantaged, by strengthening Government systems, independent bodies and civil society organizations for evidence-based, child-friendly planning and budgeting and child-rights monitoring.

52. UNICEF will significantly increase its engagement in public financing for children with the ministries of Finance and Public Administration, and local self-governments. Public awareness of gaps in the fulfilment of children’s rights will be raised to catalyse Government action. Technical support will be provided to line ministries for adequate and equitable financing in partnership with the European Union and the international financial institutions.

53. In cooperation with the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (covering all 174 local self-governments), local development plans will be reinforced, and participatory, gender-responsive, child-centred planning, budgeting and monitoring of social services will be fostered. This platform will be leveraged for scaling up models developed under other programme components at the decentralized level.

54. In conjunction with knowledge partners, gaps in the availability, disaggregation, analysis and use of data on the situation of children, including emerging environmental and population dynamics issues, will be addressed. The next round of MICS will be conducted in partnership with the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia.

55. Technical expertise will be provided for monitoring the commitments of Serbia under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international instruments and for enhancing the effectiveness of the Council for Child Rights, the Ombudsman, the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and the National Assembly in ensuring that all duty bearers promote the realization of children’s rights and respond to child-rights violations.

**Programme effectiveness**

56. Programme effectiveness will support the efficient and effective management of the country programme and financial and human resources. It will comprise programme coordination, management for results, including planning, monitoring and evaluation, communication, partnerships, engagement and advocacy and cross-sectoral programmatic issues, i.e., gender, communication for development and sustainable responses to migration challenges. Technical assistance, human resources and operational costs will be supported through this component.

57. Communication and public advocacy will support all programme components, ensure that child rights are visible, contribute to social mobilization and behavioural change for child rights, drive knowledge dissemination and public support, including the engagement of young people, and expand UNICEF outreach, voice and brand positioning.

58. Member States, international financial institutions and the United Nations system will remain key strategic partners. South-South and triangular cooperation, partnerships at the regional, national and subnational levels and innovative financing will be explored to take results and modelled approaches to scale, foster sustainability and leverage new resources. UNICEF will continue to engage with the Serbian public, the private sector, including the start-up ecosystem, and the Government to mobilize
resources and innovation for child rights. UNICEF will aim to increase funding from the Serbian private sector, which reached over $1 million in 2019.

Summary budget table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme component</th>
<th>Regular resources</th>
<th>Other resources</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young child health and well-being</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>5 000</td>
<td>5 650</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality and inclusive pre-university education, including early childhood education and care</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>10 800</td>
<td>11 300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child protection</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>4 000</td>
<td>4 850</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young people</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>3 200</td>
<td>3 850</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social policy, public financing, child-rights monitoring</td>
<td>1 100</td>
<td>1 500</td>
<td>2 600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programme effectiveness</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4 250</td>
<td>25 000</td>
<td>29 250</td>
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</table>

Programme and risk management

59. This country programme document (CPD) outlines the UNICEF contributions to national results and serves as the primary unit of accountability to the Executive Board for results alignment and resources assigned to the programme at the country level. Accountabilities of managers at the country, regional and headquarters levels with respect to country programmes are prescribed in the organization’s programme and operations policies. The programme of cooperation will be implemented in line with UNSDCF mechanisms and will ensure compliance with UNICEF policies and procedures.

60. The feasibility of the country programme relies on key assumptions, including political stability, political will to advance reforms, strengthened accountability frameworks, the availability of adequate resources for implementation and the modelling of innovations.

61. Critical risks include the stagnation of reforms, a reduced fiscal space from the economic impact of COVID-19, a lack of donors for social areas of work and potential environmental emergencies. Risk-mitigation measures will include the effective and optimal management of financial resources, the leveraging of partner resources for children and well-developed early warning and response mechanisms to enable a high degree of flexibility to respond to emergencies.

62. Continuous efforts will be made to advocate for and identify new entry points, including with the support of the UNICEF Business Advisory Board, and to make use of opportunities that may arise to accelerate progress towards the country programme outcomes.

Monitoring and evaluation

63. UNICEF will monitor results through annual reviews with the Government and implementing partners to assess progress, identify key strategic, programmatic, operational and financial risks and define appropriate mitigation measures, all of which will inform annual work planning. Progress towards planned results will be
monitored on the basis of the results and resources framework of the CPD and annual workplans. UNICEF, in cooperation with the Government, will increase programme monitoring and quality assurance for the harmonized approach to cash transfers.

64. UNICEF will work with partners to strengthen national monitoring and evaluation capacity. Emphasis will be on implementing subnational planning processes, improving programme performance monitoring and enhancing feedback mechanisms.

65. UNICEF will contribute and monitor progress towards the common outcomes of the UNSDCF and will support the Inter-Ministerial Working Group for the Sustainable Development Goals in the production of voluntary national reviews, facilitating the generation of the information needed to monitor national and international commitments and compliance with the observations made by the committees of the main human rights instruments.
## Annex

### Results and resources framework

**Serbia – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, 2021–2025**

**Convention on the Rights of the Child:** Articles 12, 13, 15, 19, 20, 22–24, 28, 29, 37, 39 and 40  

**National priorities:** Sustainable Development Goals 3–5, 10 and 17  

**United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework outcomes involving UNICEF:** (a) Serbia harnesses the full potential of a green, sustainable and inclusive economy; (b) Human well-being, social equity and capacities; and (c) Building trust through the rights and duties agenda.

### Related UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021 Goal Areas: 1–5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNICEF outcomes</th>
<th>Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)</th>
<th>Means of verification</th>
<th>Indicative country programme outputs</th>
<th>Major partners, partnership frameworks</th>
<th>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. By 2025, girls and boys from conception to 6 years, especially the most marginalized and those living in humanitarian settings, and their parents/families will benefit from high-impact health, nutrition and other interventions that support nurturing care for early childhood development (ECD), enabling children to survive and thrive. | Measles-containing vaccine (MCV1) coverage  
B: 93% (2018)  
T: 95%  

Districts or equivalent administrative units with at least 80% coverage of measles-containing vaccine (MCV1) coverage  
B: 95%  
T: 100 %  

Percentage of children aged 12 to 35 months engaged in four or more activities providing early stimulation and responsive care in the past three days with their father  
B: (a) 48% overall; 27.7% poor; 9% Roma (2019) | National statistics  

National statistics  

Multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) 2019 | 1.1. By 2025, national policies, evidence, and institutional and professional capacities are in place to provide quality, evidence-based, equity-focused, fiscally sustainable perinatal and immunization services to all mothers, new-borns and young children.  
1.2. By 2025, national and local health and other service providers and stakeholders have improved understanding, standards and skills to deliver culturally and gender sensitive, high-quality integrated ECD and early childhood intervention services and programmes for all children from conception to 6 years of age benefiting | Ministry of Health, Institute of Public Health, Ministry of Demography and Population Policy, Local Self-Governments, Council for Child Rights, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD), Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, private sector | 650  
5 000  
5 650 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNICEF outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T: (a) 60% overall; 35% poor; 20% Roma (2023)</td>
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<td>their development and inclusion and empowering and capacitating parents to adopt positive nurturing care practices.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Children under 5 years identified with developmental risk, delay or disabilities receiving standard early intervention services through a UNICEF-supported health program</td>
<td>UNICEF/partner documentation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>B: 0</td>
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<td>T: 8,000</td>
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<td>2. By 2025, all children learn and develop their competencies through quality, inclusive education that fosters their well-being and active participation in the community.</td>
<td>Net enrolment rate of children aged 3 to 5.5 years</td>
<td>Administrative data</td>
<td>2.1. By 2025, preschool education quality and access are improved through strengthened institutional capacities, governance (including for public-private partnerships) and intersectoral coordination at the national, regional and local levels, and preschool teachers have increased competencies to apply modern inclusive pre-school pedagogies.</td>
<td>MoESTD, Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS), National Education Council, private sector</td>
<td>500 10 800 11 300</td>
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<td></td>
<td>B: 63.9% (boys: 63.8%, girls: 64%) (2018)</td>
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<td>T: 80% (boys: 80%, girls: 80%)</td>
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<td>Percentage of children aged 36–59 months from disadvantaged groups attending an early childhood education programme</td>
<td>MICS</td>
<td>2.2. By 2025, teachers have the necessary skills and practices to apply modern pedagogical approaches of quality inclusive education and are supported through effective policies, monitoring and assessment.</td>
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<td>B: Poorest quintile – 10.5%; Roma children – 7.4% (Roma boys: 6.8%; Roma girls: 8%) (2019)</td>
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<td>T: Poorest quintile – 20%; Roma children – 20% (boys: 20%; girls: 20%) (2023)</td>
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<td>Net attendance in upper secondary education</td>
<td>MICS</td>
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<td>B: Poorest quintile – 78.6%; Roma children– 28.4% (boys: 30%; girls:26.6%) (2019)</td>
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<td>T: Poorest quintile – 85%;</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF outcomes</td>
<td>Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)</td>
<td>Means of verification</td>
<td>Indicative country programme outputs</td>
<td>Major partners, partnership frameworks</td>
<td>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (in thousands of United States dollars)</td>
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| Roma children – 35% (boys: 35%; girls: 35%) (2023) | Students aged 15 achieving at least the minimum proficiency level (2) in core subjects  
B: Mathematics – 60%;  
T: Mathematics – 75%;  
Reading – 75%; Science – 75% | Programme for International Student Assessment study | | | |
| 3. By 2025, more children, including those affected by humanitarian and emergency situations, will live in safe, protective, non-violent and caring family environments and benefit from increased access to adequate, family-oriented services, improved quality of alternative care, enhanced access to justice systems and improved violence protection measures. | Number of children (0–17 years) living in residential care (standard), disaggregated by gender, age, disability  
B: 793 (2018)  
T: 25% decrease | Administrative data | 3.1. By 2025, the social service workforce has increased capacities to provide quality, inclusive family strengthening services and alternative care.  
3.2. By 2025, caregivers and children have the knowledge and means to seek support relating to violence against children and professionals have the capacity to provide inclusive, cross-sectoral support and rehabilitation.  
3.3. By 2025, justice and social welfare systems are strengthened to divert children in conflict with the law, to implement early rehabilitation programmes and to ensure that court proceedings are child sensitive. | Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs, Republic Institute for Social Protection, SORS, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, Ministry of Justice, private sector | 850 4 000 4 850 |
| Percentage of girls and boys age 1 to 14 years who experience any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers (standard)  
B: 44.5% (2019) for children age 1 to 14 years (boys: 46.3; girls: 42.5)  
T: 20 percentage point decrease (2023) | Percentage of children entering formal care / separated from birth families  
B: 1,059 (2018)  
T: 950 | Administrative data | | | |
<p>| Administrative data | Administrative data | MICS | | |</p>
<table>
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<td>Percentage of girls and boys in conflict with the law who are subject to a diversion order or alternative measure rather than a custodial sentence (standard) B: 8.3% (2018) T: 20%</td>
<td>Administrative data</td>
<td>4.1. By 2025, young people are provided with increased opportunities to develop and apply their skills to successfully transition to work. 4.2. By 2025, young people, especially the most vulnerable, have increased knowledge of healthy development and available services. 4.3 By 2025, young people have participation platforms and increased capacities to amplify their voices and be connected, actively engaged and empowered to and productively participate in their communities and society</td>
<td>Ministry of Youth and Sport, SORS, Ministry of Innovation, private sector</td>
<td>RR  OR Total</td>
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<td>4. By 2025, young boys and girls and young people in Serbia, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized, benefit from quality non-formal education and skills-development opportunities and are able to apply their skills and competencies to participate, contribute and realize their rights.</td>
<td>Number of adolescent girls and boys who participate in or lead civic engagement initiatives through UNICEF-supported programmes B: 0 T: 5,000</td>
<td>UNICEF/partner documentation</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>3 200</td>
<td>3 850</td>
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<td>5. By 2025, children and adolescents, particularly the most marginalized, progressively benefit from inclusive national</td>
<td>Expenditure on education as a percentage of total government expenditure (disaggregated by pre-primary / primary / secondary)</td>
<td>Annual reports</td>
<td>5.1. By 2025, national and local authorities are equipped to plan for, generate, efficiently use and report upon robust and credible social sector budgets and to</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance, SORS, local self-governments, line ministries, Republic Policy</td>
<td>1 100</td>
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<td>and municipal government policies, budgets and programmes that are evidence-based and prioritize the best interests of children and youth in public finance and public spending.</td>
<td>B: 9% (2016), pre-primary (0.1%); primary (4%); secondary (2.1%) T: 13%, pre-primary (0.6%); primary (5%); secondary (3.5%)</td>
<td>Statistical capacity indicator for Sustainable Development Goal monitoring (Goal 17.18.1) B: Global methodology under development T: Global methodology under development</td>
<td>leverage domestic and external resources for equitable, child-focused investments to achieve child- and adolescent-relevant Sustainable Development Goals. 5.2. By 2025, national authorities, civil society organizations and independent institutions are effectively informed and influenced by data, research, evaluation and analysis that enable them to advocate for the child- and adolescent-focused design of national policies, programmes and budgets.</td>
<td>Secretariat, Office of Human and Minority Rights, Ombudsman, Commissioner for Equality</td>
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| 6. Programme Effectiveness | | | | 500 | 500 | 1 000 |
| **Total resources** | | | | **4 250** | **25 000** | **29 250** |