

# COVID 19 Socio-Economic Response Plan



COVID-19  
RESPONSE





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# COVID 19 Socio-Economic Response Plan

October 2020







# FOREWORD

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The year 2020 will be remembered as a turning point in the history of modern society. The year when the whole world - every one of us - was impacted by a crisis that has had far reaching consequences on our lives, bringing global uncertainty and challenges not seen since World War II.

While the coronavirus has brought intense suffering to many families and communities in Serbia and around the world, it has also brought some unforeseen positive side effects, from clear blue skies in dense urban environments to unprecedented levels of innovation and solidarity.

We have already learned a lot from this crisis, and we know that it has the potential to induce a change for the better. We are at a moment where our collective and individual futures are in our hands, with a once in a lifetime opportunity to not just recover but build forward better.

As we restore health systems, we can simultaneously accelerate progress towards sustainable development. The crisis has shown that humans have adapted quickly to new forms of living, from the widespread emergence of technology-supported work from home and remote schooling arrangements to the expansion of e-commerce, and stronger connectedness and solidarity among people and communities. The crisis, however, has also contributed to deepening trends of inequalities within segments of society, including in Serbia, where it continues to impact more severely vulnerable groups.

Between April and August 2020, the UN family in Serbia conducted a comprehensive assessment of the impact of the

pandemic on people, institutions, business, and the environment in which we live. The assessment provided the data and insights required to formulate recommendations for action by the UN, its government counterparts and its partners in country. The recommendations presented in the present report (the COVID-19: Socio-Economic Response Plan) are the result of a broad, collaborative effort involving UN agencies, the Government of Serbia, and representatives of both businesses and civil society. They aim to address both the needs to adapt to the crisis and the new world it has created, and to mitigate the impact of future similar situations by building forward better, accelerating the reform processes, and anchoring sustainability and resilience in the country's development vision.

In Serbia, we are at a unique moment in time: a new government is coming to power, with the ability to shape a sustained recovery, spearhead faster progress in ensuring the well-being of the citizens, reverse rising inequalities and harness the collective efforts from all communities. It is also a time when the country can access additional significant support from many of its international partners, be it the United Nations, the European Union, international financial institutions, and others. The effective use of resources available through strong multilateral cooperation can boost Serbia's ambitious path for the decades to come. These convergences play out in the larger setting of the UN Secretary General's Call for the Decade of Action to accelerate the implementation of the sustainable development goals. Now more than ever: we need health security, improved well-being and equality for all, a green recovery and stronger resilience of society and the economy to future potential shocks.

**We look forward to working with our partners in Serbia, in the region,  
and shape our path forwards together.**

**Francoise Jacob**  
United Nations Resident Coordinator in Serbia

**Francine Pickup**  
UNDP Resident Representative in Serbia

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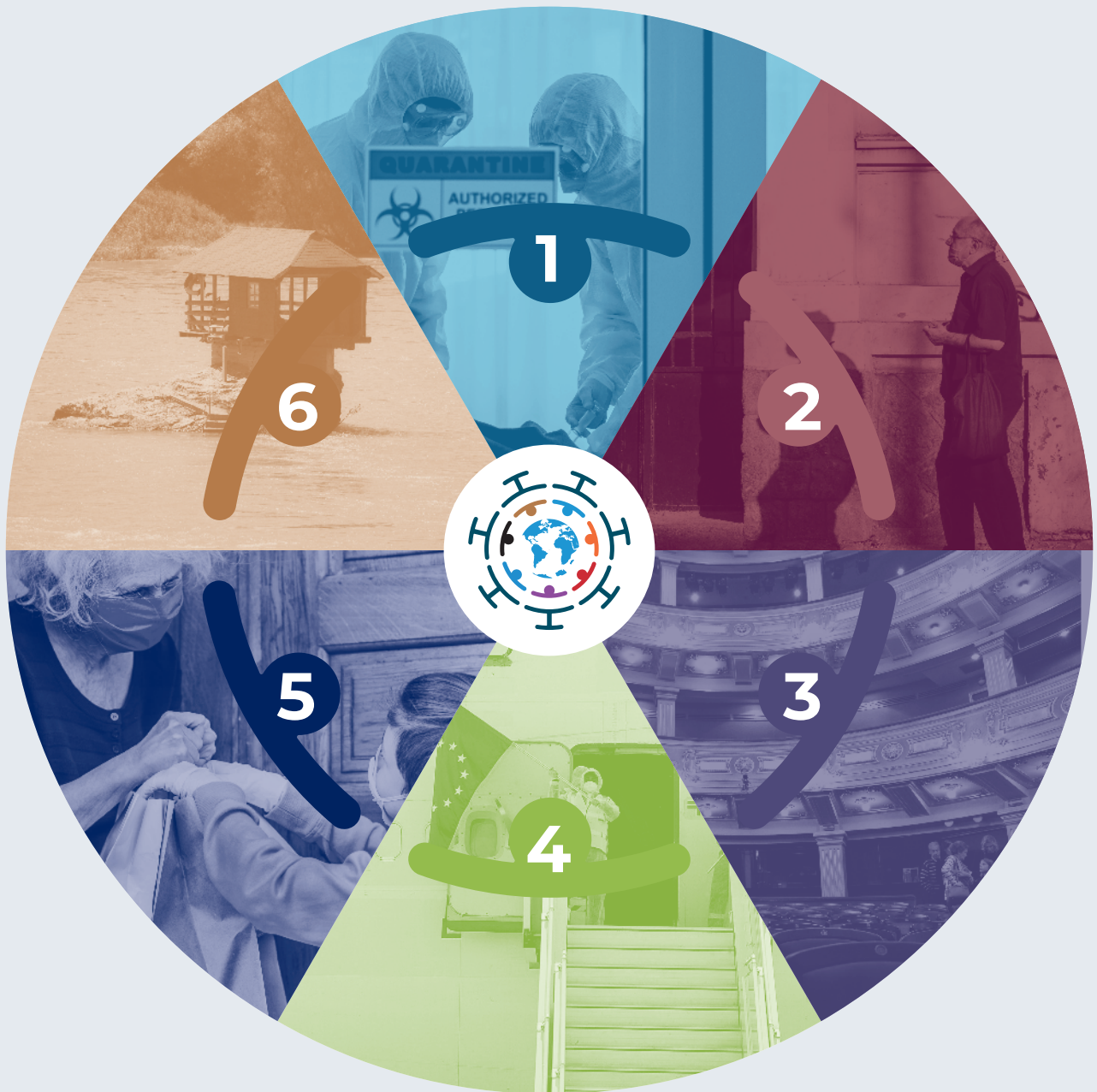
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# OVERVIEW

In response to the unprecedented global crisis caused by COVID-19, the United Nations ("UN") mobilized its full capacity across countries with a focus on three main areas: healthcare response, humanitarian response and socio-economic response. The socio-economic impact assessment and response plan were developed as part of a broad partnership among the UN Country Team in Serbia, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator and facilitated by the United Nations Development Program ("UNDP"). This response plan is informed by an in-depth overview of the impact of COVID-19 on key economic and human development perspectives: health, social protection and provision of basic services, jobs and the economy, macroeconomic stability, community cohesion, governance and resilience, and the environment. The assessment is shaped around the UN Secretary-General's COVID-19 response framework; it promotes a vision based on the opportunity to build forward better in the aftermath of the crisis, with an end goal of accelerating the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the "Agenda 2030").

The crisis is ongoing, and its outlook remains uncertain with the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 evolving. Such circumstances require continuous monitoring and the ability to quickly respond, adapt to, and mitigate such impacts. This report provides short, medium, and long-term recommendations for interventions that are necessary for building much more resilient economy and society. It will also be used by the UN family and its partners to shape their strategies and programs in the years to come, within the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework ("UNSDCF").

## MAIN FINDINGS ON THE IMPACT OF COVID AND KEY INGREDIENTS FOR MOVING FORWARD

**The ongoing COVID-19 outbreak in Serbia was marked by two peaks, in April 2020 and in July 2020, with a third one building up just as this report goes to print. The spring and summer peaks significantly impacted health, economic and social well-being, and the way people live and work.**

While both of the first two peaks in outbreaks were contained to relatively manageable levels by the Government of Serbia (the "government" or the "GoS") implementing restrictions, there are important ongoing implications of COVID-19 to the Serbian economy and Serbian society, especially as the crisis is far from over and the pandemic could peak yet again in the future.

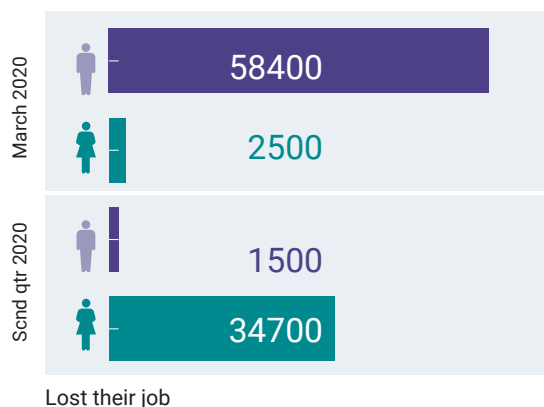
Around the world, the COVID-19 outbreak exposed deficiencies in the **nexus between human rights, individual freedoms, and crisis risk management**. In particular, the analysis contained in the previously released report "COVID-19: Socio-Economic Impact Assessment" shows that the Serbian Parliament could not participate in the decision-making process related to the proclamation of the state of emergency and there was an initial gap in consultations with key social actors. This contributed to concerns over the fair application of the rule of law and human rights, heightened risks of discrimination, shrinking of democratic space and more limitations on freedom of information and expression, including due to restrictions on the work of journalists. There was also a perceived lack of transparency in decision-making, and an overflowing of fake news or false information (COE, 2020a).



**Both the economy and society in Serbia were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, but they did show short-term resilience in being able to rebound.**

The crisis brought strong year-over-year ("YoY") contraction of gross domestic product ("GDP"), at its greatest at a rate of 6.4% YoY in the second quarter of 2020, and a month-over-month ("MoM") decline of GDP as much as 9.2% during the second quarter of 2020. As of August 2020, a total of 94,100 jobs were lost in Serbia during 2020 and there was a decline in average actual working hours during the week by 7.5% during the second quarter of 2020 compared to YoY levels (SORS, 2020c).

As an immediate reaction to the crisis in March 2020, businesses dismissed mostly men (58,400 men lost their jobs during March 2020 compared to 2,500 women), while the second quarter of 2020 overall saw an opposite trend as businesses adjusted more long-term to the crisis (where, in the second quarter a net 34,700 women lost their job compared to a net increase of 1,500 more jobs for men).<sup>1</sup>



There was a particular drop in participation rates<sup>2</sup> in the second quarter of 2020, with 185,200 individuals in the "working age" population reporting they were either not actively working or not actively looking for a job. While the economy has still not recovered from the initial shock of the

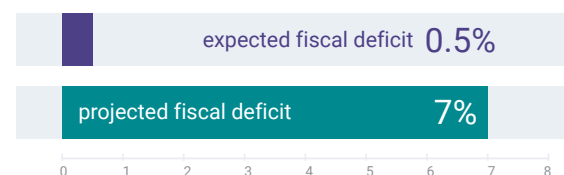
crisis, businesses indicated that they were able to secure their finances to withstand the first phase of the crisis, and data regarding industrial production and exports indicate that economic activity has slowly picked up in the May 2020 – July 2020 period. Similarly, the crisis increased the proportion of already vulnerable populations whose livelihoods might be significantly threatened if the crisis persists, increasing this proportion from 31% pre-crisis to 35% post-crisis. Households have coped during the crisis through various strategies and thanks to community support, but it is unclear how long they can rely on these reserves.

**The government and the National Bank of Serbia (the "NBS") reacted quickly and provided a large fiscal stimulus and monetary easing to contain the negative effects of the COVID-19 outbreak.**

The measures introduced had a particularly important and positive effect on affected businesses' liquidity and in disincentivizing them to dismiss workers. The interventions left Serbia's overall fiscal position sustainable, provided there is continued and sustained economic growth in the following year in 2021. The universal cash handout implemented by the government of 100 EUR per person provided fast relief but could have been more impactful and fairer had it specifically targeted those in need and included income or other eligibility thresholds.

By the end of 2020, Serbia's fiscal deficit is projected to increase from the expected 0.5% of GDP before the outbreak of the pandemic to a full 7% of GDP, in line with the trends in other countries, all the while public debt is estimated to rise from 49% of GDP to between 59% and 60% of GDP, which is still relatively low compared to other EU countries (Eurostat, 2020f). Serbia therefore retains some fiscal and budgetary space for introducing further support measures, albeit carefully managed and in an increasingly small space to do so.

Before the outbreak of the pandemic



The lack of development of the financial and capital markets in Serbia and Serbia's limited access to diverse sources of financing were exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis. Indeed, the shock itself and the monetary policies that were

<sup>1</sup> Men represent a predominant part of the labor force in business and infrastructure sectors while women dominate the care-economy and education sectors (SORS, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> "Participation rates" refers to the total number of people or individuals who are currently employed or in search of a job.

enacted to contain it, at domestic, regional, and international levels, will further increase the Serbian private sector's dependency on credit rather than equity financing. A renewed emphasis on ongoing reforms in the financial sector, and related accompanying measures, will be needed to strengthen Serbia's recovery and sustain progress towards the achievement of SDGs in Serbia as well as inhibit Serbia's transition to a circular, green and inclusive economy.

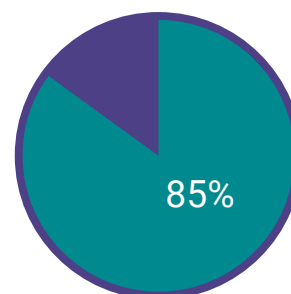
At the **regional level**, within the Western Balkans and South-east Europe, after an initial period during which protectionist measures were enacted to obtain and retain PPE and essential medical equipment, trade cooperation resumed and was strengthened through the "Green Corridor" project that eased transport and trade flows across the subregion. Other opportunities for cooperation among the sub-regional partners were missed, however, including the possibility of jointly procuring medical equipment and PPE across the region. Successful coordination and cooperation at the regional level and with European partners will remain key for Serbia to recover and also to reap the potential opportunities stemming from increased efficiency and resiliency measures that have been adopted from the crisis (and could be useful long-term), as well as those opportunities that could arise from a possible near-shoring of some of supply chains across Europe as a reaction to the heightened risks of global trade in recent months.

**Despite many negative consequences of the crisis, local communities, businesses, and civil society organizations demonstrated a significant will to engage and help the economy and society.**

Local communities across Serbia extended support in many ways, including through donations and volunteering platforms that gathered several thousand volunteers to support older people, among others, whose movement was fully restricted due to physical distancing measures put in place. Many large companies independently either donated finances to combat the crisis or donated their products and services, such as beds, mattresses and bed linen sets to hospitals and social institutions, free short holidays for medical staff in spa centers, food products and technical capacity for building innovative solutions in institutions on the frontlines of responding. The Serbian Chamber of Commerce, with its network of regional offices, acted as a direct channel for impacted companies, having touchpoints with these companies daily to help listen to their needs and guide them through the crisis. The Red Cross of Serbia provided direct aid, particularly in activities which included mass volunteering and daily individual support to the most vulnerable populations in need of health support. Even the Serbian diaspora abroad had many initiatives through which community members offered their financial and technical support to those affected by COVID-19 in Serbia.

**Some sectors of society were affected more than others. The stimulus measures were universal and not targeted to reach *only* the poor and vulnerable and did not include incentives to *support* environmental priorities.**

Particularly vulnerable populations included informal workers, small farmers, families with children, single parents, children, the elderly, and residents of substandard settlements (particularly the Roma population). Informal workers, who accounted for 85% of all dismissed workers in the first quarter of 2020, were almost completely invisible to the government measures.



■ All dismissed workers in the first quarter of 2020

■ Informal workers

Unlike formal workers, they received only the EUR 100 per person one-time stimulus payment. Finally, the government support did not provide any focus on green and environmental issues, since there was no green conditionality to government support measures.

**The path of social and economic recovery in the years following the COVID-19 outbreak is highly uncertain. If the pandemic continues, a longer and more pervasive downturn might be expected.**

In addition to being vulnerable to contagion within its borders, Serbia remains exposed to the external economic shocks that might come from the European Union (the "EU"), which is its dominant trading partner. If the EU area is faced with either persistent new spreading of the virus, or with a postponed market reaction resulting in a strong economic downturn by the end of this year or in the following year, then these factors might affect the Serbian economy and moreover the overall social wellbeing of Serbia's citizens.

**Rather than just recovering to pre-COVID-19 levels, Serbia should use this as an opportunity to build forward better.**

The UN global COVID-19 crisis response is designed to support governments in looking beyond immediate recovery with an eye towards longer term development goals and the Agenda 2030, and can be identified in five broad recovery areas: health systems, social protection, jobs, the economy (including the green economy), and overall resilience.

In the health systems sector, the priorities in the short term are clearly related to containing the outbreak, preparing for extensive vaccination campaigns, while preserving the system's capacity to provide non-COVID-19 related services, and expanding the reach and quality of services to address mental health well-being. In the longer term, structural reforms are needed to enhance the resilience of the health sector to disasters of a similar and also of a different nature, including by addressing issues related to inclusivity (including but not limited to the extent and impact of out of pocket payments for health services, access to health services for minority groups, and more).

With regards to the societal dimension of the crisis, three key priorities have emerged:

1. expanding social protection services by scaling up specific actions for groups at risk, including by evaluating a temporary basic income ("TBI") scheme,
2. enhancing resilience of the education system to crisis, including the ability of the education system to continue to be inclusive during such times, and
3. prevention of domestic violence, gender-based violence and other forms of violence, while ensuring the provision of psycho-social support at all levels.

**In economic recovery, a key priority should be on "green" recovery to build environmental health and resilience in our society and economy.**

Future fiscal stimulus programs provided by the government should be used as a unique opportunity to make progress towards protecting the environment and tackling climate change, along the objectives set in the 2015 Paris Agreement. Such efforts would also allow fast-track progress towards "Chapter 27" (the environmental dimension) of the Acquis Communautaire, so the country can fully implement the upcoming Green Agenda for the Western Balkans.<sup>3</sup>

Overall, the risks of future pandemics will be reduced by restoring lost ecosystems and biodiversity, fighting climate change, and reducing pollution. Particular attention should be given to sustainable solutions for infrastructure development, urbanization, and energy transition, while at the same time integrating nature-based solutions and the principles of a circular economy, green financing, and green conditionalities.

**It is critical for Serbia to fully unleash the potential of technology to support building resilient communities and economies - harnessing technology will accelerate Serbia's transformation.**

The country's ability to reduce COVID-19's impact on future jobs and economic activity depends not only on its ability to contain the pandemic but also on firms' and communities' adaptability to global disruptions. The crisis has shown that there are solutions that can simultaneously help fight the pandemic and progress towards sustainable development. E-commerce has emerged as an immediate response by businesses to lockdown measures but can also help SMEs expand access to markets even outside the context of this pandemic.

**Future fiscal support from the government or other sources needs to be targeted and invested strategically in priority sectors -- including health, social protection, IT infrastructure for education and the economy, and green incentive programs encouraging the most environmentally responsible transformation.**

While there is still budgetary space for additional stimulus, this space is increasingly constrained given the many priorities. In order to maintain the remaining available budget space for future projects in the next year or two, Serbia needs to enact a more selective approach to its fiscal support measures and be very efficient in targeting those that are most in need. As mentioned above, a TBI scheme might be part of the solution to protect the newly vulnerable population exposed to risk of poverty resulting from COVID-19. Enactment of a TBI type scheme would require unconditional emergency cash transfers, providing secure income to vulnerable populations for a 6 to 12-month period. A renewed emphasis on ongoing reforms in the financial sector, and related accompanying measures, will also be an important ingredient to strengthen Serbia's recovery and sustain progress towards the achievement of SDGs in Serbia.

In order to build trust in institutions, and enhance adherence to safety measures needed to contain the outbreak it is important to address **democratic deficits** by creating structured opportunities for extensive civic engagement and representation of all stakeholder groups in local de-

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, see "Commission Staff Working Document: Guidelines for the Implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans" dated as of June 10, 2020, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/green\\_agenda\\_for\\_the\\_western\\_balkans\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/green_agenda_for_the_western_balkans_en.pdf).

velopment planning and decision-making dialogues. The implementation of socio-economic measures needs to be more inclusive by:

- (a) enhancing decentralized responsive governance,
- (b) assessing local governance frameworks for managing crisis (regulations, protocols, local acts),
- (c) improving the transparency of local self-governments' ("LSGs") work and communication with citizens on key issues affecting their communities, and
- (d) adopting a decision making model that is based on community needs and ensures inclusive responses. Going forward, the utilization of human rights standards and COVID-19 specific UN tools and guidance, will ensure higher levels of equality, participation and non-discrimination (see United Nations, 2020) COVID 19 and Human Rights).

**Ensuring more flexible and responsive governance mechanisms and institutional coordination capacities will be particularly critical for the government, both at the local and central levels, as is creating a more integrated approach across government institutions. The capacities of local actors will need to be strengthened as they and others embrace the opportunities of an urban green recovery.**

A crisis of this scale stretches the human and institutional capacities of all countries. While in crisis management an *ad hoc* approach is sometimes inevitable; however, it is important to build more agile, responsive, and inclusive governance at local and central levels to prepare for additional shocks and build for long term recovery. There is also a particular need for innovation and tech-oriented solutions to governance issues that can also aid in transparency, information flows, and inclusiveness.

**Finally, it is essential to ensure informed decision-making based on the availability of gender-disaggregated and locally representative data, also taking advantage of various data lakes and new data sources.**

The assessment found that local institutions particularly did not have all the information they needed to make the best decisions for their communities. Information on the most affected populations, including age groups, gender, or socio-economic or geographical distributions of those tested and/or confirmed cases of COVID-19, has not been readily available. In many cases stakeholders have lacked channels of communication to express their needs and priorities to local institutions charged with responding to the crisis in local communities. **Informed decision-making requires readily available, timely, and good quality data on**

what is happening in the economy and society, including data on **actual needs as well as capacity to respond to those needs. Essential to this is having various channels for transparent communication and a dialogue between citizens and the state.** An effective response to the crisis requires improved efficiency in coordination and cooperation between different institutions and stakeholders both at the local level and between local and central institutional stakeholders, as well as active participation of civil society organizations.

In the following sections of this report we will present recommendations arising from the "COVID-19: Socio-Economic Impact Assessment" report for Serbia,<sup>4</sup> as they relate to the **six main chapters of response:**

1	health
2	social welfare and protecting people
3	jobs, economic response and recovery
4	macroeconomic response and multilateral collaboration
5	social cohesion and community resilience
6	environment and climate change

## APPROACH

This current response plan is set within the overall UN COVID-19 "recovery pathway" framework and follows the initial analysis and programmatic activities carried out by the UN system which began in March 2020 following the outbreak of the crisis. This response plan is based on the key gaps identified in the socio-economic impact assessment conducted earlier this year. That assessment relied upon official data related to the impact of COVID-19 and provided by government institutions as well as a series of specific assessments and surveys conducted by UN agencies and other research conducted by civil society organizations.

The socio-economic impact assessment was mainly focused on the period from March 2020 (when the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in Serbia) to May 2020. When data was available, the period observed was extend-

4 For the full report, see "COVID-19: Socio-Economic Impact Assessment" published by UN Serbia and UNDP, available at [https://serbia.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/seia\\_report%20%281%29.pdf](https://serbia.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/seia_report%20%281%29.pdf); see also accompanying press release dated September 28, 2020 and available at <https://serbia.un.org/en/92908-impact-covid19-serbia-new-report-and-call-action-united-nations>.

ed to June 2020 or July 2020. It primarily looked at the impact of (i) the spread of virus and (ii) suppression measures enacted to curb the spread of virus. This response plan constitutes "Phase 3" of the UN team in Serbia's response to COVID-19, is situated in the context of the UN's broader support in Serbia in the following phases:

## PHASE 1

### UN Country Preparedness and Response Plan ("CPRP") (March 2020 - June 2020).

The UN agencies in Serbia conducted an analysis of needs and gaps during the initial phase of the pandemic and proposed a response to the health and humanitarian crisis. A subsequent review report of this initial analysis and its recommendations was produced in June 2020.

## PHASE 2

UN publication "COVID-19: Socio-Economic Impact Assessment," aimed at understanding the mid and long-term impact of COVID-19 (April 2020 – September 2020), (available at [https://serbia.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/seia\\_report%20%281%29.pdf](https://serbia.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/seia_report%20%281%29.pdf)) based on:

- A data collection and fact-finding report with joint inputs from the government and UN Agencies;
- A review from an industry and sectoral perspective to identify the hardest-hit economic sectors and come to a tentative estimation of losses;
- Specific thematic assessments of COVID-19's impact on different areas, conducted by various UN agencies and including various field-based assessments in Serbia and in the broader Western Balkans regions, according to each agency's mandate and scope of work; and
- Preparation of the Socio-Economic Impact Assessment with the goal of presenting a comprehensive and concise picture of the impact of the crisis to date, to allow for informed decision making for future phases of the crisis.

## PHASE 5

Integration of Long-Term Recommendations in the UN Cooperation Framework (2021-2025) to be presented to the government in November 2020.

## PHASE 3

### COVID Recovery Strategy (September - October 2020).

Based on the findings of the UN-led "COVID-19: Socio-Economic Impact Assessment" for Serbia, this report presents recommendations based on the analysis laid out in the assessment and also details the value proposition of UN agencies and the strategic and programmatic actions planned in response. This report focuses on action steps that stakeholders across Serbia can take to address the medium and long-term needs of the crisis but also help build back better in pursuit of Agenda 2030 goals

## PHASE 4

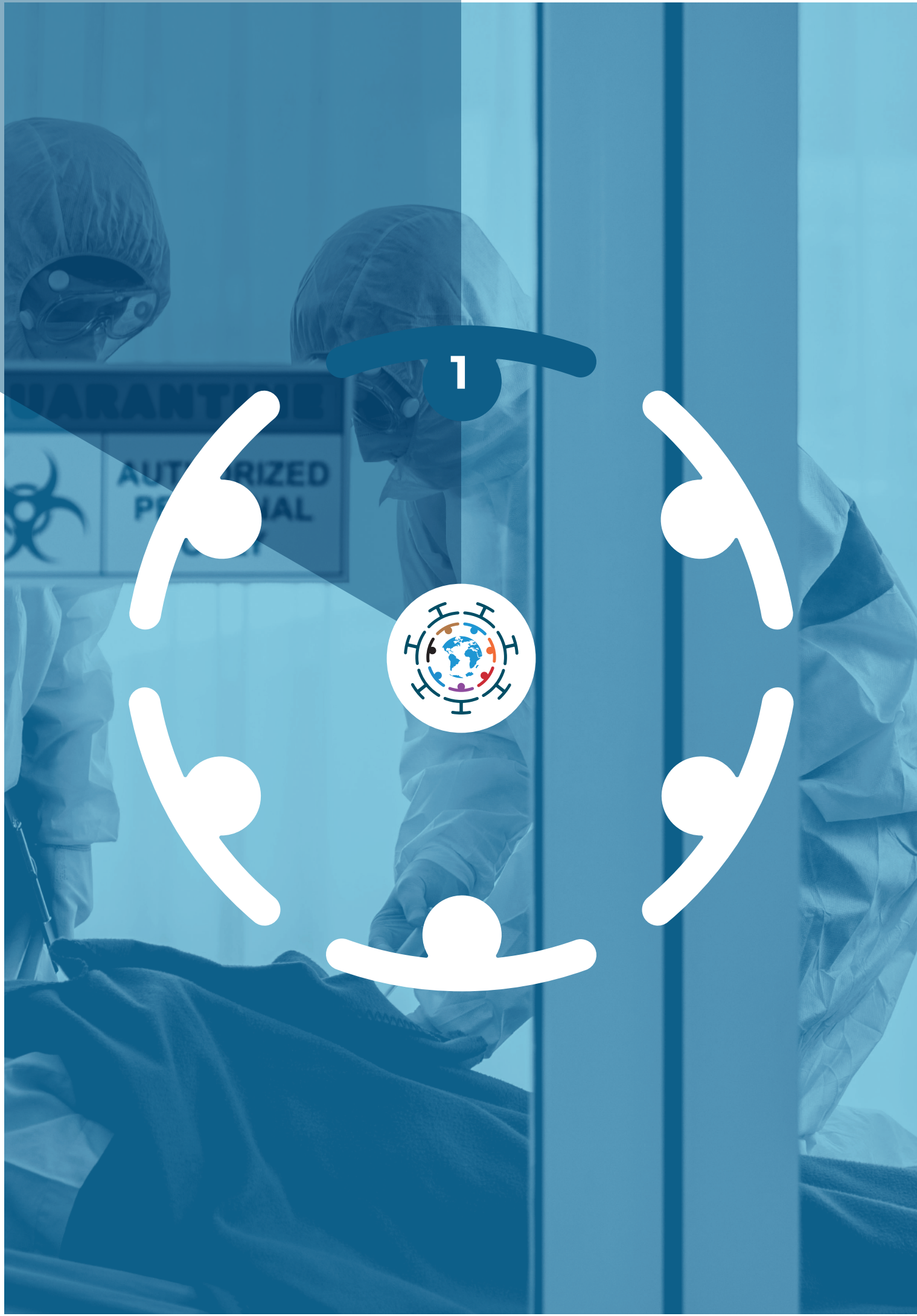
### Resource mobilization, implementation by UN agencies, counterparts and partners - Monitoring of COVID-19's Impact through Socio-Economic Indicators and Adjustments to the Response.

Since March 2020, the UN country team has mobilized additional expertise and resources to support the emergency response to COVID19. We have also re-purposed and adapted a number of existing programmes, to integrate COVID19 related approaches and activities. As of October 2020, we have engaged USD 53 million in such projects – out of which approx. USD 30m have been completed (including procurement of COVID19 medical equipment and supplies for about USD 24m).

We are now seeking an additional USD 44m – as per the table below, and further detailed in each chapter – covering short, mid and long term COVID19 related activities until the end of 2022.

	Total Budget (USD)	Funding Gaps (USD)
1. Health	7,280,000	6,595,000
2. Social welfare and protecting people	4,732,000	3,886,500
3. Jobs, economic response and recovery	9,730,000	9,700,000
4. Macroeconomic response and multilateral collaboration	2,183,200	1,683,200
5. Social cohesion and community resilience	5,520,000	5,450,000
6. Environment and climate change	16,662,800	16,623,800
	<b>46,108,000</b>	<b>43,938,500</b>





## 1

# Health First - Strengthening the Health System and Expanding Universal Access to Health Care

## CHAPTER 1

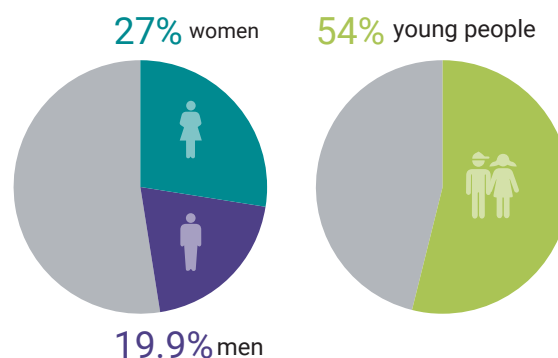
### OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

At the outset of the crisis, government responded relatively quickly and effectively to the first phase of the pandemic, allocating resources, introducing restrictive measures, and equipping medical personnel, mitigating the worst of potential health impacts. The Ministry of Health led and coordinated the health response in Serbia, as part of the governmental crisis management and response team. However, the easing of physical distancing and other restrictions was premature and led to a resurgence of the virus, particularly in July 2020 and August 2020. In late August 2020, the measures imposed by the government to stem new reported cases started to bear fruit, as the virus was contained within relatively manageable boundaries. The findings from the *COVID-19: Socio-Economic Impact Assessment* for Chapter 1: "Health First – Impact on Health Services and Systems" found that the health system in Serbia was faced with two key challenges:

1. insufficient capacity of the public health system to identify, isolate, test, and treat all cases of COVID-19 that emerged, and moreover to trace and quarantine applicable contacts of those infected and
2. insufficient capacity to dual-track efforts and provide regular health services while at the same time aggressively treating and addressing COVID-19 as an overarching national health crisis.

Additionally, all non-essential health procedures (including diagnostic or treatment, as well as elective surgeries) were temporarily suspended during the State of Emergency and only gradually reintroduced as macro-health conditions improved. Patients turned away from such diagnostic and treatment services during this time were particularly affected, as they were prevented from using public healthcare services and had to turn to private health services, which ultimately further increased the burden on private households for "out-of-pocket payments" and expenses (non-reimbursable payments directly incurred by the patient).

During this time approximately 27% of women and 19.9% of men experienced difficulties in accessing health services (UN WOMEN 2020b; UNFPA, 2020). These barriers were even more pronounced among young people, 54% of whom confirmed that they had restricted access to health services due to the crisis (UNICEF, 2020i).



Experienced difficulties in accessing health services

Mortality on a YoY basis did not increase during the months of March 2020, April 2020, and May 2020 (during this time period the number of deaths was, in total, 3% lower than the same period YoY) (SORS, 2020e). During the months of June 2020 and July 2020, the overall number of deaths from all causes was instead 14.2% higher compared to the same period YoY (Ibid.).

### OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

The government response to the COVID-19 crisis was undertaken in close and immediate collaboration with development partners and the UN family.

**During the first five months of the crisis, UN agencies were directly involved with national authorities, through advisory support, logistics support, and procurement of supplies and equipment, contributing a total value of approximately 20M EUR.**

Given the UN's close cooperation with the government at the outset of the crisis, and particularly in the health realm, the recommendations provided for this response plan have been uniquely informed by the UN's work in assisting government actors and civil society alike in navigating the crisis to date. Both on the short term and medium to long term, there are a number of recommendations that Serbia can undertake to improve outcomes in the health system area, all of which the UN and other partners can support.

**The human and physical resources for testing, contact tracing, treatment surveillance – as well as vaccination – all need to be further strengthened** so that Serbia is ready for any resurgence in infections of COVID-19 and other pathogens. Equally important is to secure optimal continuity of non-COVID-19 health services during the ongoing emergency. **An increase in capacity of health providers and health system management is needed to dual-track the health system and reinstate regular health services**, while at the same time the system will continue to provide COVID-19 health services for all population groups; this may include strengthening capacities for remote health services in order to better dual track regular services and in order to better reach COVID-19 affected populations.

**In the medium to long term, the priority should be strengthening human, institutional, and physical resources in the health sector**, including by building new hospitals and biosafety level laboratories, integrating public health emergency management into academic curricula, and upgrading the capacity for medical waste management by hospital and healthcare providers.

**In the longer term, the broader structural reforms already planned should resume and will make the health system more resilient in general, also more resilient for any future emergency.** This should include advancing universal health coverage, addressing relevant topics such as health financing, high out-of-pocket expenditures during and beyond the crisis, equitable access to health services for all people,<sup>5</sup> and more, developing a health care workforce strategy, and

conducting health technology assessment and introducing new technologies.

Part of these reforms should be to **strengthen public procurement of medicines, vaccines, and medical equipment/devices. Special attention should be paid to increasing digitalization in the health care sector as a part of the integrated health information system focusing on data collection and epidemiological surveillance.** Since non-communicable diseases ("NCDs") are the main cause of morbidity and mortality in Serbia, and there is a link between NCDs and COVID-19 related mortality, support for prevention and healthier lifestyle changes is crucial.

The health information system across Serbia needs to be upgraded to enable proper capture and analysis of social determinants and data disaggregation, each of which would optimally inform the policy process.

Lessons learned from the pandemic should be used to **enhance the resilience of management systems to future pandemic risks, and should be included in the national strategy** for disaster risk reduction, including by the stress testing disaster risk management systems against complex disaster risk scenarios (including pandemics).

Finally, multisectoral cooperation and coordination, especially within the social care sector at all levels of government – from local to national – should be an integral part of planning and include a strong equity lens. Multilateral coordination between the Ministry of Health, its affiliated institutions, international financial institutions, and the UN should be used to optimize the resources available in these trying times.

## Immediate to Mid-Term Recommendations

### **A Strengthen multisectoral cooperation and coordination among stakeholders.**

- With the social care sector at all levels for a better alignment of preventive strategies and actions and outreach to communities at risk;
- Between national and local and municipal bodies on the delegation of authority in situations such as pandemics, including crisis response and management and the management of resources;
- With international agencies and partners involved in the health sector, for an optimization of resources and actions; and
- With the private health sector businesses, to promote participation, flexibility, and innovation in crisis situations.

<sup>5</sup> The COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment for Serbia highlights the difficulty in accessing COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 related medical care for certain categories of people, as well as higher out-of-pocket expenditures incurred for using private health facilities during COVID-19 when patients could not be accommodated at public facilities for their routine health (non-COVID-19) health matters.

## **B Continue to focus on preventive and clinical activities related to COVID-19 prevention and response, slowing down the virus spread while boosting critical care surge capacity.**

- Strengthen Serbia's capacity for testing, contact tracing, and epidemiological investigation (including through expansion of laboratory capacities, increased training, procurement of essential equipment and supplies, and optimization around standardized processes);
- Expand COVID-19 surveillance systems and integrate COVID-19 surveillance into existing respiratory disease surveillance systems;
- Strengthen case management and infection prevention control (including through training and maintenance of sufficient levels of medicines, medical supplies and personal protective equipment);
- Strengthen communication and community engagement (for example, ensuring communication of essential information through diverse channels, including those tailored to the specific needs of different – and marginalized – groups in society);
- Strengthen and systemize disease control measures at borders, particularly during the active circulation of disease during pandemic heights;
- Streamline the integration of the private health sector into existing public sector COVID-19 prevention and clinical response processes, with validation of standards and protocols within the private sector; and
- Create and disseminate verified preventive measures across workplaces, with a special emphasis on food business operators, notably for transporters, traders, food processing units and farmers, all aimed at improving the handling of food and the protection of the health of employees and consumers.

## **C Secure and upgrade health sector infrastructure and workforce capacity in order to improve COVID-19 preventative measures and clinical response.**

- Finalize the recruitment, training, and posting of additional medical and other care personnel for effective staffing to respond to the crisis;
- Expand and strengthen protections for health and care workers against COVID-19 by improving infection control, prevention procedures, and the availability and use of personal protective equipment for this key element of the country's human infrastructure; and

- Continue to refurbish, expand, and standardize isolation units and other COVID-19 response units around the country.

## **D Ensure continuity of non-COVID-19 health services.**

- Review the health sector's capacity to serve non-COVID-19 patients (including through remote health care) and to sustain delivery of and access to essential healthcare for those who need it most, such as patients with NDCs, pregnant women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities, and other high risk groups;
- Maintain critical services, including core prevention and immunization programs;
- Develop mechanisms for monitoring accessibility of healthcare services for different groups of the population; and
- Strengthen mental health services, psychological support, and supporting services for the general population and for health professionals in particular, with a focus on vulnerable populations.

## **Medium to Long-Term Response and Preparedness**

- ### **E Develop a national COVID-19 plan for procurement of vaccines and implantation of a vaccination roll-out plan, including through the formation of a National Immunization Technical Advisory Group or similar group, and the development of an inclusive of communication strategy on COVID-19 vaccines as part of overall communication on the importance of vaccines.**

- ### **F Develop and strengthen Serbia's capacity for risk-based decision making across the healthcare sector.**

- Revise the all-hazard public health risk assessment at the national and subnational levels;
- Operationalize the national health emergency preparedness and response plan (designating key functions, providing training, undertaking simulation exercises, and conducting after-action reviews);
- Determine a way to cost and implement a National Action Plan for Health Security ("NAPHS"); and



- Improve data management in the healthcare sector by advancing the continuous collection of age and gender disaggregated data generated through systems of healthcare and social protection (during and outside emergencies) and making data regularly available to the public, institutions and civil society organizations.

## **G Continue to upgrade the healthcare system's physical infrastructure.**

- Strengthen hospital safety and readiness to manage emergencies, including through renovation or reconstruction of public health buildings to enhance their preparedness for infectious diseases health emergencies;
- Build two COVID-19 specialized hospitals, with multiple and adaptive pandemic functions;
- Strengthen laboratory capacity across the country, with biosafety level two and level three laboratories in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš, and Kragujevac;
- Equip primary healthcare centers and clinics for infectious diseases and for detection and response of infectious diseases in case of emergency (particularly if caused by high-threat pathogens); and
- Upgrade the country's capacity for medical waste management by better equipping hospital and healthcare providers in their waste management processes.

## **H Focus on standard-setting and strengthening of the healthcare workforce.**

- Establish a Public Health Emergency Operation Center ("PHEOC");
- Establish a center of excellence on International Health Regulation ("IHR") training; and
- Include public health emergency management into academic curricula.

## **I Facilitate setting up emergency procedures and protocols that improve biosecurity standards that protect both human lives and food production process.**

## **Longer Term Recovery Recommendations**

### **J Resume broader structural healthcare reforms to make the health system in Serbia more resilient for any emergency.**

- Advance universal health coverage (including addressing topics such as health financing, financial protection, equitable access to health services) and the high out-of-pocket expenditures often required to access healthcare;
- Strengthen the country's healthcare workforce strategy;
- Conduct a health technology assessment and embark on the introduction of new technologies; and
- Ensure access to health during emergencies for the most vulnerable – particularly youth, women, the elderly, people with disabilities, and those in rural areas.

### **K Strengthen the public procurement of medicines, vaccines and other medical equipment and devices. This may include implementing systemwide efficiencies, strengthening national production and regional production, and pooled procurement mechanisms at the regional level.**

### **L Develop a harmonized strategy for physical infrastructure improvements in the healthcare sector. Health infrastructure in the future needs to not only be climate resilient, but also integrate all the lessons learned from COVID-19 in terms of needs for isolation, physical organization, accessibility and other physical layout limitations.**

### **M Advance digitalization in the healthcare sector to better serve patients more quickly and efficiently while capturing and sharing key data across the country. This work will include developing an e-health strategy and action plan.**

### **N Continuously promote the advanced control of NCDs by including health in all policies and by promoting healthy public environments and individual behaviors (including promoting no smoking, physical exercise, nutrition, a reduction in air pollution, and other key behavioral health factors).**



**O Enhance the resilience of risk management systems to address future pandemic risk. The national strategy for disaster risk reduction should reflect systemic risk with a pandemic dimension, taking lessons learned from the current crisis and building on the stress testing of disaster risk management systems against complex disaster risk scenarios, both previously experienced and not yet experienced.**

**P Further strengthening of one health approach with additional focus on: risk management practices when it comes to risk identification, analysis, control, and monitoring to any biosafety risk (zoonosis or other transmissible diseases)**

## The UN Value Proposition

The UN brings in a wealth of international and national technical expertise, as well as resources to support the national health system in addressing the current COVID-19 crisis and beyond. Active in the health sector more than 20 years, the UN family was immediately involved in the first phase of Serbia's emergency response to COVID-19, following a comprehensive intervention strategy.

The **WHO** is the lead UN agency for health and has provided continuous technical assistance and guidance to the Ministry of Health in the fields of epidemiological surveillance (including epidemiological investigation, contact tracing, and reporting), laboratory diagnostics, clinical case management, infection prevention and control, communications, points of entry, logistics, maintaining essential health services, and others. The WHO's work with the Ministry of Health and across Serbia is in line with the Biannual Collaborative Agreement ("BCA"), the General and European programs of work, as well as with the international health regulations ("IHR"). In cooperation with other agencies, the WHO has contributed to the procurement of essential goods and the recruitment of essential personnel as Serbia responded to the COVID-19 crisis, as well as ensured the sustainability of influenza vaccine production and providing technical and financial backing to Public Health Emergency Operations Center ("PHEOC").

This support will continue going forward, and will be supplemented with work supporting other key priorities, include supporting the production and procurement of vaccines for preventable diseases, the move towards more universal health coverage and longer term health system strengthening, improvements in areas linked between the environment

and health, and interventions that improve health literacy and healthy behavior.

As part of its mission to support the government by assisting with project management, infrastructure, procurement, human resources and advisory services, **UNOPS** has been and will continue to work closely with the Ministry of Health and the WHO as well as other partners, including through the procurement of essential medical and non-medical items and through the recruiting of essential personnel during this time. Going forward, an important priority may be the renovation or reconstruction of public health buildings to enhance their preparedness for infectious disease and pandemic health emergencies, a task which UNOPS is uniquely qualified and ready for.

**UNFPA** has a unique capacity to advise in areas pertaining to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including on issues of gender-based violence. UNFPA applies a people-centered and human rights-based approach and uses its extensive understanding and data to provide support for the community-led programs. Key ongoing priorities of UNFPA include ensuring information delivery to vulnerable groups and access to sexual and reproductive health programs, based on needs assessment.

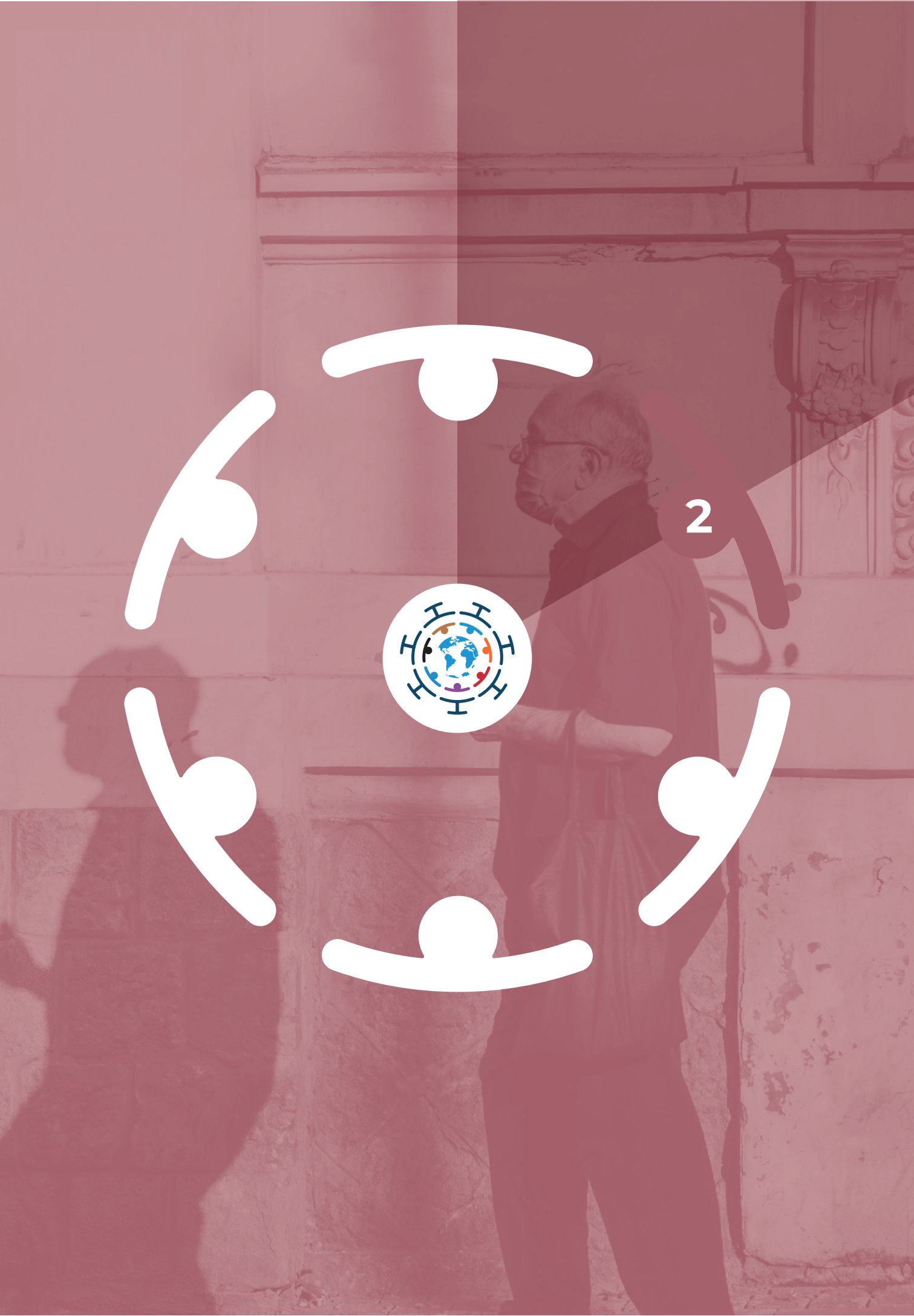
Within the framework of its mission of eradicating poverty, reducing inequality, and developing resistance to crises and natural disasters, **UNDP** will continue to contribute its expertise to the COVID-19 response in Serbia, including by equipping biosafety level two and level three laboratories to be established throughout Serbia, and assisting in the renovation of several healthcare facilities across the country, as well as building towards long-term recovery goals through specific assistance in the area of e-health, telemedicine, and remote health services.

**UNDRR** supports countries in reducing existing risk and preventing the creation of new risks. Within its mandate, it will support the revision of the national strategy for disaster risk reduction to reflect systemic risk with a pandemic dimension, taking into account learnings and lessons from the current COVID-19 crisis, and ensuring the national strategy's alignment with sustainable development goals and the Sendai Framework for disaster risk reduction.

**FAO** provides technical and analytical support to the government in developing solutions and tailored policies for protecting vulnerable groups and informal or seasonal workers, including by addressing food security, as well working to improve Serbia's competitiveness by providing specific solutions to enhance incomes in rural areas which are dependent on food production as an industry.

**Table 1** below provides an overview of the projects that the UNCT Serbia are planning to implement or are implementing as a response to the crisis, for which there are funding gaps. An additional table in the Annex (**Table A1**) lists projects that are also undertaken to respond and that are fully funded.

<b>TABLE 1.</b>		Total Budget (USD)	Funding Gaps (USD)
<b>Health System: Ongoing and planned activities with funding gaps</b>			
<b>1. Stronger capacity to identify, treat and follow up on cases of COVID-19</b>			
WHO and UNDP	Capacity building, technical assistance and guidance to the Ministry of Health (MoH) including: epidemiological surveillance, diagnostics, clinical case management, logistics, essential health services etc.	350,000	220,000
WHO and UNICEF	COVID-19 vaccination: procurement; perception change among health workers; reactivation of the National Immunization Technical Advisory group (NITAG) and sustainability of vaccine production.	210,000	200,000
IOM	Adaptation and digitalization of standards operating procedures (SOP) on management of ill travelers with immigration and border authorities.	60,000	60,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>620,000</b>	<b>480,000</b>
<b>2. Improved availability of quality, real time, disaggregated data and data analytics for informed decision making</b>			
UNICEF and UNDP	Support to: a) the Office for IT and eGovernment in establishing a central, integrated service for collection, storage, and reporting of COVID-19 statistical information and b) to the other relevant institutions in developing digital solutions	160,000	110,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>160,000</b>	<b>110,000</b>
<b>3. Improved communication and outreach</b>			
WHO and UNFPA	Risk communication activities, including behavioral analysis, communication materials on school reopening, use of influencers and community engagement.	150,000	75,000
UNICEF	Revision, dissemination and monitoring of implementation of WASH/epidemiological guidelines for prevention of COVID-19 in school settings.	50,000	40,000
UNICEF	Supporting persistent and partnership-based advocacy.	30,000	20,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>230,000</b>	<b>135,000</b>
<b>4. Higher flexibility and adaptability of the health system to unexpected shocks</b>			
UNOPS	Renovation or reconstruction of public health buildings and clinics to enhance their preparedness for infectious disease health emergencies.	4,000,000	4,000,000
WHO	Establishment of the Public Health Emergency Operation Center (PHEOC) at the national and sub-national levels.	500,000	500,000
UNICEF	Support to the MoH, health institutions and professional associations in ensuring continuity and quality of maternal, neonatal and child health care during COVID-19.	350,000	100,000
UNDRR and UNDP	Supporting the revision of the national strategy for DRR to incorporate pandemics and lessons from the current crisis, while also aligning with SDGs and the Sendai Framework.	20,000	20,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4,870,000</b>	<b>4,620,000</b>
<b>5. Stronger inclusivity of the health system</b>			
FAO	Support mechanisms for small and medium-sized farmers and businesses to ensure information flow related to risks for current and future health crises.	1,200,000	1,200,000
UNICEF	Supporting the MoH in providing pediatric home visiting (Roma health mediators and nurses) and early childhood intervention services by teleworking with families.	200,000	50,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,400,000</b>	<b>1,250,000</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>7,280,000</b>	<b>6,595,000</b>



2

# Social Welfare and Protecting People

# 2

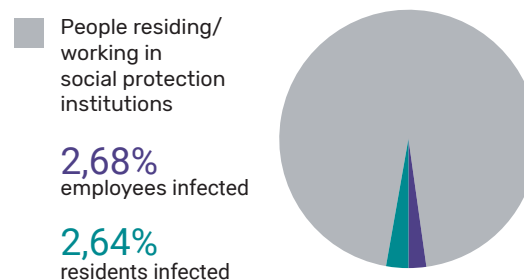
## CHAPTER 2

### OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

The experience of rapidly adjusting social protocols in all people's daily lives as a result of COVID-19 – from social interactions to working environments, public transport to education – has exposed some gaps and opportunities for the government and development stakeholders to further strengthen the social welfare system in Serbia, including the opportunity to improve access to services for vulnerable groups. Serbia's projected fall in GDP as a result of COVID-19's economic impact will have a negative impact on the already strained social protection budget in the country. Depending on the trajectory of the crisis, 125,000 to 327,000 citizens of Serbia could become newly poor as a result of COVID-19 (WB, 2020b). The findings from the *COVID-19: Socio-Economic Impact Assessment* for Chapter 2: "Social Welfare and Protecting People" determined a number of key learnings for how COVID-19 has, and will continue, to impact the provision of social services across the country. To continue to support all people's in the provision of crucial services (such as health and education) but also to support the most vulnerable, the adequacy and coverage of state social services expenditures will have to be revisited, as the initial wave of the crisis has revealed some weaknesses in governmental support schemes.

The "health first" approach initially taken by Serbia in the first weeks and months of the crisis was primarily focused on fighting the health risks of COVID-19, and it viewed the crisis through a social lens anchored on preventing infection among older persons. The government recognized the over 65 population as the most vulnerable to infection and introduced a number of measures to protect them as a group.

These measures proved to be effective in protecting against infection, as only 2.64% of people residing in social protection institutions and 2.68 % of their respective employees were infected by May 13, 2020 (a date that marks a high point of the crisis) (IDWG, 2020).



However, these relatively positive health outcomes came at a cost to the personhood of those residing in social protection institutions. Isolation and social distancing measures led to an acute sense of loneliness – the inability to be physically near the people most important to them upended many of these individuals' routines and prevented them from feeling included in the social fabric.

On the other hand, the general lockdown policy and physical distancing restrictions negatively affected the provision of other general and community-based social services for many vulnerable groups across Serbia and challenged the effectiveness of social welfare programs. Children and young people were not recognized as a group particularly at risk, but as potential virus transmitters who could (sometimes unwittingly) more quickly spread COVID-19 among those they interacted with. Kindergartens, schools, and universities were closed early in the crisis to try and prevent this. The entire education system was required to switch to remote teaching and learning, within the limited resources



that were available to it, affecting over 1.2M children and young people across the country (GoS, 2020e).

During the health crisis, the already unequal access to safe water, sanitation and electricity in substandard settlements generated additional health and social risks for the mostly Roma population residing in them (OHCHR and SIPRU, 2020). The response did not effectively address these risks and impacts. Additionally, the general lockdown negatively affected the already vulnerable position of homeless people, with insufficient shelter capacities and a discontinuation of services provided in the community. The rights of persons with disabilities, their access to personal assistance, and assistance for their community inclusion and visibility was also disrupted to some degree.

The number of reported cases of domestic violence decreased during the State of Emergency, while psycho-social support to women in situations of violence provided through emergency helplines increased by 30% compared to the pre-COVID-19 period (UN Women, 2020a). The seemingly contradictory data points – that on the one hand official reports of domestic violence decreased, but on the other hand usage of (primarily) community-led hotlines increased, points to an issue that needs to be more deeply examined. It may be that the isolation and physical distancing measures required during the State of Emergency made victims less likely to want to interact with official channels of support, thus looking to rely on channels such as phone lines that do not require physical contact. Further attention to this issue may help lead to greater insights on how this population can best be served. The stimulus and social protection measures introduced by the government consisted of a combination of cash and in-kind assistance, but many groups who needed assistance most direly found themselves left out of or under-included in benefits programs, such as families with children, children, residents of substandard housing settlements (primarily Roma populations), the homeless or those at risk of homelessness, and those who do not possess personal identification and travel documents.

**Social services were already insufficiently available across all municipalities before COVID-19 and many of them were halted entirely with the COVID-19 outbreak. Systematic gender gaps in accessing social services were observed, with women more frequently reporting difficulties in accessing benefits and services.**

Within the limited fiscal and budgetary space stakeholders will need to rely on both existing and new, innovative methods and tools to ensure that those who are at the greatest risk of poverty and social exclusion do not fall behind even more so in the shadow of COVID-19.



March, 2020,  
Volunteers in Zrenjanin

## OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

While the COVID-19 outbreak affects all segments of society, the poorest and most vulnerable have been shown to be particularly at risk. Because of this, the country's social protection response must consider differentiated impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable groups, as well as those shouldering the additional burden of unpaid care work. The Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran, and Social Affairs (the "*Ministry of Labor*") has coordinated the country's social protection response; while the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development (the "*Ministry of Education*") coordinated the national response on sustained (and distance) based learning during the emergency. The UN, being the largest international actor on social protection and basic services, has supported this response through: (1) procurement and logistics, (2) outreach and strategic and public education communications, and (3) advisory support to the abovementioned ministries, for a total value of about 8M USD since the crises began. To mitigate any negative social impact from COVID-19 on the poorest and most vulnerable populations over the coming months and years, Serbia should undertake the following immediate, mid and long-term measures across the following key areas.

**Social protection** – In order to effectively reach the most vulnerable and "newly poor," the country should adjust and



scale up cash transfer programs to respond to the immediate economic impacts of COVID-19. As discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 of this report, a temporary basic income (“TBI”) scheme could be considered. In the longer term, under the recovery phase, the social protection system should further enhance its capacities to implement cost-effective financial social assistance programs, including through better linking social assistance beneficiaries to employment programs that support their inclusion into the labor market on a longer term basis. The continuity of social services, as well as access to shelters for children, women, homeless and families at risk, as well as migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, should be ensured through solutions tailored to these groups’ needs. Multisectoral coordination, including coordination with relevant civil society organizations, should be intensified to utilize the potentials of all sectors and stakeholders.

**Education system** – In the short-term, the focus of education system work should remain to be on ensuring children’s wellbeing and protection to sustain the newly introduced “blended” schooling model<sup>6</sup> and provide accessible learning for all children, preferably in schools where communities are able to safely do so. Specific models and opportunities for children from low-income families should be also developed to ensure access to the most vulnerable children who depend on school for not just their education but as a safe physical space. In the long term, investments should focus on the creation of a quality education system that is more resilient to the COVID-19 crises (and could be resilient to other crises), including through a focus on digitalization of education, increasing the competencies of teachers, implementing quality assurance programs and engaging parents and families as an essential aspect of the educational system.

**Prevention of domestic violence and gender-based violence and provision of psycho-social support** – During the temporary lockdown at the outset of the COVID-19 crisis, the data on rates of violence against women in Serbia was contradictory.

**Official police data on the number of violent cases reported during this time period decreased, while emergency or “SOS” helplines reported a 30% increase in services provided to victims and their families.**



To overcome this discrepancy, the protection systems for this vulnerable group must be upgraded and innovative models of protection and service delivery (whether through remote or other access points) should be re-defined. In the short term this could be done by introducing or scaling up new online models for reporting violence and receiving psycho-social support, while on a longer-term basis, systems for violence prevention, protection services and justice for children should be strengthened.

## Immediate to Mid-Term Recommendations

### A Social protection

- Scale up and expand resilient and pro-poor social protection systems by supporting the Ministry of Labor in designing, adjusting, and implementing cash transfer programs;
- Scale up and expand humanitarian aid systems and protocols to facilitate distribution of in-kind and livelihood support to the most vulnerable populations and those at risk of poverty (the newly poor, including asylum seekers, refugees, Romas and migrants);
- Support local social services to ensure access to shelters and continuity of basic services during crisis times, securing support to children, women, home-

<sup>6</sup> The 2020-2021 school year in Serbia started under a “blended” schooling model, allowing smaller groups of students attending classes in person for up to 50% of the normal class time, while the remaining 50% of the normal class time is organized on-line or through distance learning modules.

less and families at risk, as well as to migrants, asylum seekers and refugees; and

- Strengthen cooperation and coordination between general social protection sector offices and specialized service providers (oftentimes civil society organizations) to ensure continuity of and access to essential services.

## B Education

- Sustain the newly introduced “blended” schooling model by ensuring the wellbeing and protection of children in schools (and at home in their new “home” schools) through active monitoring of “WASH” (water, sanitation, and hygiene) and other key health indicators;
- Increase competencies and support to teachers who are also undergoing distance learning for the first time, through professional training programs on alternative learning methods;
- Ensure remedial education to compensate for lost instructional time, especially for the most vulnerable children who may fall behind their class levels;
- Devise comprehensive policies for improving the quality of education for migrants, including provision of necessary technical equipment, psycho-social support, and improvement of pedagogic practices of teachers so that they can better educate this at-risk group; and
- Ensure sufficient staffing levels for educators and providers that have played an invaluable role in providing educational support for the most vulnerable children – returnees and Roma children - thus helping ensure continued and higher levels of outreach to the Roma community.

## C Prevention of domestic violence and gender-based violence and provision of psycho-social support

- Strengthen, adapt, and upscale the availability of protection services for victims of domestic and gender-based violence and their families, including devising a digital reporting system for instances of domestic and gender-based violence and flexibly adapted operations for emergency, or “SOS,” helplines so that these critical services can continue to be provided in a remote context and be resilient to future crises;
- Strengthen, adapt, and upscale the availability of psycho-social support programs for the vulnerable and at-risk (including women with disabilities, older wom-

en, women in the informal economy and with no income, minorities, children, victims of human trafficking, and persons housed in residential care facilities and in asylum and reception centers); and

- Support distribution of information on how to prevent and report domestic and gender-based violence and where to seek help during emergencies.

## Medium to Long-Term Response and Preparedness

### D Social protection

- Improve access to and efficiency of social protection systems by adjusting the “Social Card Registry” and “Social Protection Information System” for screening and enhancing the communication with beneficiaries of protection programs and services;
- Scale up and adapt social assistance schemes by introducing evidence-based vertical or horizontal expansions of existing programs to meet beneficiaries’ needs;
- Strengthen capacities at the local level to introduce socially innovative and integrated services responding to needs of the most vulnerable groups in emergency and crisis situations, such as COVID-19; and
- Mobilize government support for specialized services providers (oftentimes civil society organizations) through institutional grants and project-based funding allowing organizations better resilience to serve vulnerable populations in an ongoing manner and throughout unexpected crises.

### E Education

- Develop specific learning models and provide conditions and opportunities for online learning for children from low-income and vulnerable families, including refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers;
- Adapt the school pedagogy system to different modalities of educational delivery, including blended learning; and
- Introduce mental health and violent extremism prevention programs for students in secondary schools.

## F Prevention of domestic violence and gender-based violence and provision of psycho-social support

- Strengthen multisectoral cooperation and community engagement to ensure a functional referral system for victims seeking assistance is in place across all sectors, for continuity and access to essential services during emergencies; and
- Increase the provision of psycho-social support and mental health support to vulnerable migrants, including through specialized training for frontline workers who are working with this particularly vulnerable group.

tection of children, digitalization of Serbia's education system nationwide, the increased skills competencies of teachers, further reliance on quality assurance and activities which engage parents and families in children's education;

- The social services sector in Serbia should see **rapidly scaled up protection systems in key areas** such as violence prevention, justice for children, and care and protection services; and
- There should be increased capacity at all levels (national, subnational and local) in cross-cutting areas to **ensure inclusive, universal, age and gender responsive, equitable rights-based services**, including services that address gender-based violence through risk mitigation and increased availability of response services.

## Longer Term Recovery Recommendations

To intensify and accelerate recovery efforts, Serbia should focus on strengthening its systems, while being flexible and developing new and innovative rights-based approaches to service delivery to supplement current system cohesion.

- **The social protection system should ensure that no one is left behind** by informing all constituents (including service delivery providers, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders) of any changes to social protection measures, by adopting social service policies based on disaggregated data analyses (including data that is based on gender, disability, age, and is location specific), and by enhancing the cost-effectiveness of financial social assistance programs, including through better linking social assistance beneficiaries to employment programs that support their inclusion into the labor market so that these financial assistance interventions are linked with longer term survive and thrive opportunities;
- **Local self-governments should ensure systemic solutions for housing of vulnerable groups**, including refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers, people in a situation of homelessness, the Roma community, and persons at risk of statelessness (inhabitants of substandard settlements with no or limited access to safe water, proper sanitation and sewage, electricity or continuous income);
- Serbia should build back **a more resilient and effective education system for quality education and increased learning** outcomes that includes improved learning, better access to quality education for the most vulnerable children, a focus well-being and pro-

## The UN Value Proposition

UN agencies will collectively work with institutions in creating an uninterrupted provision of services and protection. The UN will continue responding to the crisis through risk mitigation and response services, along with adapting programming in the context of COVID-19 measures for safe, accessible, and quality social protection responses and people-oriented services.

**UNICEF** as a lead UN agency for social protection and education of youth has been providing technical assistance and guidance to the government on the impact of COVID-19 to social sectors (education, children, social protection, and health). This support will continue, and going forward, key priorities will include improved access to mental health and psycho-social services for youth, capacity building of caregivers for online resilience, increased connectivity and IT equipment for residential facilities, along with interventions which are aimed at bridging the digital gap for the most vulnerable children.

**UNESCO**, with a global mandate to build peace through international cooperation in education, sciences, and culture will support the development of educational tools for the prevention of violent extremism among adolescents, a threat that may be increasing and should be addressed as a consequence of schools' closures.

**OHCHR** is supporting government, civil society, and other stakeholders in providing policy advice on human rights mainstreaming and "leave no one behind" – the central promise of Agenda 2030. OHCHR will continue to monitor access to basic services and rights in substandard settlements and assess the impact of the COVID-19 health cri-

ses on anti-discrimination efforts for vulnerable groups and people at risk.

Ending violence against women and girls is a key strategic priority for **UN Women**. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, UN Women increased its support to initiatives addressing violence against women, and has continued to strengthen the capacities of other women's organizations providing innovative solutions to enhance access to services during the lockdown period and beyond, particularly for women from marginalized groups.

**UNFPA**, with its unique expertise on the status of older people, is focused on providing policy recommendations to the Ministry of Labor on the protection of older people during the COVID-19 health emergency. In parallel, UNFPA is supporting enhanced access to sexual and gender-based violence services for refugees and migrant women and girls affected by COVID-19 pandemics in Serbia.

Both **UNOPS** and **UNDP** have been actively supporting local self-governments and communities in improving social protection services following the pandemic's outbreak, including the renovation and building-up of key communal infrastructure in substandard settlements, strengthening local initiatives for inclusion of Roma, and the creation of the rapid response facilities.

**UNHCR** has been supporting the sustainable integration of refugees affected by COVID-19 pandemics in Serbia through free legal aid, financial, education, and employment support.

**IOM** is working with the government to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on migration management, providing essential services and assistance to migrants (including those in irregular living or working situations facing increasing vulnerabilities) and assisting service providers by equipping them with tools and methodologies to deliver effective migration management services.



Syrian Mother with three children in one of the Asylum Centers near Belgrade.

With specific expertise on food security and a goal to ensure access to enough high-quality food, **FAO** is providing support to the government for improved access to income for livestock farmers (a group that is particularly hard hit by the COVID-19 crisis) and facilitating multi-sectoral coordination for social and pension protection across the agriculture sector.



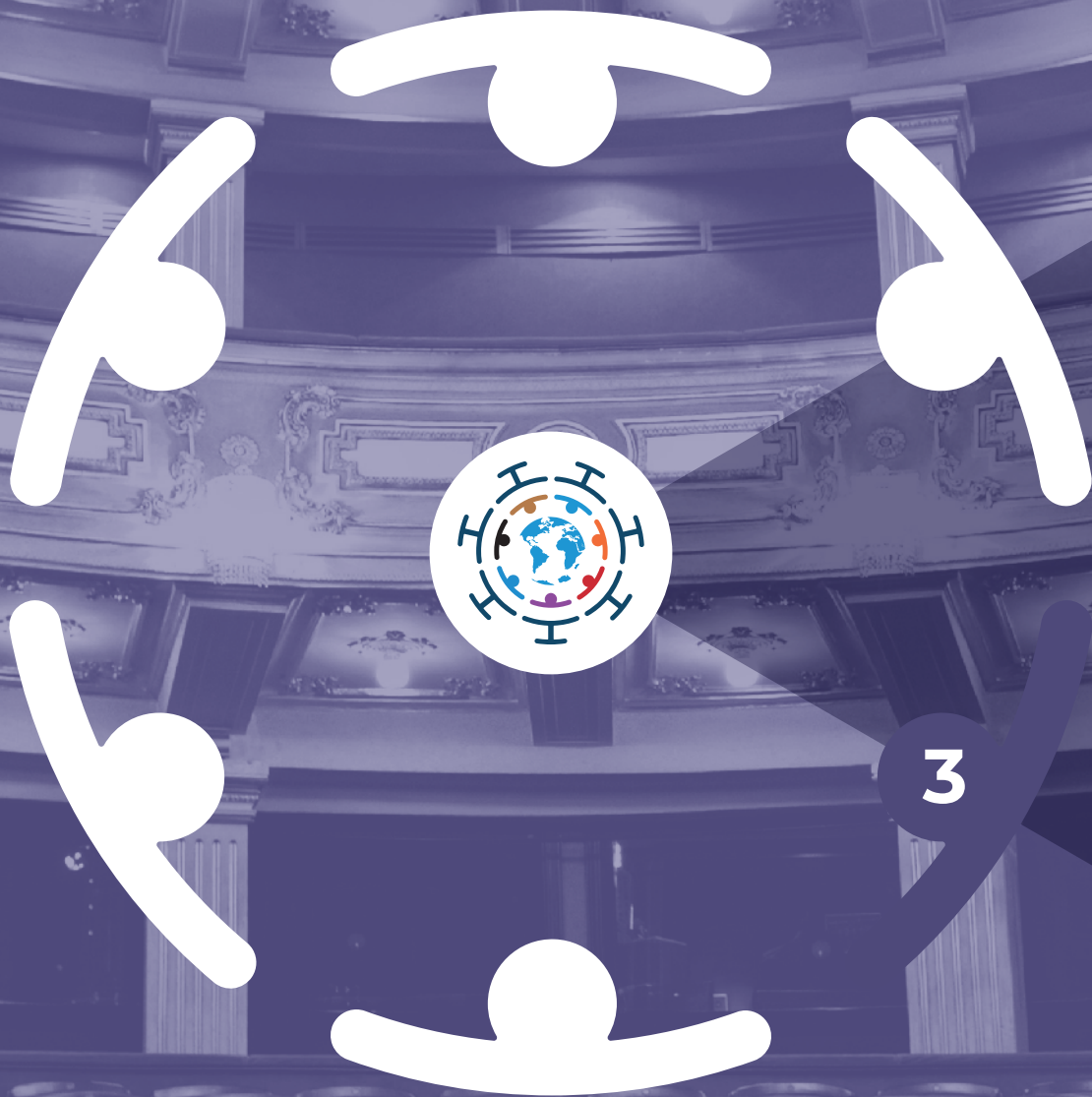
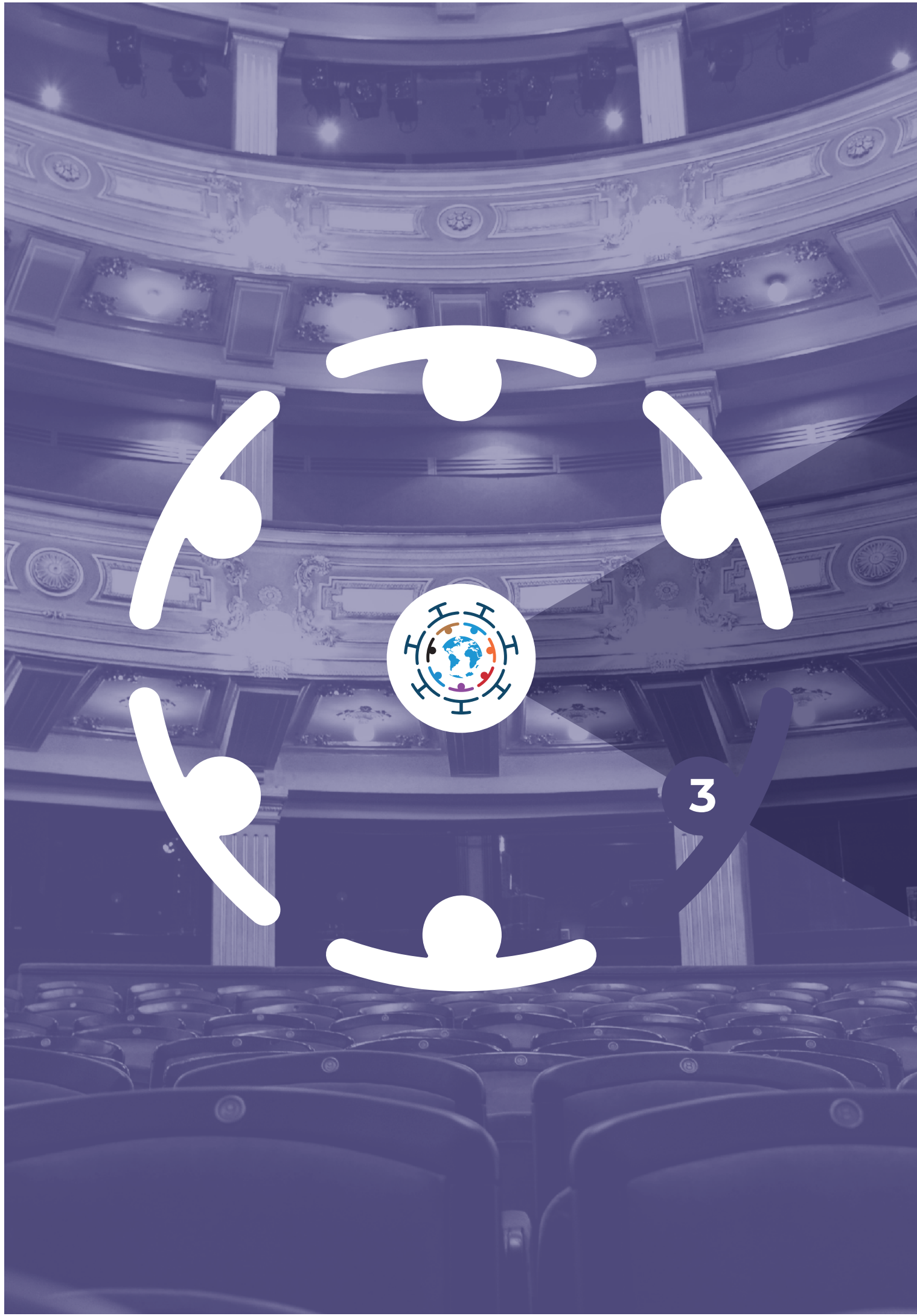
**Table 2** below provides an overview of the projects that the UNCT Serbia are planning to implement or are implementing as a response to the crisis, for which there are funding gaps. An additional table in the Annex (**Table A1**) lists projects that are also undertaken to respond and that are fully funded.

**TABLE 2.**

**Social Welfare and Protecting People: List of ongoing and planned activities with funding gaps (USD)**

		Total Budget	Funding Gaps
<b>1. Stronger social protection and welfare system</b>			
FAO/UN WOMEN/ IOM /UNOPS/ UNICEF/ OHCHR	Strengthening social protection and services provision for vulnerable groups (i.e. vulnerable groups of women, disadvantaged children and families, migrants in vulnerable situations, persons with disabilities in institutions etc) through inter-sectorial and intergenerational dialogue, assessments, evidence based policies, community engagement, digital outlets and online database systems, legal assistance etc.	2,804,000	2,114,000
UNICEF and UNFPA	Supporting access to information, connectedness and digital literacy for older people in long-term care facilities and communities and for children in alternative care. Upgrade and sustainability of an online information and knowledge-sharing platform for child protection service delivery.	790,000	725,000
FAO	Increasing access to income, social and pension protection for the agriculture and the livestock sector including by providing animal feed and health care and by facilitating multi-stakeholder processes	280,000	280,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3,874,000</b>	<b>3,119,000</b>
<b>2. Improved psychosocial support</b>			
IOM/UNFPA/ UNICEF/WHO/ UNFPA	Psychosocial support for both caregivers/social service staff and beneficiaries (children,youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, COVID-19 patients and their families, refugees and migrants) including by awareness raising, scaling up support, rollout of the accredited curriculum, helplines, psychological first aid etc.	358,000	288,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>358,000</b>	<b>288,000</b>
<b>3. Increased GBV prevention for groups at risk</b>			
UN Women	Increased GBV prevention through online services and support to policy and regulatory frameworks.	500,000	479,500
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>500,000</b>	<b>479,500</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>4,732,000</b>	<b>3,886,500</b>





3

# Jobs, Economic Response, and Recovery

# 3

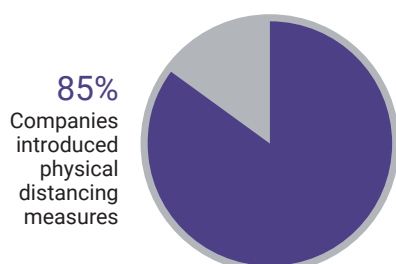
## CHAPTER 3

### OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

**The Serbian economy was hit hard by COVID-19, but businesses in general demonstrated short-term resilience.**

The severity of the impact was moderated by a robust macroeconomic environment, the distinctive structure of Serbia's economy, relatively lower integration of Serbian businesses into the global supply chain networks, and businesses own financial resources which they relied on to face immediate liquidity issues. A review of the impact of COVID-19 on jobs and the economy in Serbia, looking at Chapter 3 of the *COVID-19: Socio-Economic Impact Assessment* "Jobs, Economic Response, and Recovery," shows that on the whole, companies demonstrated short-term resilience through relatively the fast operational and financial adjustments businesses were able to make.

Most companies switched to remote work and where this was not possible, due to the nature of the work, as many as 85% of companies introduced physical distancing measures (CEVES, 2020).



tained the crisis this way) (CEVES, 2020), while the government's fiscal measures to protect businesses were also generally well received.

In addition to the jobs lost thus far, the jobs that remain are still subject to a significant drop in productivity due to adjusted working norms and a high loss in the overall number of working hours being contributed to the economy (estimated at a loss of 510,000 full time equivalent ("FTE") work hours in the second quarter of 2020 alone) (SORS, 2020c).

While the economy showed solid resilience, the negative impacts were felt in certain industries, such as in hospitality, culture and entertainment, transport, and automotive industries. Workers in the informal economy and in small and medium sized farms, both of which did not have access to government assistance, were also severely hit. Economic resilience in the longer term is not certain.

If the pandemic is not contained, the negative economic impacts could grow as financial resources are depleted to deal with the health aspects of the crisis but also the impact to individuals and businesses. Continued investment in small and medium sized enterprises ("SMEs") to improve broad access to finance, digital transformation, e-commerce operations and delivery infrastructure will pay dividends in the future. Early signs suggest a move towards geographically closer supply chains.

### OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

The government's initial support was generous and timely, despite not being targeted to only those in need. This support needs to be continued, however, and further and better targeted to address the greatest needs, which likely means targeting this type of assistance in the future only to those

The marked liquidity shock to businesses was buffered primarily by businesses' own financial reserves (63% sus-

business sectors that were hardest hit, to women in the labor market, to youth, and to the informal workers that were not reached by earlier measures deployed at the outset of the crisis yet who are disproportionately affected by the economic downturn.

**As an immediate and continuous response to the ongoing crisis, the key priority is to save jobs and help firms to survive.**

Immediate response measures include helping firms implement health and safety measures for workers and providing sufficient liquidity, focusing first on the sectors most impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. This can include grant support and could then move progressively towards self-financing or other bank financing structures and opportunities. The government should pay attention to financially supporting and reaching the most vulnerable workers, such as informal workers, seasonal workers, and workers in a state of material deprivation. These are the workers most in need of financial stimulus and government support measures. Finally, the immediate response should address gender roles and unequal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, particularly in an environment that we are now living in where the burdens of being contained to home (for working, schooling, and more) may exacerbate already unequal distribution of duties.

**Going forward, it is crucial to support building a resilient private sector.** Actions in the future should be based on a more granular understanding of the multiple impacts on different sectors of the economy, and of the level of preparedness and capacity to manage risk by micro, small and medium enterprises (“MSMEs” – as a vector for local job creation).

The country’s ability to reduce COVID-19’s impact on future jobs and economic activity depends not only on its ability to contain the pandemic, but also on firms’ adaptability to global and local disruptions.

While there are many factors impacting firms’ resilience, three important aspects need to be supported: operational resilience, financial resilience, and market resilience.

**Digital transformation of companies is one of the key horizontal factors that enables resilience.** Helping firms to adopt digital technologies is necessary for ensuring safety (i.e. through reduced face to face interactions), efficiency (through automation of ordering and customer interactions) and higher productivity (i.e. through machine learning, data analytics), but also adaptability. Firms’ speed and agility require building capacity to collect data and manage overall

crisis through informed decision making. Also, eCommerce is one of the big opportunities that has emerged during the crisis – the adoption of eCommerce in a widespread manner by firms big and small across Serbia will require further technical and other support, including support in improving the entire delivery infrastructure within the country, which has proven to be underdeveloped to meet the needs of a sophisticated eCommerce-based and technology-enabled business system.

**Data collection and information sharing between sectors and on all levels becomes crucial.** This refers to both government and private sectors, as well as civil society and civic sector organizations. Information sharing with and among firms is essential during crisis, and this element of information sharing can be improved to prepare the Serbian economy for future crises and shocks.



Interior of old National Theatre with seats, balconies (galleries) in Belgrade, Serbia.

**Several sectors have demonstrated great agility in responding to the crisis, such as information and communications technology, agriculture and food production, local tourism, and e-commerce.** Attention should be paid to supporting sector resilience and strengthening key enablers in each sector and across sectors: value chains, transport networks, alternative access to customers, quality of services and local infrastructure, banking regulatory frameworks, access to financing, and training.





Protection measure at stand at market place during Covid-19 outbreak.

**The introduction of economic incentives towards a “green” and circular economy could provide important opportunities for firms in response to the crisis.** For example, firms can be supported in building mobility system in cities that are clean, adaptable, and interconnected, and that meet climate targets. For example, with increased home deliveries during crisis and even more increased use of plastic packaging, it becomes even more important to increase recycling through better waste collection and a switch to different types of packaged materials that are better for the environment. The government can support material reuse and recycling infrastructures and offer incentives for green investments or provide support green financial instruments.

**In the medium to long term in the employment sector,** the focus should be on new strategies, policies and action plans to support the country’s recovery, including the “New Employment Strategy and Action Plan” and the “Youth Employment Programme.” These need to be revised considering the impact of the pandemic and should be gender responsive and fully consulted with all relevant partners.

**In the longer term,** efforts to improve jobs and the economy should concentrate on promoting smart, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth, reforms to address informal labor market activities and creating better decent work opportunities for the vulnerable groups on the labor market.

**Finally, we recommend using this recovery opportunity to align private sector activities and investments with the Agenda 2030.** This means inciting investors, banks, and businesses of all sizes to embed the SDGs into their decision making and practices and supporting governments to establish enabling policy and regulatory environments while facilitating multi-stakeholder partnerships.



## Immediate to Mid-Term Recommendations

### **A Strengthen real time data collection, analysis, and knowledge sharing.**

- Establish a platform for near real-time tracking of COVID-19’s impacts on different sectors of the economy. The platform should consolidate data from different official sources and alternative and private sources (for example, satellite data, data from commercial operators, and other sources) to provide warning signals and help in planning targeted economic emergency support measures;
- Build both a baseline and granular understanding of where small and medium businesses are now, in terms of their understanding and managing of the current pandemic risks, their level of preparedness for future risks and economic shocks, and any potential bottlenecks that would inhibit further investment into this segment;
- Create a quick response and information sharing system specifically for agricultural producers and larger or exporting companies, through existing and newly created support systems and associations for preventing and buffering temporary domestic and export



markets disruptions affecting the agricultural sector; and

- Develop an SDG Investor Map, a targeted platform of country-level data that highlights the development impact as well as the business opportunity of “Belt and Road Initiative” investments (or, investments focused on connectivity for goods through a focus on transport, communications, and energy) in relevant sectors, subsectors, sub-regions and, more granularly, proven business models.

## **B Enhance micro, small, and medium enterprises (“MSMEs”) in their operational and financial resilience.**

- Provide sector-specific and government-backed or international financial institution-backed financial support to the most impacted small business sectors;
- Support MSMEs in implementing e-commerce solutions to ensure they can adapt their activities to the post-COVID-19 context;
- Support MSMEs in obtaining equipment, software and increasing their capacities in the areas of finance, innovation, and digital transformation. This support should focus first on sectors most impacted by the COVID-19 crisis (hospitality, retail, and others).
- Engage the banking and insurance sectors, local self-governments and international financial institutions in financing MSMEs’ investments in workplace adaptation measures, for adherence to health and safety measures, or other adaptation measures which allow the business to continue running, such as work from home arrangements; and
- Support the food and agricultural sector by raising awareness and knowledge of current health procedures, as well as provide targeted financial assistance for investments needed to improve biosecurity for MSME food sector employees and, ultimately, their consumers.

## **C Provide support to the most vulnerable sectors and most vulnerable workers.**

- Raise awareness among informal sector workers on health and safety recommendations and options for obtaining income during the health crisis, with special attention paid to vulnerable informal worker groups and women;
- Provide secondary raw material collectors (recyclers, etc.) with decent employment opportunities, particularly during the crisis; and

- Direct immediate financial support and social service support to the most vulnerable workers in the informal economy and workers living in a state of material deprivation, as well as seasonal workers who lost their livelihood (partially or fully) due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Medium to Long-Term Response and Preparedness**

### **D Create a supportive environment for economic operators to take advantage of new and emerging market opportunities and to engage in a circular and inclusive economy.**

- Enhancing MSMEs’ bankability by building their capacity to absorb finance from different sources. This includes providing new capital market instruments, equity-based finance, microfinance, but also incentives for banks to expand their client base. Increasing MSMEs’ bankability would include allowing them access to a wider range of financial instruments (both equity and debt-based) to help them address current status and also prepare for future crises (whether future economic shocks from COVID-19 or future crises altogether);
- Support the technological and digital transformation of MSMEs, to increase their competitiveness in domestic and foreign markets;
- Fund economic infrastructure projects that contribute to new jobs creation;
- Support retraining systems to ensure workers have the skills required for the post-COVID economy;
- Support local self-governments’ efforts to improve business services and establish a more conducive business environment; and
- Strengthen business support services at local level, including strengthening assistance to MSMEs in reaching metrics that show tangible and verifiable positive impact to the environment and climate change, as well as increase local jobs in green sectors (as detailed in Chapters 4 and 6).

### **E Provide specific support to businesses’ participation in regional and global supply chains, so that they may adapt and take advantage of identified trends.**

- Identify and removing priority parafiscal barriers (such as taxes on specific goods and services) as well as other bottlenecks in supply chains;
- Create efficient and cost-effective solutions to respond to the specific challenges of food supply chains (including but not limited to challenges related to transport, marketplace selling, payment, quality schemes, and inclusion);
- Build the capacity of MSMEs to implement emergency management and continuity management solutions; and
- In agriculture, preserve incomes from exports – even during market disruption- through innovation within value chains, and support access to new agricultural markets in light of seasonality and the specific sensitivities and timing requirements of food sales.

## **F Re-assess and, as necessary, reform legislative frameworks and policies.**

- Assess and, as necessary, adjust the labor and social welfare legislative framework to the new circumstances we find ourselves in (with tele-working, newly identified essential services, and other learnings), and also with a gender inclusive lens accounting for the changing pressures and responsibilities across gender roles;
- Develop a “Youth Employment Programme” with a pilot guarantee scheme for young workers;
- Develop new “Employment Strategy and Action Plan” that is gender informed, which would include amending legislation regulating civil conscription during a state of emergency;
- Create better decent work opportunities for the vulnerable groups in the labor market and formalize informal labor workers through tax administration and social security reform, to ensure long term financial protection for these highly vulnerable groups;
- Create horizontal linkages and partnerships for market positioning of companies through intersectoral and cross-border cooperation, with the aim of strengthening Serbia’s sector-specific market positions and securing continued domestic and foreign market presence for any future crisis; and
- Develop a smart strategy for the development, review and implementation of innovative solutions, including enabling a more inclusive and creative policy environment, specifically aimed at agricultural and rural development, which could include piloting smart

strategy solutions facilitating dialogue between the technology community and the agricultural holding company community to develop demand-driven and fully applicable technology and information sharing solutions for the agricultural sector.



July 2020,  
A waiter working at the terrace of a cafe in Serbian Capital, wearing a respiratory face mask during the coronavirus covid 19 health crisis.

## **The UN Value Proposition**

Based on the rich inputs from the rapid assessment work conducted to date, the UN will contribute to reducing the impact of COVID-19 on employment and certain key, vital economic sectors by both gathering and structuring information and data collection, analysis and sharing and also by supporting the development of gender-responsive national employment policies. This follow-up will become a key focus area of the UN’s support once the country shifts into a recovery phase. The UN has the knowledge, capacity, and initial resources to suggest evidence-based policy options and support Serbia through the following partnerships.

**FAO** will focus its actions on facilitating the creation of an enabling environment for the development of e-commerce and new solutions for market access for small and medium sized agricultural holding companies, through promoting short value chains and quality products. The organization will also support the certification and quality management of voluntary standards for high value markets and the creation of national and regional common producer organizations to improve response and market positioning.



April 2020,  
Delivery cyclist on Belgrade's Republic square working deliveries during the corona virus outbreak.

**ILO** will support the country's National Employment Service in the deployment of functional analysis and feasibility studies aimed at the rollout of the new "National Employment Strategy" and the new "Youth Guarantee," as well as support the implementation of these new programs as they the transition to more ongoing initiatives.

**UNDP** will focus its interventions on strengthening private sector resilience and increasing private sector capacity to embrace innovative solutions, activate on e-commerce, access appropriate sources of financing, and conduct sustainable business operations. The organization will support MSMEs at the local level (outside of larger cities and along more rural areas – particularly along hiking trails as a method of building domestic nature-based tourism), specifically in the areas of tourism, services, hospitality, and creative industries, with particular focus on women-led enterprises. UNDP will also support MSME's implementation of innovative solutions addressing COVID-19 related development issues in two countries from the region. UNDP will also continue supporting Serbia in accessing foreign direct investment to continue to build the national economy through investment in key sectors.

**UNECE** plans an evidence-based, action-oriented action plan with recommendations for removing behind and at-the-border regulatory and procedural trade barriers in a manner that is consistent with the requirements of the multi-lateral trading system requirements of the region, and is consistent with the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Doing so will help support Serbian firms and their activities across the region in their recovery from the COVID-19 economic crisis.

**UNESCO** plans its actions on creating the image of local communities as destinations rich in cultural heritage and tradition to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth through increased activities such as domestic and nature-based tourism and more.

**UNOPS** will roll out grant and technical support mechanisms to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of MSMEs and women and youth-led start-ups, will facilitate employment through provision of investment related to vocational training and will support the improvement of business-related services by strengthening business support organizations that contribute to enhanced competitiveness of Serbian MSMEs.

**Table 3.** below provides an overview of the projects that the UNCT Serbia are planning to implement or are implementing as a response to the crisis, for which there are funding gaps. An additional table in the Annex (**Table A1**) lists projects that are also undertaken to respond and that are fully funded.

**TABLE 3.**

Jobs, Economic Response and Recovery: List of ongoing and planned activities with funding gaps

		Total Budget	Funding Gaps
<b>1. Supporting the recovery and resilience of SMEs including agricultural producers</b>			
UNDP	Future-proofing of the private sector for the post-pandemic era with special emphasis on business in the creative, hospitality, service, and tourism sector, including through challenge calls and implementation of innovative solutions	550,000	550,000
UNDP	Analysis of Serbian e commerce landscape in the post-COVID context critical issues and new opportunities	20,000	20,000
FAO	Supporting agricultural producers facing multiple disaster vulnerabilities through quick response tools for financial, technical and information support related to COVID-19 and other disasters.	150,000	150,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>720,000</b>	<b>720,000</b>
<b>2. Strengthening supply and value chains</b>			
FAO and UNECE	Address disruptions caused by health (and other) crises and increase resilience and competitiveness by facilitating smart solutions, by creating linkages to export-oriented value chains, by strengthening national and regional common producer organizations and by capacity building to ensure diverse supply chains especially for agri-food and critical raw materials	7,810,000	7,780,000
FAO	Facilitating an enabling environment for the development of e-commerce and new solutions for market access for agricultural SMEs	500,000	500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>8,310,000</b>	<b>8,280,000</b>
<b>3. Strengthening the labor market</b>			
ILO	Transition to formality.	700,000	700,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>700,000</b>	<b>700,000</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>9,730,000</b>	<b>9,700,000</b>





4

# Macroeconomic Response and Multilateral Collaboration

## 4

### CHAPTER 4

#### 4.1 MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE

##### OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

The health crisis is expected to result in a contraction of GDP in 2020 between 3% and 5.3% YoY, primarily due to an expected fall in remittances, foreign direct investments, exports, as well as in personal and corporate expenditure and investments. While significant, this drop is relatively smaller compared to many other European countries.

As a result of the stimulus package, by the end of 2020, Serbia's fiscal deficit is projected to increase from the expected 0.5% of GDP before the outbreak of the pandemic to a full 7% of GDP, in line with the trends in other countries, while public debt is estimated to rise from 49% of GDP to between 59% and 60% of GDP, which is still relatively low compared to other EU countries (Eurostat, 2020f).

Serbia therefore retains some fiscal and budgetary space for introducing further support measures, albeit carefully managed and in an increasingly small space to do so. In the future, liquidity will be an important issue in determining the resilience of the economy.

**Serbia's relatively stable macroeconomic fundamentals prior to the COVID-19 outbreak ensured that the fiscal space needed to spend money to protect lives and livelihoods throughout the crisis was available to policy-makers.** The universal cash handout implemented by the government of 100 EUR per person provided fast relief but could have been more impactful and fairer had it specifically targeted those in need and included income or other eligibility thresholds.

The lack of development of the financial and capital markets in Serbia, and Serbia's limited access to diverse sources of financing could preclude greater resilience to future

shocks and constrain recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, as well as inhibit Serbia's transition to a circular, green and inclusive economy. The COVID-19 crisis and the monetary policies that were enacted in the aftermath to contain the shock, at domestic, regional, and international levels, will further increase the Serbian private sector's dependency on credit rather than equity financing. A renewed emphasis on ongoing reforms in the financial sector, and related accompanying measures, will ultimately strengthen Serbia's recovery and sustain progress towards the achievement of SDGs in Serbia.

##### OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

As the crisis now enters its ninth month, with high uncertainty on how long the pandemic will last, it remains **critical that Serbia carefully manages the remainder of the initial fiscal policy space**, with careful fiscal policies and a targeted approach, so that it can continue to enact expansionary policies to support the recovery.



July 2020,  
Employees of a beauty parlor, standing in front of the salon during the coronavirus covid 19 health crisis.



The deployment of future stimulus packages will be a unique chance for Serbia to target and streamline its assistance to both individuals and the private sector, while embracing the transition to a green and inclusive economy. Recovery measures should be informed by the overarching ambition of sustainable development and supported accordingly by a consistent and comprehensive multi-partner consultation mechanism with international financial institutions, the EU, the UN and adequate data and information sharing platforms.



July 2020,  
Senior woman in a street of Belgrade,  
during the Covid-19 outbreak.

**Moving forward, the first priority should be protecting the poor and vulnerable by accelerating the transformation and targeting of the social protection system.**

Consideration should be given to enacting a temporary basic income ("TBI") scheme through cash transfers providing a temporary top-up payment only for those people below a vulnerability threshold. The involvement of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the government ("SIP-RU"), local authorities and when relevant, civil society organizations in the development and rollout of such a scheme is of key importance.

**The second priority** should be to avoid bankruptcies of otherwise financially sound enterprises and contain job losses, including through risk-sharing instruments and direct support for targeted investments (for example, direct monetary support for business' onsite adaptation of new regulations, for the repurposing of operations and training staff to take advantage of market opportunities, and more).

These measures should incorporate conditionalities to ensure that they simultaneously support progress towards sustainable development and the transition to a green and circular economy. Publicly funded equity-type instruments will be also needed to complement loans and guarantees to alleviate the excess leverage problem that is already developing.

**As a third priority,** the allocation of resources in both the health and education sector should be reviewed, and investments in these sectors should be undertaken as needed and unlocked with support from donors and concessionary sources of funding.

**In the longer term, it is critical to address structural barriers to growth through key legislative and institutional reforms,** including by developing a mature capital market system in Serbia, requiring a sufficient legislative framework for non-bank financial institutions. Equally important is to continue the country's efforts in reforming public procurement and reallocating the savings from any new system efficiencies towards social expenditures that are critical for vulnerable populations to weather this crisis. There needs to be solution for regulatory and administrative barriers to trade, and higher trade connectivity through accession in trade organizations such as the World Trade Organization ("WTO"), and others.

Finally, progress towards Agenda 2030 and achievement of the SDGs should be re-intensified. In this regard, the adoption and implementation of the "Integrated National Financing Frameworks" ("INFFs"), the UN toolkit to better link planning and financing processes within a country, will provide an important foundation. It will be critical to increase investment in green infrastructure, research and development, and information and communications technology adaptation to improve home-based innovation and access to new digital technologies.

## Immediate to Mid-Term Recommendations

**A Strengthen multi-partner cooperation and informed decision-making for macroeconomic recovery.**

- Support regular multi-partner consultation mechanism among international financial institutions, the EU, the UN, and relevant government line ministries on coordinated efforts to incentivize a green and sustainable recovery;

- Develop the “Economic Recovery Dashboard” (“ERD”), a data aggregation and tracking tool, to closely track how different segments of economy cope with the crisis, providing quick and relevant in-depth visual info on economic recovery;
- Develop scenarios for the Serbian economy’s response to COVID-19, and its impact to sustainable development and budgetary costs over the next four years;
- Develop simulations to project the impact of structural interventions and measures in order to better tailor these measures for the intended audience and for maximum economic impact (for example, measures such as temporary basic income and the systematic provision of social services to incentivize participation in the workforce); and
- Assess the viability of climate financing instruments for a green recovery.

## **B Continue to protect the most vulnerable, support the economy and ensure sufficiency of the health sector.**

- Scale up support to the most vulnerable population groups and families having lost jobs and livelihoods during the pandemic (as detailed in Chapter 2), including through the involvement of relevant stakeholders, civil society organizations and local authorities;
- Review and address misallocation of resources and – as needed – mobilize additional concessional funding and quickly fast-track investments in the health and education systems (as detailed in Chapters 1, 2 and 5) to ensure they are ready for a possible new surge in COVID-19 cases;
- Continue the stimulus to MSMEs so that the country can avoid bankruptcies of otherwise financially sound enterprises and contain job losses, including by providing the following support to MSMEs as a crucial segment of the economy: (a) training and advice, (b) risk-sharing instruments (such as debt guarantee schemes) and (c) direct support for targeted investments across the segment (for example, along topics such as adaptation of onsite workplaces to comply with new safety regulations, repurposing operations and training staff to take advantage of market opportunities, implementing more e-commerce in light of “new normal” living and purchasing conditions – beyond simply a focus on supply chains, and increased focus on online and remote learning, as detailed in Chapter 3);
- Provide incentives for banks to enhance access to finance for unbanked individuals and MSMEs by under-

taking targeted measures such as by easing collateral requirements; and

- Provide support for MSMEs participating in global supply chains, including by addressing barriers to increased development of e-commerce and online sales.

## **Medium to Long-Term Response and Preparedness**

### **C Build capacities for evidence-based policymaking.**

- Build capacity for the collection and use of statistics, more robust data analysis, financing for sustainable development goals and gender focused financing, and the monitoring of budgets along social development priorities, including in emergency response;
- Develop “Integrated National Financing Frameworks” (“INFFs”) a UN toolkit to better link planning and financing processes, ensuring better assessment and incorporation of financial and non-financial risks in financing policies, in partnership with the Ministry of Finance;
- Integrate the Serbian Public Investment Management (“PIM”) framework with the SDG agenda, as integration of SDGs and Serbia’s PIM process would enable an additional SDG perspective to current investment planning and financing processes;
- Boost the institutional and analytical capacities of institutions in charge of the execution of the national budget, public investment, the management of public debt to ensure the efficiency of borrowing process, as well as the design, execution and monitoring of the COVID-19 support packages that have been enacted and may continue to come be enacted; and
- Mainstream gender equality and inclusivity in the process of developing and adopting Serbia’s national agricultural strategic programming and planning, as a key sector of the economy and one that has been particularly affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

### **D Support a green, sustainable, and inclusive economic recovery.**

- Taking advantage of low interest rates, develop a new package of targeted measures aimed at continuing stimulus to support economic recovery while also supporting Serbia’s transition to a green and circular



economy through a focus on incentivizing activities such as green infrastructure, subsidizing MSMEs' and households' investments in retrofitting and energy conservation, and implementation of environmental standards;

- Accelerate regulatory framework reforms aimed at strengthening non-banking financial institutions, such as microfinance institutions, to ensure that funding reaches parts of the economy which are insufficiently supported by the local banking sector;
- Improve the quality and efficiency of public procurement systems, including by using common web platforms and monitoring mechanisms to source and distribute needed goods and services, including in emergency situations. This should include the introduction of conditionalities on green procurement, and should promote the use of savings from procurement efficiencies towards necessary social expenditures; and
- Enhance regional cooperation by coordinating and harmonizing trade measures that impact supply chains and connectivity, including intensifying efforts for EU and WTO accession and address regulatory and administrative barriers to trade.

## Longer Term Recovery Recommendations

- Plan Serbia's long-term shift from a grey to green economy and identify priorities for the development of an inclusive Serbia that is resilient to future crisis of a similar or different nature to COVID-19;
- Support home-grown innovation, by taking advantage of new digital technologies and strengthening vocational training and opportunities for continuous education.
- Enhance a gender perspective at it relates to Serbia's public investments, including by diversifying skill trainings for women and better valuing the care economy, particularly in light of their status as essential frontline workers through key national crises like COVID-19;
- Provide support for the development and implementation of green infrastructure strategies, including at the local level; and
- Provide incentives to the development of innovative solutions for public needs, including by providing a supportive environment for public-private partnerships.

TABLE 4.1

### Macroeconomic Response: ongoing and planned activities with funding gaps

		Total Budget	Funding Gaps
<b>1. Enhance partnerships</b>			
RCO and UNCT	Supporting regular multi-partner mechanisms and the development of new models for crisis response and recovery.	100,000	100,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>
<b>2. Green, inclusive and gender responsive recovery</b>			
UN Women	Gender Responsive Governance and Budgeting	1,300,000	800,000
UNDP	Introduction of "green criteria" for incoming investments and Green Recovery Study on the viability of financing options and climate financing instruments for a green recovery.	31,200	31,200
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,331,200</b>	<b>831,200</b>
<b>3. Programmatic measures</b>			
UNDP	Economic Recovery Dashboard (ERD).	112,000	112,000
UNDP	Integration of SDGs with Public Investment Management System through the INFF toolkit.	560,000	560,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>672,000</b>	<b>672,000</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>2,103,200</b>	<b>1,603,200</b>

## 4.2 MULTILATERAL AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

### OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Within the Western Balkans and Southeast Europe, after an initial period during which protectionist measures were enacted to obtain and retain PPE and essential medical equipment, trade cooperation resumed and was actually strengthened through the “Green Corridor” project that eased transport and trade flows across the subregion. This important initiative was intended, and indeed, reached, its stated objective of guaranteeing unimpeded transit of essential goods, throughout the sub-region.

During the health crisis, other dimensions of the process of deepening regional integration also gained additional momentum.

A EU-Western Balkans summit took place on May 6, 2020 with participation by EU member states and six Western Balkans partners, and other sector-specific regional cooperation emerged (including meetings among agriculture ministers, transport ministers, and others across the Western Balkans).

Other opportunities for cooperation among the sub-regional partners were missed, however, including the possibility of jointly procuring medical equipment and PPE across the region. At the same time Serbia, along with North Macedonia and Montenegro, participated in the recently established “rescEU” stockpile of medical equipment and, since 2012, has also participated in the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (“ERCC”) which has provided important venues for inter and intra-regional cooperation, both of which can be further strengthened.

### OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Regional cooperation with other Western Balkan partners will play a crucial role in the recovery. To support business competitiveness and remove outstanding non-tariff barriers, partnering countries, business and institutions should more closely coordinate trade policies and harmonize regulatory and administrative measures based on a risk management approach and in cooperation with standards bodies and quality infrastructure institutions. Actions (that are, in part, already in advanced stages of planning) to improve logistics, and facilitate e-commerce and cross-border digital services (including the development and growth of regional payment systems) will positively impact supply chains and connectivity across the region, including in Serbia. These measures will also contribute to lower costs of



April 2020  
An aircraft carrying medical aid from the EU arrived in Serbia's capital Belgrade

trade and support strengthened ability to respond to future crisis of a similar or different nature to COVID-19.

A twin area where cooperation should be prioritized is in environmental action, including through the proposed “Green Agenda for the Western Balkans” which aims at maximizing the impact of the “European Green Deal” program for the subregion. A linked approach across the Western Balkans would help Serbia and its neighbors harmonize regulations and move towards EU requirements, and could also better promote nature-based solutions, fight environmental degradation, and address complex and cross-regional issues such as climate change and urban rehabilitation.

Finally, cooperation for resilience is vital to help restore the performance and resilience of ecosystems. As the environmental commons cuts across borders, managing shared environmental resources sustainably requires a concerted and integrated collaborative action as well as policy measures to promote sustainable consumption and production (including, for example, along common river basins across the region). This coordinated and collaborative approach will also contribute to progress towards the “Priorities of Action” of the Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction.

## **E Strengthen regional cooperation for emergency management.**

- Further strengthen and develop “Green Corridors” or areas of sustainable commerce and environmental restoration;
- Develop common measures to optimize emergency procurement mechanisms at the regional level, including common measures for the handling of relief and emergency procurements;
- Streamline trade procedures and facilitate trade at borders, including by reducing tax and administrative burdens on external trade, and enhancing the use of risk-based inspections;
- Ensure knowledge sharing, particularly of information and statistics relevant to COVID-19 (for example, sharing the status of COVID-19 rates at borders and along transport routes, and sharing health insurance standards across countries); and
- Facilitate the creation of electronic platforms for regional trade of essential products, which can be utilized in times of need but also grow during non-emergency times to better integrate trade across the region and allow partnering Western Balkan countries to best specialize their industries along their strengths.

## **F Enhance cooperation among partners to support the recovery.**

- Initiate and facilitate joint Western Balkans governments meetings to coordinate sectoral policies critical to a successful recovery (on topics such as disaster preparedness, trade and connectivity, efforts to support the digital economy, and others).

## **G Improve connectivity across the region and beyond and lower transaction and transport costs.**

- Support Serbia’s integration in regional and international trade networks, to take advantage of post-COVID trading opportunities incl. WTO accession
- Reduce technical and administrative barriers to trade (for example, by aligning certification and laboratories testing for certain industries, by allowing mutual recognition of certification statuses across countries) and remove any duplicative or unnecessary processes for enhancing the transparency of border security and trade measures (for example, by moving towards e-TIR, or electronic international road transport, standards and procedures); and



Sjenica, Southwest Serbia  
UNDP ©Bojan Lucic

- Monitor regional food trade policies on key food commodities and improve market connectivity along food supply chains.

## **H Enhance the region’s capacity for cooperation in environmental matters and crisis prevention and management.**

- Initiate discussions on regional Western Balkans waste and chemicals management and response; and
- Design structures and methodology for regional crisis preparedness and contingency planning workstream.

## **I Support a green, sustainable, and inclusive recovery.**

- Build and share scientific knowledge on the links between ecosystem stability, the environment and human health in the Western Balkan region, including a focus on the spread of zoonotic diseases;
- Support actions towards improvement of the protected areas network, as well as acceptance of sustainable management practices for natural resources and best practices in combating wildlife crimes and the illegal trade of wildlife;

- Establish regional cooperation for implementation of the Sendai framework on disaster response and recovery to guide the multi-hazard management of disaster risk at all levels and sectors;
- Implement multilateral environmental agreements ("MEAs") that create a variety of obligations in the fields of environmental legislation, enforcement, monitoring and reporting, including adherence with the "Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes" (2015) and the "EU Water Framework Directive."

## The UN Value Proposition

The UN system, through the office of the Resident Coordinator, will continue to support a multi-partner consultation mechanism with international financial institutions, the EU, and the government on fiscal and economic recovery matters. **UNDP's** strategy is based on supporting a "green" recovery, aimed at building back better. Key components are the development of "green criteria" for incoming investments, conducting a "Green Recovery Study" and conducting an assessment of the viability of financing options and climate financing instruments for a green recovery in the aftermath of COVID-19. Better management of data and knowledge is the second key priority for UNDP, and UNDP plans to launch an "Economic Recovery Dashboard" ("ERD") to be a one stop place to track and assess key data points affecting the health sector, the economy, and society in Serbia in the aftermath of COVID-19, and also plans for deeper integration of the sustainable development goals into Serbia's Public Investment Management System, through the integrated national financing framework ("INFF") toolkit. Still under the same priority, the **World Bank** plans – among other priorities – to launch a "Public Procurement Portal" which will help bring efficiency gains and resource coordination for future crises but also on an ongoing basis at all levels of public procurement in the country.

**UNDP** will focus on supporting the government in policy planning, encouragement (through technical advice and capacity building) for a more responsive public sector, and management of public finances through informed and data-driven decision making. Specifically, this will include: designing and putting in place a framework for monitoring the impact and effectiveness of public policy measures; designing and putting in place processes for continual adjustment of public policy measures based on finding from

consistent monitoring; and connection with data resources into the policy-making and policy-monitoring process so that relevant and key data points are continually utilized at both the policy design and implementation stages.

Jointly, UN entities including **UNECE**, **UNDP**, **UNEP**, **UNESCO**, **UNICEF** and the **WHO**, among others, can support response plan priorities, through their respective regional institutions, regional offices and/or through the Western Balkans Action Plan, in various ways, such as by:

- Undertaking a lessons-learned exercise focused on the regional aspects of the UN's COVID-19 response in the region, bringing the relevant regional authorities closer together and progressing regional coordination for crisis response efforts in future, including by taking stock of measures introduced in each of the countries in the region and sharing learnings from each of these measures to facilitate best practice knowledge sharing;
- Facilitating a regional strategy for climate resilient infrastructure development, followed by an action plan identifying concrete climate proofing measures, including the move towards green infrastructure and with an emphasis on any infrastructure's potential impacts on ecosystems, species, and human needs as part of post-COVID-19 infrastructure building response;
- Implementing the "UNECE Action Framework for Responses to the COVID-19 Crisis" with its three main chapters, including facilitating connectivity (including but not limited to adopting harmonized regulatory frameworks, digital tools - such as e-TIR, and the increased electronic exchange of information); addressing transboundary and other transnational risks (including promoting the existing multilateral environmental agreements, and the use of shared standards and statistics to improve decision-making and transparency across the region), and supporting a green and resilient recovery (through the improved use of resources – such as a circular economy approach);
- Stepping up the design and implementation of regional projects to build regional synergy for faster recovery (for example, through digitalization, connectivity, innovation efforts); and
- Facilitating strategic and policy discussions in cross-cutting areas of regional importance, including related to youth, the fight against hate speech and disinformation; the situation of Roma and other minorities, and public information and resources regarding the rise of gender-based violence during COVID-19.



TABLE 4.2.

**Regional and Multilateral Collaboration: List of ongoing and planned activities with funding gaps (USD)**

		Total Budget	Funding Gaps
<b>1. Support trade integration</b>			
RCO and UNCT	Support Serbia's integration in regional and international trade networks, to take advantage of post-COVID trading opportunities incl. through support for WTO accession & address technical barriers to trade	50,000	50,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		50,000	50,000
<b>2. Enhance regional cooperation</b>			
RCO and UNCT	Initiate and facilitate joint Western Balkans governments meetings to coordinate sectoral policies critical to a successful recovery (on topics such as disaster preparedness, green recovery, connectivity, digital economy, etc).	30,000	30,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		30,000	30,000





# 5 Social Cohesion and Community Resilience

## CHAPTER 5

### OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Learnings from the *COVID-19: Socio-Economic Impact Assessment* shed light on community resilience aspects and the impact of the crisis on social cohesion within local communities. Chapter 5 particularly, "Social Cohesion and Community Resilience" shares key insights on household coping strategies and local institutional capacity in managing COVID-19.

**Local communities and households showed resilience during the first wave of the crisis, but for the most vulnerable in poor and less developed regions it was particularly hard to cope.**

The lockdown measures and physical distancing to discourage further spread of the virus, including both work and mobility restrictions, impacted household income and consumption patterns, particularly for working families and for households that rely on remittances. Households often reduced their spending to basic needs, while for some, coping sometimes included a violation of the temporarily imposed physical distancing and mobility restrictions to get to work or care for loved ones. Most local services, including cosmetic and hair salons, craft workshops, mechanic shops, and cafes, were temporarily closed. The negative impact of the lack of public transport during the restrictive period particularly affected rural households, women, and commuting workers. While many of these consequences were eased once the restrictions were lifted and physical distancing less stringently enforced, pressure on jobs and incomes was not eliminated entirely.

Local institutions responded effectively to the crisis. For many sector specific areas (health, social protection, education, etc.) the national level institutions were charged with responsibility for setting overall strategy and plans, while local self-governments ("LSGs") had frontline operational roles in administering these priorities that were set by the national level institutions. Because Serbia as a whole, and most regions, lack an adequate local governance frame-



April 2020,  
Volunteers in Zrenjanin helping during Corona outbreak

work, the overall crisis management process was mostly *ad hoc* and depended on the individual human and financial capacities of LSGs themselves. There was a significant variation in the overall institutional capacity to respond to the crisis at the local level across the country. The municipalities with weak capacities saw those weaknesses exacerbated during the crisis. For example, social protection coverage was weak and worsened at the local level during the pandemic, partly due to the lack of capacity of relevant local institutions to identify those hit hardest by the crisis and develop new ways to help them.

As in other countries, one of the main challenges throughout the COVID-19 period was the inherent contradiction

of the Constitutional human rights and standards and the uneven effect of the restrictive measures, which affected some categories of society more than others. These concerns were addressed progressively throughout the crisis, often on an ad hoc basis. Certain liberties are assessed as being particularly affected by the restrictive measures, such as those of expression and of information.

The pandemic placed new constraints on social cohesion and political engagement, with the absence of democratic institutions such as the National Parliament from the decision-making process at national level. The initial gap in social dialogue and democratic engagement on COVID-19 response was reflected also at the local level, where most LSGs did not include civil society organizations (“CSOs”) in their emergency task forces or decision-making process. Nevertheless, local CSOs played an important role in humanitarian work, providing support to vulnerable groups, providing access to relevant and timely information, and providing free legal support and consultations. Associations, networks, and businesses stepped in by providing support and donations to communities and local institutions. The same lack of participation and social dialogue was visible at the national level.

## OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Understanding the initial response by local communities is a pillar underlying recommendations for an effective response as the crisis moves forward. The initial response of local communities to COVID-19 was shaped by three key factors:

1. the **spread of the pandemic in their respective communities and constituencies**;
2. the **capacities of local self-governments’ social welfare and health services units to respond**; and
3. the **presence of social capital and trust among citizens in the institutions around them**.

Local authorities – under difficult circumstances – struggled to simultaneously manage a complex emergency, build the long-term resilience of their communities, and build and consolidate social cohesion. The already more vulnerable local communities, including areas that were suffering from depopulation in recent years, had a weakened capacity to respond to the crisis. Civil society organizations, the diaspora, volunteers, and businesses actively responded to people in need, even as they were not included in formal decision-making processes.

With this backdrop of experience, three areas of priority for local communities have emerged and provide a key framework for the needs of Serbia going forward. In the aftermath of COVID-19 Serbia must:



May 2020,  
Older women getting in public transport

- **Address democratic deficits**, by creating structured opportunities for extensive civic engagement and representation in dialogues on local and national development planning, decision-making, and implementation of socio-economic measures that are inclusive and reinforce mutual trust. This will require: (a) enhancing decentralized responsive governance at the regional and local levels, (b) assessing local governance frameworks for managing crisis (including regulations, protocols, local acts, etc. to determine where – if any – gaps are), (c) improving the transparency of LSGs’ work and communication with their citizens on key issues affecting their communities, and (d) adopting a decision-making model that is based on community needs and ensures inclusive responses.
- **Strengthen the capacities of local actors** by building the technical and human resources of local self-governments to respond to crisis and to provide effective, uninterrupted public services to their citizens in a non-discriminatory, gender responsive, transparent, and effective manner. Improving the digital capacities and information communication technology systems of public sector institutions at the local level is a key supporting action as it will have a great effect on the ability of LSGs to subsequently provide effective online services to their own citizens. Going forward, the positive local actions and initiatives – including those led by the diaspora and by civil society organizations – should and create a more systematic and inclusive response, to sustain them.



■ **Embrace opportunities to spearhead an urban green recovery** by upgrading local infrastructure, and local authorities' capacity to monitor the impact of their actions and ensure a sustainable response to crises and development challenges that local communities will face in the future. The following are important priorities:

- (a) Invest in disaggregated data to better understand inequalities so that local communities can act on them;
- (b) Guarantee safe shelter for everyone, and accelerate the development of affordable housing schemes to protect those most in need during and in the aftermath of the crisis;
- (c) Engage marginalized communities as partners in response efforts;
- (d) Implement participatory, tailored strategies for local economic development; and
- (e) Future-proof cities by investing in sectors with the potential for high ecological and digital transformation impacts, as well as job creation.

Sustainable local development can only be assured by strong commitment at all levels of government to resume the structural reforms which were being implemented in previous years. Local development plans which are currently being prepared in line with the provisions of the new legislation on LSGs need to be informed by and based around functional reviews and socio-economic assessments of the vulnerabilities in these communities that were exposed by COVID-19 and the related COVID-19 response measures, while also taking into account new trends (for example, new mobility and work mobility trends).

Local authorities will need the support of the central government to strengthen the rule of law and upgrade their local governance systems based on principles of democratic representation and good governance so that these local governance institutions become more accountable, transparent, inclusive, efficient, and effective while discharging their duties, particularly during crisis situations.

## Immediate to Mid-Term Recommendations

### A Ensure continuity of essential services to the community during emergencies.

- Ensure that local self-governments develop and/or update their operational management and crisis response plans based on baseline assessments, and ensure that local self-governments monitor the inclusion of biological hazards and the full risk spectrum that these hazards create as part of these plans;

- Gather disaggregated data by improving data collection and data integration, particularly as it relates to data on vulnerable groups, to ensure their inclusion in operation management and crisis response plans going forward;
- Assess and, as necessary, strengthen local policy and normative frameworks (including regulations, protocols, local acts, and other rules) for better preparedness and response, including by setting and assessing minimum standards for social service delivery in and outside of crises;
- Review and address technical and human resource constraints of local self-governments to provide effective public services to citizens during health and other emergencies; and
- Improve the digital capacities and information communication technology systems of public sector institutions at both the central and local levels, so that they may provide effective online services to their citizens.

### B Strengthen community cohesion and respect for the fundamental rights of citizens.

- Review crisis management and emergency response protocols at the central and local level to integrate these protocols and to ensure the continuous effective use of democratic institutions and systems, even and especially for crisis planning;
- Ensure key stakeholders have adequate participation in the local and national decision-making processes, including regular consultations with relevant civil society organizations and persons from the target audience of intervention plans, to improve the government's public acknowledgement, understanding of and respect for human rights and the rule of law across the country, particularly in an emergency context; and
- Ensure proportionality and necessity of human rights restrictions in emergency situations according to principles of the rule of law and accepted international human rights standards.

### C Promoting trust by improving communication and media literacy.

- Enhance media information literacy, and strengthen local communities' capacities to confront fake news, stigmatization and misinformation; and
- Improve information dissemination through the use of digital innovations, bringing together community engagement and social networks.

## Medium to Long-Term Response and Preparedness

### D Improve governance systems through the application of good governance principles.

- Resume structural reforms of local governance that had already begun (namely, decentralization efforts in accordance with the subsidiarity principle, as well as further support to the LSG reform processes including addressing universal healthcare coverage and the rise of out of pockets payments);
- Continue to strengthen the overall system for strategic development and budget planning affecting local governments, ensuring coherence across administrative levels and supporting operationalization of the Agenda 2030 and the SDG Framework. Increased coherence of the strategy and budget planning process would allow for more transparent, efficient, effective, and performance-based development and sectoral policy planning, including better implementation, monitoring, and budgeting for new plans that are specific to the COVID-19 recovery process as well as those that are not, and are required under wider structural reforms stemming from the EU accession processes;
- Develop online space for efficient and safe inputs from citizens in decision-making at the local level – for use during the this pandemic and beyond (which could include transparent online tools at the official websites of government institutions, increased use of platforms for citizen engagement, the development of software for online referenda and the submission of citizen petitions, and more);
- Review the protection and management measures for cultural properties during and after emergencies (include increased digitalization of cultural and educational content); and
- Promote the sharing of experiences among local governments within Serbia and with local governments worldwide, drawing lessons learned and helping local communities help each other in the quest to build back better with more resilient systems at local level (which could be accomplished through participation in city-to-city peer learning networks and events and global networks supporting cities' resilience).

### E Enhance decentralized responsive governance.

- Support decentralization of the crisis response systems and policy making in accordance with regional specifics, and reflecting lessons learned from COVID-19 that local communities often need different things and know their populations best;
- Improve governance mechanisms and communication between central and local level authorities, to ensure more effective coordination in managing crisis;
- Improve cooperation between local authorities and civil society organizations in local planning and community service delivery, through the development of protocols of cooperation, recognising the importance of these civil society organizations as key social service providers and ensuring transparent funding for civil society organizations so that they themselves can better weather complex crises such as COVID-19;
- Ensure inclusive social dialogue and decision-making at local levels while promoting participation and volunteerism among all generations in the community; and
- Create an adequate social and political environment for citizens' engagement (including heavier reliance on online and live round tables, the provision of grants and micro-grants for grassroots local movements, and partnerships with media for the promotion of online tools for better local service delivery).

### F Improve the social welfare system and social services provision at local level, to ensure full coverage of vulnerable groups and citizens in need, particularly during times of crisis.

- Improve local infrastructure and health services to ensure access to water supply, sanitation, waste management and proper health protection at the local level;
- Enable periodic scanning of communities to identify groups at a higher risk due to social exclusion, low income, low access to services, and other key factors, in order to plan targeted interventions and improve resource allocation for the population groups falling outside the existing support systems (with particular attention paid to the hardest hit households – such as those that are remittance-reliant, located in rural areas, and women-led, among other characteristics); and
- Ensure that response mechanisms are based on the principles of non-discrimination, and that actions taken or not taken do not intentionally or unintentionally exclude populations from key services.

## The UN Value Proposition

Under its mandate, the **OHCHR** is supporting the government, civil society, and stakeholders across Serbia in fulfilling Serbia's human rights obligations and mainstreaming a "leave no one behind" approach, including at the local level. OHCHR will continue to monitor the access of basic services and rights in local settings, with a particular focus on those living in substandard settlements, and to advocate for the implementation of relevant human rights standards and guidance concerning the pandemic and crisis situations.

Both **UNOPS** and the **UNDP** have actively been supporting local self-governments and communities in support of economic planning and local service delivery, while at the same time addressing inequalities and improving the relationship and cooperation between local government authorities and civil society. UNDP will work with local self-governments to build their administrative capacities and governance abilities, particularly given the new challenges of governing remotely, governing through a crisis, and governing in a continually adjusted, responsive and agile manner. This work will include building a framework and the administrative capacity to help local governments on inclusive citizen engagement across local communities. Going forward,

one area of focus for UNDP will be improving digital skills across all sectors of society, including among vulnerable groups through activities like reskilling programs. Another area of priority will be strengthening collective action and community initiatives and shifting the paradigm from reactive to proactive strategies that include both local governmental leaders and civil society stakeholders.

**FAO's** priorities will include facilitating participatory decision-making at the local level especially in rural communities and supporting producers that are facing multiple vulnerabilities and disasters, such as the effects of flooding, hail or drought, in combination with the macro effects of COVID-19 on the economy. Working within its mandate of promoting intergenerational solidarity and community cohesion, one important **UNFPA** priority will be to enhance awareness among young people of opportunities for community engagement. Finally, **UNESCO** will work with local communities to support branding and planning for local communities' ability to be perceived as destinations rich in cultural heritage and tradition.

**UN Habitat** is the UN agency mandated with the urban and habitat agenda in Serbia and will be working cross functionally with other UN agencies in areas that demand expertise in urban living, livelihoods, housing and habitability of housing settlements.

TABLE 5.

**Social Cohesion and Community Resilience: ongoing and planned activities with funding gaps**

		Total Budget	Funding Gaps
<b>1. Support to e-governance</b>			
UN-Habitat/ UNDP/ITU	Addressing the digital divide through a) ICT infrastructure assessments b) capacity gap analysis c) design of a methodology for measuring the take up of critical eGov services and d) establishing local open data platforms and websites	360,000	360,000
UNDP and FAO	Support online service delivery by: Online trainings for civil servants; online remote working for local parliament and IT retraining for people with disabilities (includes Serbia at your Fingertips); building human capacities and creating IT solutions for decentralized policymaking and rural development.	370,000	370,000
UNDP	eHealth: digital transformation of the health system; addressing wellbeing through new technologies.	30,000	30,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>760,000</b>	<b>760,000</b>
<b>2. Strengthening the capacities of LSGs and support to communities</b>			
UN Habitat (and relevant UN agencies)	Guidance and piloting of urban regeneration in the context of building back better towards more inclusive, resilient, safe and sustainable communities and cities.	1,500,000	1,500,000
UNOPS	Improvement of social cohesion within local communities and immediate support to LSGs including through specific and innovative social protection services and measures for those most affected	800,000	800,000
UNOPS	Supporting LSGs in post-COVID-19 crisis recovery through comprehensive governance and rule of law interventions for managing crises (i.e. a) improving digital capacities and ICT system for provision of eServices, especially for vulnerable groups and b) increasing civic engagement).	600,000	600,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,900,000</b>	<b>2,900,000</b>
<b>3. Enhancing social cohesion</b>			
UNDP	Supporting the effective socio-economic integration of returnees.	1,600,000	1,600,000
UNICEF	Supporting the resilience of adolescents and youth through the improvement of mental health services.	150,000	150,000
UNFPA	Promoting volunteerism of all generations, intergenerational solidarity, community cohesion and preventing ageism and raising awareness amongst young people about the opportunities of community engagement.	110,000	40,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,860,000</b>	<b>1,790,000</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>5,520,000</b>	<b>5,450,000</b>



6





## 6

# Environment and Climate Change

## CHAPTER 6

### OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

The policy response to COVID-19 presents a unique opportunity for Serbia and other countries to integrate an environmentally sustainable perspective into its response. Chapter 6 of *COVID-19: Socio-Economic Impact Assessment*, "The Green Impact of COVID-19 – Its Impact on the Environment and Climate Change in Serbia" focuses on both the environmental impact of COVID-19 and the environmental opportunities in the COVID-19 response strategy.

**Findings shows that movement restrictions and other suppression measures enacted to curtail the pandemic resulted in short-term environmental gains, such as a fall in air pollution and a fall in greenhouse gas emissions.**

However, there were also numerous adverse effects to the environment and Serbia's progress on environmental priorities. Reduced overall public spending because of budgetary reallocations has negatively affected highly needed investments in environmental protection projects, such as those in wastewater treatment, waste management and maintenance of protected areas. Investments in renewable energy received a blow when favorable tariffs were removed during this time period, with the result being that companies needed to compete with fossil fuels on the market, negatively impacting biomass rates (or, rates of organic matter used as fuel) in particular. The government support measures to companies during the crisis were blind to environmental criteria, missing an important opportunity to support Serbia's transformation to a greener economy.

The opportunities, however, lie in a green recovery in the context of Serbia's EU accession process. The EU is about to legally mandate its transition to net-zero emission goals by 2050, decoupling growth from resource use and leaving no one behind in this process. This EU "Green Deal," whose goals are aligned with Agenda 2030, will likely impact Serbia regardless of the pace of its progress towards full EU membership.

Serbia's recovery from COVID-19, if tailored to support a greener, less resource intensive and less polluting economy, should help Serbia to become more competitive in the global market and more resilient to future shocks and crises. In turn, the regional goals of decarbonization and decoupling of growth from resource use and energy intensity could sustainably improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Serbia over the long run.

### OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Addressing the environmental impacts of COVID-19 has been a neglected topic across many response strategies around the world, and Serbia is no exception. Environmental gains from reduced food traffic and travel during the quarantine periods have been short-lived for most countries, and in Serbia the reopening process occurred without any linkages to ambitious short or long-term policies to prevent air pollution or promote de-carbonization in the future, two prominent risk factors in public health that could have been considered or more thoughtfully integrated into Serbia's reopening plan.

**The large recovery packages that countries are implementing to preserve lives and livelihoods will – if used wisely – present a unique opportunity for countries to make progress towards the environment and climate change SDGs of Agenda 2030, and the objectives of the 2015 Paris Agreement.**

In the case of Serbia, a "green response" would provide an opportunity to fast-track Serbia's progress on Chapter 27 of the *Acquis Communautaire* EU accession instrument and would help the country become an early adopter of the EU's "Green Deal." Overall, the accompanying risks of future pandemics or future spikes in this COVID-19 pandemic will be reduced by restoring lost ecosystems and biodiversity, fighting climate change, and reducing pollution.

Serbia should alleviate the adverse impact that budget cuts (due to reallocated, emergency COVID-19 related spending) have on environmental governance and nature protection across Serbia and step up its support for these sectors. **Enacting and operationalizing strategies for climate change and disaster risk reduction should be a priority for the upcoming government.** The country should continue its investments in environmental protection and climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, in line with recommendations from the Fiscal Council of Serbia, where the Council has strongly supported meaningful public investments in this sector as a way out of the envisaged COVID-19 induced recession, at the expense of investments in other sectors.<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, support to green businesses that were hit hard not only by the macroeconomic shocks caused by COVID-19 but also by the removal in Serbia of subsidies for this sector, including recycling and biogas industries, should be reinstated. With the expected rise in air pollution in Serbia in the winter of 2020-2021, **efforts should be made to accelerate improvement of air quality, and for urban decarbonization plans.** This includes a systematic review of infrastructure and transport strategies, programs, and projects through strict and meaningful environmental and health impact assessment framework before such projects are approved. In other words, a strengthening and modernization of the environmental governance and stewardship among the public sector and private sector is necessary.

**Waste and water management is another area of concern in the wake of COVID-19:** the surge in health and prevention activities has resulted in a spike in hazardous waste, such as personal protective equipment, electronics and pharmaceuticals, the release of large amounts of wastewater and detergents, the heavy use of disinfectants and antimicrobial solutions, and the increased reliance on single-use plastics. Further investment in waste management, particularly at the local level, and beyond the larger city centers where infrastructure already exists, will bring multiple benefits to the country (for example, benefits along the lines of environmental preservation, lower GHG emissions, increased availability of compost and further ability for electricity and heat generation). These investments should be designed to

ensure an overall coherence of waste and water management across the country.

**In the long term, the country should streamline its efforts to invest in building forward better – whether looking at infrastructure development, urbanization, or energy transitions – and integrate nature-based solutions where possible, relying on the principles of a circular economy, green financing, and green conditionalities.**

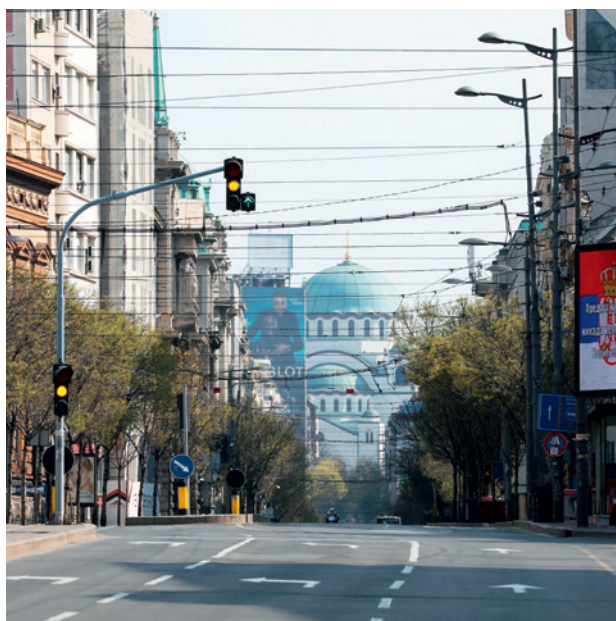
Doing so will reduce the high energy intensity and carbon footprint that exists in Serbia today. Future COVID-19 response aid and financing packages, even if in different fields such as economic recovery, should include targeted conditionalities to support green growth and deliver social dividends, such as new jobs. Businesses that have received government support that promote circular economy principles, such as businesses with high levels of reuse and recycling, and businesses that promote investments in renewable energy sources, such as biogas, should be protected most during the crisis and should be provided additional incentivizes.

**Finally, action on environmental priorities and climate change is an integral part of citizen demands in Serbia and meets both global and local aspirations,** as shown by the recent “UN75” survey. Public awareness is growing across generations on the need to preserve and expand the country’s national resources, including a focus on biodiversity and environmental services, for the sake of public health and sustainability of these and other scarce resources moving forward.



Underground containers in one of the streets of a city Raška in southern Serbia.

<sup>7</sup> The Fiscal Council wrote: “In 2021, public infrastructure investments should be increased, and the financing can be secured by decreasing the excessive investments [...] this is the best type of public expenditure for economic recovery. [...] We therefore recommend that investments into infrastructure be increased by about 0.5 pp of GDP in 2021, compared to 2020. [...] The greatest investment increase is needed in healthcare, education, environment protection and communal infrastructure, which have all been neglected for decades and are in dire condition.” Fiscal Council of Serbia: “The Effect of the Health Crisis on Fiscal and Economic Trends in 2020 and Recommendations for Fiscal Policy in 2021,” page 32, available at [http://www.fiskalniasavet.rs/doc/analize-stavovi-predlozi/2020/FS\\_Efekat\\_zdravstvene\\_krize\\_na\\_fiskalna\\_i\\_ekonomska\\_kretanja\\_u\\_2020\\_preporuke\\_za\\_2021.pdf](http://www.fiskalniasavet.rs/doc/analize-stavovi-predlozi/2020/FS_Efekat_zdravstvene_krize_na_fiskalna_i_ekonomska_kretanja_u_2020_preporuke_za_2021.pdf) (Serbian) and available at [http://www.fiskalniasavet.rs/doc/analize-stavovi-predlozi/2020/FC\\_Summary-Effects\\_of\\_the\\_Healthcare\\_crisis\\_on\\_fiscal\\_&\\_economic\\_trends\\_in\\_2020+recommendations\\_for\\_2021.pdf](http://www.fiskalniasavet.rs/doc/analize-stavovi-predlozi/2020/FC_Summary-Effects_of_the_Healthcare_crisis_on_fiscal_&_economic_trends_in_2020+recommendations_for_2021.pdf) (English).



April 2020, Belgrade's main streets were empty during lockdown imposed as part of measures to stop the spread of the Covid-19.

**The combination of growing public awareness, lessons learned from COVID-19 on the need to preserve public health, and the many financial and political incentives available globally and locally make it a perfect time for Serbia to lead a transformational change focused on achieving a green economy.** This change will be for its people, their lifestyles, and the protection of the human population and ecosystem health across the country.

## Immediate to Mid-Term Recommendations

### **A Accelerate actions addressing air pollution in main urban centers in Serbia, including through:**

- Subsidies, social benefits and credit schemes for upgrading individual heating systems (the primary source of air pollution, with a direct impact on health);
- Improving the energy efficiency of both private and public buildings; and
- Promoting alternative modes of transport.

### **B Build capacity to reduce and manage COVID-19 related waste.**

- Conduct a medical waste management capacity assessment; and

- Help policymakers develop short-term strategies and, in the long-term, incorporate pandemic waste strategies into crisis preparedness and response.

### **C Restore and resume planned expenditures and investments in the environment sector.**

- Assess the adverse impact that COVID-19 has had on budget cuts to environment and climate change sector activities; and
- Restore planned investments into the environment and climate change sectors, as one of the key priorities of a national post COVID-19 recovery.

### **D Mainstream key environmental considerations into the second state support package that is likely to be passed.**

- Require beneficiaries of state support to enact projects for the reduction of greenhouse gases, the reduction of resource use and waste generation, and the diversification of energy sources;
- Provide favorable lending for private sector and other stakeholder investments in green recovery efforts, in cooperation with international financial institutions, commercial banks, and the donor community;
- Provide direct support to public and private entities working for environmental protection and climate change mitigation and adaptation, which have specific and irreplaceable expertise, and should be preserved from job losses during economically uncertain times;
- Provide additional financial incentives for employment in the "green" sectors, such those working in environment and natural protection jobs as well as those other actors working towards improved environmental conservation in rural areas and the preservation of biodiversity in agriculture and food production; and
- Provide support to small farmers as actors of change for the environment in rural areas.

## Medium to Long-Term Response and Preparedness

### **E Enact necessary policy and regulatory reforms.**

- Assess and, as necessary, revise the model of packaging materials for certain products, considering the



broader waste management and circular economy strategies of Serbia and the increase in online trade fueled by COVID-19;

- Assess existing waste management legislation against the challenges of COVID-19, and, as necessary, adapt the policy and legal framework for management of COVID-19 contaminated waste;
- Provide guidance to local governments on the challenges related to the upsurge of waste due to COVID-19, and how to address the challenge in an environmentally responsible manner;
- Improve procedures for decentralized responsive governance, with a focus on restoring lost
- ecosystems and biodiversity, based on community needs and participation in development dialogue, planning and decision-making processes related to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction;
- Review policy options for mitigation, preparedness, and response to zoonotic disease threats; and
- Strengthen environmental governance, especially governance of protected areas and natural reservoirs, to ensure their natural and financial sustainability for years to come.

## **F Invest with a “build forward better” approach.**

- Use the funds earmarked for COVID-19 recovery to implement “green” projects (for example, projects which contribute to natural resource protection, environmental protection, and climate change mitigation and adaptation and which ensure the country’s transition to low-carbon and circular development models);
- Develop and implement a long-term energy transition plan to address air pollution as a major threat to the country;
- Prioritize investments in green infrastructure, enhancing the share of renewables in the country’s energy mix, with a focus on nature and ecosystem-based solutions for climate adaptation; and
- Be an early adopter of the EU’s “Green Deal” and ensure co-funding for local investments into improvements to environment infrastructure and quality of life; and
- Improve the ability of the media and civil society to monitor and report on environmental and climate change issues and develop and strengthen litigation capacities for topics focused on the environment, pollution, and climate change.

## **G Support and scale up nature-based solutions in agricultural production.**

- Promote ecosystem-based solutions for climate adaptation for small agricultural holders, but also promote increased ecosystem-based solutions in disaster risk reduction and spatial planning efforts;
- Improve the resilience of agri-food sector by assisting companies and farmers in applying both innovative and traditional knowledge to their production practices, including new models of production and resource management, like those proposed by circular economy principles, zero waste approaches, and environmentally sustainable practices; and
- Implement circular economy approaches in certain key pilot sectors, including addressing issues related to food loss and waste along value chains.

## **The UN Value Proposition**

**FAO** leads global efforts to eradicate hunger and food insecurity as well as to ensure sustainable agriculture and natural resource management. The partnership between the FAO and Serbia is guided by the 2019-2022 Country Programming Framework (“CPF”) features three priority areas, including one focused on building resilience to natural disasters and climate change as well as improving sustainable management of natural resources. This includes transformation of food systems, issues of food loss and waste in light of principles of a circular economy, tackling environmental challenges such as land degradation, pollution of agricultural soil, deforestation and greenhouse gas emissions, advancing adaptation to climate change, implementing resilient agricultural techniques, and working towards improved quality of life for men and women in rural areas.

**UNDP** will promote nature-based solutions to climate change adaptation and mitigation, which are essential for tackling multiple developmental challenges, be they climate crisis, inequality and poverty, insecurity, or migration. The UNDP portfolio of projects will target policymakers, institutions at national and local levels, and citizens as well as citizen groups. Efforts will range from awareness-raising, activism, and advocacy to legislative and policy support, access to finance, creation of green technological solutions, and promotion of forward-looking, resilient, and resource-efficient approaches in response to COVID-19. UNDP will draw resources from the Global Environment Facility, Green Climate Fund and other environment-focused vertical funds, and further leverage government financing, development

loans, and private investment into environment and climate friendly initiatives. On specific themes, UNDP will continue with its analysis and policy support to the infectious waste management sector, as well as analysis, policy support, and innovations focused on improving air quality levels and measures to be implemented locally.

**UNEP** supports Serbia through a regional project to incentivize and redirect investment towards non-polluting activities, promote waste prevention and recycling, and step-up the monitoring of transboundary pollution. UNEP supports the energy sector and ecological transition through its activities enhancing “environmental performance” and “climate proofing of infrastructure investments in the Western Balkan region,” two key initiatives from an EU integration perspective.

**UNECE** provides data analysis on selected development topics important to the Europe region, including in the environmental sector, as well as capacity building support to selected municipalities in Serbia on local waste management plans. UNECE supports local self-governments in their preparation of project proposals targeting available financing sources that will enable implementation of local waste management plans or further develop or update the existing waste management infrastructure in these locales.

**UN Habitat** provides support to the UN Country Team in Serbia in mainstreaming urbanization principles into the

Common Country Assessment (“CCA”), the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (“UNSDCF”) and the country’s Socio-Economic Response Plan (“SERP”) and also provides support to relevant government ministries (for example, the Ministry of Construction, Infrastructure and Transport) in its technical advisory function. UN Habitat acts as coordinator for implementing the “UN System-Wide Strategy for Sustainable Urbanization,” both through its substantive headquarter-based Urban Practices Branch as well as through its Inter-Regional Advisor role, responsible for expertise in these areas across the wider sub-region.

**UNOPS** supports municipalities to address air pollution issues through the development of local policies, technical documentation, and infrastructure works (including, for example, supporting projects like the introduction of cleaner heating).

**WHO** supports government ministries in charge of health and environmental protection in the development of policy documents and adequate response measures by national actors focused on environmental protection and health services. The WHO supports the government ministries in their multi-sector cooperation, in line with WHO frameworks, and in establishing and maintaining a coherent country-wide effort to achieve health and environmental outcomes in harmony with EU legislation and regulations on these topics.

TABLE 6.

**Environment and Climate Change: List of ongoing and planned activities with funding gaps**

		Total Budget	Funding Gaps
<b>1. Addressing and accelerating actions to reduce air pollution</b>			
UNDP/UNOPS/ UNHabitat/ UNEP/ UNICEF/WHO	Supporting the reduction of air pollution and related health challenges at the national and local level, by: a) strengthening intersectoral and multistakeholder cooperation b) nature-based solutions c) policies d) technical documentation d) infrastructure e) participation of youth and f) advocacy	9,250,000	9,211,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>9,250,000</b>	<b>9,211,000</b>
<b>2. Circular Economy Approach and tackling the COVID-19 related (and other) waste</b>			
UNDP and FAO	Reducing Community Carbon Footprint by a Circular Economy Approach, including by: developing programs and policy recommendations for green recovery, agriculture, agroecology and food processing and smart management of chemicals and wastes	3,377,000	3,377,000
FAO and UNECE	Raising awareness and delivering capacity building on good practice in handling and preventing food loss and waste in production, trade and selected value chains (UNECE FeedUP@UN, Circular Food Economy Lab etc.)	1,050,000	1,050,000
UNDP/WHO and others	Developing innovative solutions to prevent, detect, treat, disinfect, and manage healthcare and other waste, by strengthening awareness, quality policies, standards, practices and control mechanisms	435,800	435,800
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4,862,800</b>	<b>4,862,800</b>
<b>3. Mainstreaming environmental considerations in the recovery process</b>			
UNDP	Advancing medium and long-term adaptation planning by addressing barriers to the integration of climate change adaptation and mitigation into national, sectorial and local government planning and budgeting.	2,100,000	2,100,000
UNDP	Rapid Financing Facility to support recovery and financing in the medium term.	100,000	100,000
FAO	Resilience through local food sourcing – building capacities for regenerative agriculture and improved local ecosystems.	350,000	350,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,550,000</b>	<b>2,550,000</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>16,662,800</b>	<b>16,623,800</b>

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BCA	Biannual Collaborative Agreement
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CPF	Country Programming Framework
CPRP	Country Preparedness and Response Plan
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ERCC	Emergency Response Coordination Centre
ERD	Economic Recovery Dashboard
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoS	Government of Serbia
IHR	International Health Regulations
ILO	International Labour Organization
INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
LSG	Local Self-Government
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
Ministry of education	Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development
Ministry of Labor	Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoM	Month-on-month
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
NAPHS	National Action Plan for Health Security
NBS	National Bank of Serbia
NCD	Non-Communicable Disease
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

PHEOC	Public Health Emergency Operation Center
PIM	Public Investment Management
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEPA	Serbian Environmental Protection Agency
SERP	Socio-Economic Response Plan
SIPRU	Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit
SORS	Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia
TBI	Temporary Basic Income
UN	United Nations
UN Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSCDF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
YOY	Year-on-year

# ANNEXES

## ANNEX 1: LIST OF FULLY FUNDED ONGOING AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES ALL CHAPTERS

MATRIX OF ONGOING AND PLANNED RESPONSE PILLAR 1					
		Sources of Funding: list all sources and indicate core/ non- core funds	Total Budget (USD)	Budget available (USD)	Specify if it is ongoing or planned
UNDP	Support to civil protection and disaster resilience strengthening in the Republic of Serbia in response to the COVID pandemic	EU	16,200,000	16,200,000	Ongoing
UNDP	Technical documentation for reconstruction of health care institutions, design for Clinic for Infectious and Tropical Diseases and Design and Supervision of works on secondary and tertiary healthcare facilities throughout Serbia	EU/GOS	12,400,000	12,400,000	Ongoing and planned
WHO & UNOPS	Recruitment of 200 professionals in 24 health institutions in Serbia	EU	1,150,000	1,150,000	Ongoing
UNOPS	Procurement of medical and non-medical equipment, supplies, and items needed for urgent response to a national health emergency	EU	1,150,000	1,150,000	Ongoing
IOM	Procurement and distribution of PPE, disinfection products and other disease prevention equipment and materials for border authorities and healthcare workers in reception facilities	EU/FPI	377,500	377,500	Ongoing
UNOPS	Provision of technical assistance to the Ministry of Health and the CFCU in conduct of COVID-19 related procurements	EU	60,000	60,000	Ongoing
UNICEF	Providing medical and PPE (focusing on health, social welfare systems and the most vulnerable populations) equipment as required	Corporate and other donors	250,000	250,000	Ongoing and planned
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>31,587,500</b>	<b>31,587,500</b>	

## MATRIX OF ONGOING AND PLANNED RESPONSE PILLAR 2

		Sources of Funding: list all sources and indicate core/ non- core funds	Total Budget (USD)	Budget available (USD)	Specify if it is ongoing or planned
IOM	Provision of immediate material assistance and other essential services to migrants in vulnerable situations	EU/FPI	100,000	100,000	ongoing
IOM	Risk communication and Covid-19 information provision to migrants in reception centres, including through community engagement	EU/FPI	22,000	22,000	Ongoing
OHCHR	Support to the civil society monitoring, engagement with the Government and stakeholders, free legal aid and advocacy as concerns impact on vulnerable groups and anti-discrimination in COVID-19	OHCHR core funding	20,000	20,000	Ongoing
UN Women	Online campaigns about the rights of women	EU	30,000	30,000	Ongoing
UN Women	Outreach services for the most vulnerable groups of women	UK	30,000	30,000	Ongoing
UNDP	Rapid Response Facility (Reduce the risk to vulnerable populations, especially Roma and survivors of GBV)	UNDP	200,000	200,000	Ongoing
UNDP/UNHCR	Local initiatives for improved social inclusion of young Roma	UNDP/UNHCR	131,000	131,000	Ongoing
UNFPA	Supporting access to information, connectedness and digital literacy of older people in long term care facilities and communities , while strengthening intergenerational solidarity	Core UNFPA resources	80,000	50,000	Ongoing and planned
UNHCR	Cash-based interventions for vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers	EU	40,000	40,000	Ongoing
UNHCR	Cash-based interventions for vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers	Core UNHCR funds	200,000	200,000	Planned for 2021
UNICEF	Humanitarian cash transfers for families with children at risk of poverty	USAID	600,000	600,000	Ongoing
UNICEF and World Bank	Public Expenditure Review of Social Sectors	UNICEF	100,000	100,000	Ongoing

## MATRIX OF ONGOING AND PLANNED RESPONSE PILLAR 2

		Sources of Funding: list all sources and indicate core/ non- core funds	Total Budget (USD)	Budget available (USD)	Specify if it is ongoing or planned
UNOPS	Improving Social Protection Services at local level	Swiss Cooperation Office / SDC	250,000	250,000	Ongoing
IOM	Setting up isolation tents in reception facilities, PPE	EU	600,000	600,000	Ongoing in 2020/ completed
IOM	Information campaign on voluntary return and reintegration	multi-donor	80,000	80,000	Ongoing
IOM	Migrant Interpretation and Translation Application	EU	60,000	60,000	Ongoing
OHCHR	Support to the Government, the civil society and stakeholders in their monitoring of access to basic services and rights in substandard settlements and facilitating dialogues and potential response and policy support	OHCHR core funding	30,000	30,000	Ongoing
OHCHR	Advisory and programmatic support as concerns the right to adequate housing and improvement to the substandard settlements standard of living	Through UNOPS programme on social housing (SHAI, EU funding)	80,000	80,000	Planned, pipeline
UNFPA	Provide policy recommendations to the MOLEVSA related to ageing and protection of older people, including in health emergency situation	Core UNFPA resources	20,000	20,000	Planned
UNHCR	Strengthening of community-based structures in asylum, centers	EU	50,000	50,000	Ongoing
UNHCR	Strengthening of community-based structures in asylum, centers	Core UNHCR funds	100,000	100,000	Planned for 2021
UNICEF	Research on the socio-economic impact of Covid-19 on families with children	USAID	50,000	50,000	Ongoing
UNOPS	Provision of support for improving infrastructure conditions in substandard settlements, including enhancement of communal infrastructure	EU	1,100,000	1,100,000	Ongoing
UNICEF	Bridging the digital divide for most vulnerable children	UNICEF and EU/ Contribution Agreement	2,300,000	2,300,000	Starting November 2020



MATRIX OF ONGOING AND PLANNED RESPONSE PILLAR 2					
		Sources of Funding: list all sources and indicate core/ non- core funds	Total Budget (USD)	Budget available (USD)	Specify if it is ongoing or planned
IOM	Scale up MHPSS in reception facilities (psychologists, therapists, PSS, occupational activities)	EU/FPI	100,000	100,000	ongoing
UN Women	Make available psycho-social support programs for social service workforce, including for beneficiaries	UK	30,000	30,000	Ongoing
UNFPA	Enhancing access to SGBV support to refugee and migrant women and girls affected by the Covid 19 pandemic in Serbia	Core UNFPA resources	24,000	24,000	Ongoing
UNICEF	Mental health and psychosocial support for refugee and migrant women, girls and boys, through providing access to COVID-19 adjusted, gender-sensitive prevention and response GBV and PSS services, and implementing targeted capacity building initiatives to support adjusting child protection and GBV services in context of COVID	BPRM	20,000	20,000	Ongoing
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>6,447,000</b>	<b>6,417,000</b>	

### MATRIX OF ONGOING AND PLANNED RESPONSE PILLAR 3

		Sources of Funding: list all sources and indicate core/ non- core funds	Total Budget (USD)	Budget available (USD)	Specify if it is ongoing or planned
UNOPS	Support projects of Business Support Organizations that contribute to enhanced competitiveness of SMEs so they are more resilient and recover from the crisis	EU and Norwegian funding	1,380,000	1,380,000	Ongoing
UNECE	An evidence-based national action plan with targeted measures for effective SME recovery and supporting the consolidation of a stronger and more resilient economy in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic; provide the government with action-oriented recommendations for removing behind and at-the-border regulatory and procedural trade barriers in a manner that is consistent with the requirements of the multi-lateral trading system requirements and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda	TBD	60,000	60,000	Ongoing
UNDP	Support to creation of future-proof private sector in the post-pandemic era	UNDP	200,000	200,000	Ongoing
UNDP	Study on Post-COVID19 private sector resilience and readiness for industry 4.0	Vertical funds	50,000	50,000	Planned
UNDP	Post-COVID19 SDG Investor Map	Vertical funds	55,000	55,000	Planned
UNDRR	Building resilience of SMEs	Grant	32,500	32,500	Ongoing
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1,777,500</b>	<b>1,777,500</b>	

### MATRIX OF ONGOING AND PLANNED RESPONSE PILLAR 4

		Sources of Funding: list all sources and indicate core/ non- core funds	Total Budget (USD)	Budget available (USD)	Specify if it is ongoing or planned
UNDP	Green Recovery Study – viability of financing options and climate financing instruments for a green recovery	EU Delegation	EUR 10,000	EUR 10,000	Ongoing
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	

## MATRIX OF ONGOING AND PLANNED RESPONSE PILLAR 5

		Sources of Funding: list all sources and indicate core/ non-core funds	Total Budget (USD)	Budget available (USD)	Specify if it is ongoing or planned
UNDP	Establishment of the Disaster Risk Register	EU for Civil Protection and Disaster Resilience Strengthening in the Republic of Serbia (European Union)	700,000	700,000	Ongoing
UNOPS	Provision of support to the introduction of eGovernance and enhancement of local eGovernment capacities, introduction of eServices and opening of public data at local level	Swiss Cooperation Office / SDC	300,000	300,000	Ongoing
UNDP	Fast-track Covid19 Intervention	Regional Programme on Local Development in the Western Balkans – Reload (European Union)	87,700	87,700	Ongoing
OHCHR	Assessments on the root causes and impacts of magnified inequalities in the context of COVID-19	OHCHR Core and non-core funding	25,000	25,000	Ongoing
OHCHR	Continuous activities concerning the implementation of and collection of data under the UN Socio-Economic Framework's set of Human Rights Indicators at the country level	OHCHR Core funding	20,000	20,000	Ongoing
UNESCO	Building trust in media during social isolation	European Commission	10,000	10,000	Ongoing
UNOPS	Developing and improving infrastructure with economic impact at the local level	EU	7,930,000	7,930,000	Planned (expected start in mid-2021)
UNESCO	Enhancing the capacities for more adequate management of archaeological sites	UNESCO core funding	12,000	12,000	Planned (expected start early 2021)
UNDP	Establishment of the Civil Protection Training Center	EU for Civil Protection and Disaster Resilience Strengthening in the Republic of Serbia (European Union)	650,000	650,000	Ongoing
UNDP	Improvement of operational capacities of civil protection units of general purposes	EU for Civil Protection and Disaster Resilience Strengthening in the Republic of Serbia (European Union)	400,000	400,000	Ongoing

## MATRIX OF ONGOING AND PLANNED RESPONSE PILLAR 5

		Sources of Funding: list all sources and indicate core/ non-core funds	Total Budget (USD)	Budget available (USD)	Specify if it is ongoing or planned
UNDP	Ensuring sustainable local communities by improving local development planning in the Republic of Serbia	Public and Private Finance for Development (Slovak Republic)	300,000	300,000	Ongoing
UNDP	Disaster risk management trainings of 900 emergency local responders and development of accompanying e-learning platform	EU for Civil Protection and Disaster Resilience Strengthening in the Republic of Serbia (European Union)	215,000	215,000	Ongoing
UNFPA	Improvement of information management, by ensuring communication of essential information through variety of channels tailored to the specific needs of different groups in the community	UNFPA core resources	30,000	30,000	Ongoing
UNESCO	Capacity building for fighting illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property on local level	European Commission/ Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	117,000	117,000	Planned (expected start early 2021)
UNDRR	Resilience Assessment at City level and of local Public Health systems, and recommendations for local resilience plan development; engagement of Local Governments in the Making Cities Resilient 2030 global Campaign	USAID	50,000	50,000	Ongoing
OHCHR	Support to advocacy and engagements between the Government and the civil society in the area of rule of law, human rights and equality	OHCHR core and non-core funding	30,000	30,000	Ongoing
UNICEF	Support to LSGs in developing integrated policies and budgeting for early childhood development and parenting	LEGO	500,000	500,000	Planned
UNOPS	Supporting crisis preparedness and resilience of the public institutions, including the social protection institutions	European Union	450,000	450,000	Planned
UNDP	Technical support for establishing the platform for data collection for COVID 19	"Serbia at your Fingertips / Digital Transformation for Development" project (GGF/Government of Serbia)	10,000	10,000	Ongoing
UNDP	Re skilling programm for IT	"Serbia at your Fingertips / Digital Transformation for Development" project (GGF/Government of Serbia)	350,000	350,000	Ongoing
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>12,186,700</b>	<b>12,186,700</b>	



## MATRIX OF ONGOING AND PLANNED RESPONSE PILLAR 6

		Sources of Funding: list all sources and indicate core/ non-core funds	Total Budget (USD)	Budget available (USD)	Specify if it is ongoing or planned
UNDP	Challenge Call to propose innovative solutions to tackle air quality in Serbia;	UNDP	20,000	20,000	Ongoing
UNDP	Research on Air Quality in Serbia	UNDP	20,000	20,000	Ongoing
UNECE	Guidance for local self-government on the management of medical and infectious in the context of COVID-19; Guide for developing waste management plans for local self-government; Air quality plan for Grad Kraljevo	UNECE	60,000	60,000	Ongoing
UNECE	Assessment of energy-water nexus synergy opportunities (including renewable energy) in the Drina River Basin leading to identification priority interventions and possible investments with cross-sectoral, climate (low carbon) and environmental benefits	UNECE	35,000	35,000	Ongoing
UNECE	Customization of the Guidelines and Best Practices for MSMEs in delivering energy efficient products and in providing renewable energy equipment	UNECE	10,000	10,000	Planned
UNDP	Rapid Response Facility – support to SEIA and the response plan and immediate and mid-term support to recover from the crisis;	UNDP	200,000	200,000	Ongoing
UNEP	Air Pollution and Human Health, integrating COVID perspective	UNEP	9,000	9,000	Ongoing
UNEP	South East European Platform to Beat Pollution – SEEPP Foster sub-regional cooperation and project/programme development in the fields of environmental protection and sustainable development, with a specific focus on pollution prevention, reduction and monitoring	UNEP	8,000	8,000	Ongoing
UNEP	Enhancing Environmental Performance and Climate Proofing of Infrastructure Investments in the Western Balkan Region from an EU integration perspective (with consideration of changing mobility patterns and infrastructure needs due to the pandemic)	UNEP/Austrian Development Agency (ADA)	8,000	8,000	Ongoing
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>370,000</b>	<b>370,000</b>	

## ANNEX 2: COVID19 KEY SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS

These indicators will be monitored by the UN Country team in Serbia for the coming 12 months to inform and adjust interventions and programmes

Pillar 1: HEALTH FIRST: Protecting health services and systems during the crisis			
Indicator	Value	Comparison values (Trend)	Source of verification/ Remarks
Total Deaths Codiv19/ General mortality rate	763 (October 2020)	8950 (May 2019)	Institute of Public Health of Serbia
	8602 (May 2020)		
Crude Cumulative Incidence per 100 000 population	499.4 (October 2020)	Croatia: 494.9	WHO
		Bosnia: 928.4	
		Montenegro: 2227.1	
Crude Cumulative Deaths: (per 1 000 000 population)	109.4 (October 2020)	Croatia: 77.2	WHO
		Bosnia: 280.4	
		Montenegro: 302.5	
Total hospitalized/total on respirators	2454/87 (October 2020)		Institute of Public Health Serbia
Number of people allowed to participate in public gatherings	October 2020	June 2020	Ministry of Interior
a) Indoor	a) 30	a) 100	
b) Outdoor	b) 30	b) 500	

**Pillar 2: PROTECTING PEOPLE: Social protection and basic services**

Indicator	Value	Comparison values (Trend)	Source of verification/ Remarks
Percentage/ratio of vulnerable populations accessing routine health services			
a) Children			
1. DTP/IPV/Hib immunisation	1.94.7% (2018)	Q1 - 2021	For children: UNICEF/IPH
2. MMR immunisation	2. 93.4% (2018)		
3. First preventive check-up (TBD)	3. TBD		For adults: -
Alternative: Percent of children who were unable to access health services that they required	Alternative: 7% (one third of those who needed them) (April 2020)		
b) Adults	b) TBD		
<b>2.5</b> Number of beneficiaries of social protection schemes and services related to the COVID-19 pandemic, disaggregated by type of programme, territory (rural/urban), sex, age group and at-risk population			UNICEF (in partnership with Red Cross and in coordination with MoLEVSA)
a) Cash for productivity / transfer programmes	a) 0 - September 2020		
b) Psychosocial support services	b) 19,507 – calls received/responded to total January-May 2020 (NADEL)		UNICEF (in coordination with MoLEVSA)
<b>2.2.</b>			
a) Percentage of children supported with blended/ distance/home-based learning, disaggregated by sex and vulnerability (incl. preparatory pre-school, primary and secondary education)	a) 0 (May)	a) September 2020: 257,000 Primary school children attending school-based classes; 235,000 children in lower secondary and 250,000 children in upper secondary school attending blended learning (half of the time attending schools and the other half distance learning from home)	UNCT Fact Finding report UNICEF/MoESTD
	b) 99% of primary and secondary students (May); 83% of Roma students in primary education and 91% in secondary education 79% for preparatory pre-school programme		
Number of beneficiaries of public residential institutions for elderly aged over 65	TBD	6736 (2019)	Statistical Office RS
Number of beds in shelters available to homeless people	300	TBD	ADRA CSO

Pillar 3: ECONOMIC RESPONSE AND RECOVERY: Protecting jobs, small and medium-sized enterprises, and vulnerable workers in the informal economy			
Indicator	Value	Comparison values (Trend)	Source of verification/ Remarks
Employment rate (15-64)	48.7% (Q1 2020)	49.7% (Q4 2019)	Statistical Office RS
Number of construction permits issued due to COVID-19 pandemic	1343 - 31,4% drop in May 2020	1822 (May 2019)	
Number of tourist arrivals	170411 (June 2020)	391387 (June 2019)	Statistical Office RS
Production of manufactured Products	-9.3% (May 2020)	May 2019	Statistical Office RS (Monthly Statistical Bulletin)
Industrial Production	100.4 (0.4% growth) (July 2020)	July 2019	Statistical Office RS
	98.6 (1.4% fall) (Jan-July 2020)	January- July 2019	
Number of closes MSMSEs (Struck off/terminated and newly established companies)	- 15% less terminated entrepreneurs (Jan-June 2020)	January-June 2019	Serbian Business Register Agency
	- 4.3% less terminated companies (Jan-June 2020)		
	- 37.7% less newly established entrepreneurs (Jan-June 2020)		
	- 2.4% less newly established companies (Jan-June 2020)		
Working hours and FTE jobs lost in the Western Balkans and selected countries			ILO
FTE jobs lost (48 Hours)	510 000 (Q2)		
Percentage of hours lost	14.8 % (Q2)		



Pillar 4: MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION			
Indicator	Value	Comparison values (Trend)	Source of verification/ Remarks
Real GDP growth	-6.4% (Quarterly Indices)	Update 31st November	Statistical Office RS
Export of Goods	Export –USD 7046,3 million, or -12,1% fall, in relation to the same period 2019. (Jan-May)		Statistical Office RS (Monthly Statistical Bulletin)
Import of Good	Import – USD 9789,9 million, or - 9.9% in relation to the same period 2019.		
Foreign Direct Investments		Release date:	National Bank of Serbia
	EUR 816.6 million (1st quarter 2020)	30 September 2020 for period January – June 2020	
	EUR 3,583.1 million (in 2019)	31 March 2021, for period January – December 2020	
Fiscal Deficit/Suficit	RSD -323,749 million (January-July 2020)	RSD +12,752.1 million (2019)	Ministry of finance RS
Public Debt (as a % of GDP)	56.7 - July 2020	57.3 (June 2020)	Ministry of finance RS
		52 (2019)	

Pillar 5: SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE			
Indicator	Value	Comparison values (Trend)	Source of verification/ Remarks
Protector of citizens (Ombudsman):			
1. Number of the complaints	1. 4,702 (Total contacts, March-June 2020)	1. 3.338 (for 2019)	Annual Reports of the Ombudsman
2. Number of cases with recommendations	2. 934 (665 that are due)	2. 793 (409 that are due)	
3. Number of cases with recommendations that were successfully executed	3. 635	3. 381	
4. Ratio of the number of accepted complaints and the number of decisions that were successfully executed	4. 95,48%	4. 93,15%	
Percent of Roma settlements without access to safe running water	22.65% (159/702) Settlements	TBD	Mapping of Roma Substandard Settlements – according to risks and access to rights during the COVID-19, SIPRU and OHCHR, 2020
Number of local DRR assessments and protection and rescue plans approved	76 (2019) out of 173 LFS		UNDP

### ANNEX 3: UN SYSTEM PROCUREMENT OF MEDICAL & NON-MEDICAL EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES TO COVID19 RESPONSE IN SERBIA (MARCH- JUNE 2020)

Pillar	Activity	Participating Agency	Budget (\$)	Description of Activity	Time of Delivery	Location	Donor	Quantity	Completed
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system March -June 2020	Procurement of laboratory test kits/ reagents	WHO	\$ 244,000	PCR tests kits	15-03-20	Belgrade- Distribution TBC	Germany (WHO Regional Office for Europe)	5,300	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of laboratory test kits/ reagents	WHO	\$ 272,000	6,000 PCR tests	10-04-20	Belgrade- Torlak Institute	USAID	6,000	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of mechanical ventilators	WHO	\$ 234,716	200 oxygen concentrators	10-05-20	Belgrade- Distribution TBC	USAID	200	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of RNA extraction kits and consumables for the RT PCR	WHO	\$ 143,284	Fingertip Pulse Oximeters	15-05-20	Belgrade- Distribution TBC	USAID	3,500	No
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of RNA extraction kits and consumables for the RT PCR	WHO	\$ 59,300	40 kits for 10,000 tests with additional equipment	07-05-20	Belgrade- Distribution TBC	WHO Emergency Funds	40 kits	
Pillar 2: Risk communication and Community engagement	Development/ dissemination of tailored made communication	WHO	\$ 75,000	Media messages 1. Using masks reducing risks, 2. Washing hands 3. protecting yourself and others 4. safe ways to prepare food, 5. how to behave on markets,6. Stay safe while traveling, Mental Health	May and June 2020	WHO FB, IPH Serbia website, airports, press statements, media appearances, migrant centres	WHO Corporate Funds	n/a	

Pillar	Activity	Participating Agency	Budget (\$)	Description of Activity	Time of Delivery	Location	Donor	Quantity	Completed
Pillar 2: Risk communication and Community engagement	Development/ dissemination of tailored made communication	UNWOMEN	\$ 25,000	Women's rights, gender equality, GBV, rural women Design and distribution of brochures, Social media and traditional Newsletters and briefs for donors and partners, Human impact stories for UN Women regional website		Media	TBC	TBC	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of mechanical ventilators	UNOPS	\$ 2,821,719	Devices for Monitoring, Ventilation and Anaesthesia	25-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	EU/Norway	50	Partial
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of mechanical ventilators	UNOPS	\$ 1,488,688	Devices for artificial ventilation (respirators)	25-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	EU/Norway	70	No
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNOPS	\$ 305,000	Covid-19 virus protective Medical Face Masks (standard type) multiple sizes (S,M,L)	15-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	EU	800,000	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of laboratory test kits/ reagents	UNOPS	\$ 1,473,880	Real Time PCR Machine and 2019-nCoV test	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	EU	2 pcs and reagents for 20000 tests	Partial
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of mechanical ventilators	UNOPS	\$ 130,000	Stationary oxygen concentrators	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	EU	100	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of mechanical ventilators	UNOPS	\$ 781,334	Intensive care monitors	28-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	EU, Kingdom of Norway	100	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of contactless thermometer	UNOPS	\$ 49,500	300 Infra-red Thermometers	15-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	EU	300	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNOPS	\$ 250,000	Protective masks N95 Size L - 50000 Size M - 50000	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	EU	1,000,000	



Pillar	Activity	Participating Agency	Budget (\$)	Description of Activity	Time of Delivery	Location	Donor	Quantity	Completed
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Truck size pre-fabricated container infirmary (8-10sqm)	UNOPS	\$ 666,471	100 Containers	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	EU	100	Partial
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Truck size pre-fabricated container infirmary (8-10sqm)	UNOPS	\$ 85,860	Medical furniture for 100 containers	30-05-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	EU	100	Partial
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNOPS	\$ 2,750,000	Protective medical equipment		TBC	TBC	LS	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of laboratory test kits/ reagents	UNOPS	\$ 220,000	Hematology cell counter machine and tests		TBC	TBC	20	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of mechanical ventilators	UNOPS	\$ 550,000	Syringe and infusion pumps		TBC	TBC	200	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of laboratory test kits/ reagents	UNOPS	\$ 500,000	Medical blood gas analyser		TBC	TBC	20 analysers and 15,000 test cards	No
Pillar 2: Risk communication and Community engagement	Procurement of hygiene items for Roma population	UNOPS	\$ 54,412	Procurement of food and hygiene packages for Roma population	05-05-20	Belgrade, Niš, Subotica, Valjevo	EU	1000 packages	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of mechanical ventilators	UNICEF	\$ 1,079,984	50 Ventilator ,medical adult-child w/ accessories	30-06-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	Private Sector Fundraising	50	No
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of mechanical ventilators	UNICEF	\$ 85,620	Oxygen concentrator (Procurement not finalized) Requested from Supply Division, subject to further quantity/price confirmation.	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	Private Sector Fundraising	30	No

Pillar	Activity	Participating Agency	Budget (\$)	Description of Activity	Time of Delivery	Location	Donor	Quantity	Completed
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 7,713	Face shield fog-resistant, full face disp	03-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Private Sector fundraising in progress)	5,376	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Disinfectants	UNICEF	\$ 59,861	Hygiene products for the most vulnerable	30-04-20	Serbia	Bilateral donors	8,000 sets	Partial
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of mechanical ventilators	UNICEF	\$ 19,747	Flowmeters for oxygen with humidifiers	30-04-20	Belgrade	Private Sector Fundraising in progress	60	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 652	HE Apron protection	03-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	5,200	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 2,469	HE*Gloves, heavy-duty rubber/nitrile, L	03-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	71,900	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 12,579	Coverall protection CatIII type 6b,XL	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	2,000	No
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 23,370	Gown surgical nonsterile nonwoven disp L	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	8,000	No
Pillar 2: Risk communication and Community engagement	Development/ dissemination of tailored made communication	UNICEF	\$ 350,000	1- Communication on prevention using UNICEF website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, U-Report platform and digital media channels. 2-Posters for vulnerable settlements (Roma) 3-TV and radio to increase reach of children and families		Social Media , posters, TV & Radio	TBC	TBC	

Pillar	Activity	Participating Agency	Budget (\$)	Description of Activity	Time of Delivery	Location	Donor	Quantity	Completed
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 1,504	Coverall protection CatIII type 6b,L	03-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	250	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 4,757	Mask,surgic,typellR,tiestrap,disp.pack5	03-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	1299	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 8,212	Coverall ,protection, CatIII ,type 6b,M	03-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	Private Sector Fundraising in progress	1,299	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 65,040	Gown, surgic, nonsterile, nonwoven, disp,XL	03-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	25,500	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 26,276	Mask,high-fil,FFP2/N95,no valve,PAC-20	03-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	450	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 7,321	Mask,surgic,typellR,tiestrap,disp. pack50	03-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	1,999	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 49,057	Coverall, protection, CatIII, type 6b,XL	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	7,800	No
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 4,922	Mask,surgic,typellR,tiestrap,disp. pack50	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	1,344	No

Pillar	Activity	Participating Agency	Budget (\$)	Description of Activity	Time of Delivery	Location	Donor	Quantity	Completed
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 1,020	Gown, surgic, nonsterile, nonwoven, disp, XL	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	400	No
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 2,618	Mask,high-fil,FFP2/N95,no valve,PAC-20	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	50	No
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 23,976	Gown, surgic, nonsterile, nonwoven, disp, XL	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	9,400	No
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 14,086	Mask,high-fil,FFP2/N95,no valve,PAC-20	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	269	No
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNICEF	\$ 28,628	Gown, surgic, nonsterile, nonwoven, disp,L	30-04-20	Belgrade-Distribution TBC	UNICEF Regular Resources (Fundraising in progress)	9,800	No
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Disinfectants	UNHCR	\$ 47,305	Hand sanitizer gel 65ml, for SCRM (staff and asylum seekers/migrants)	10-04-20	SCRM central warehouse in Obrenovac	UNHCR Resources	60,000 pieces	Partial
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Disinfectants	UNHCR	\$ 6,008	Liquid hand soap 1 litre, for SCRM (asylum seekers/migrants)	06-04-20	SCRM central warehouse in Obrenovac	UNHCR resources	6,500 lit	Partial
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of contactless thermometer	UNHCR	\$ 733	No contact thermometer, for SCRM (asylum seekers/migrants)	27-03-20	SCRM central warehouse in Obrenovac	UNHCR	18	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Disinfectants	UNHCR	\$ 862	Empty plastic refill spray bottle 500ml, for SCRM (staff and asylum seekers/migrants)	19-03-20	SCRM central warehouse in Obrenovac	UNHCR	1,300	Yes



Pillar	Activity	Participating Agency	Budget (\$)	Description of Activity	Time of Delivery	Location	Donor	Quantity	Completed
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Other	UNHCR	\$ 117	Water tank vol.1,000 litres, for Asylum Centre in Banja Koviljaca	27-03-20	SCRM Asylum Centre in Banja Koviljaca	UNHCR	1	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Other	UNHCR	\$ 1,695	Mobile phones, for SCRM	31-03-20	SCRM asylum and reception centres	UNHCR	10	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Supporting school based communication	UNHCR	\$ 6,180	Software, for UASC Homes	31-03-20	UASC homes	UNHCR	12 sets	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Other	UNHCR	\$ 8,242	Cleaning services, monthly, for Reception Centre in Presevo	30-03-20	SCRM Reception Centre in Presevo	UNHCR	2 months as of 30 March	Partial
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Disinfectants	UNHCR	\$ 678	Hygiene supplies, 2 months, for Homes for UASC: JRS and Loznica	13-04-20	UASC homes in Loznica and JRS Belgrade	UNHCR	610 pieces	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of hygiene items for Roma population	UNHCR	\$ 6,586	Food and hygiene supplies for 230 Roma IDP families in Belgrade	09-04-20	Belgrade, 9 Roma settlements	UNHCR	230 parcels	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNHCR	\$ 12,008	Latex gloves and protective masks, for SCRM staff	13-04-20	SCRM central warehouse in Obrenovac	UNHCR	12,000 pairs of gloves, 16,000 masks	Partial
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNHCR	\$ 1,726	Protective masks, latex gloves and ethanol for MoLEVSA staff working with children	09-04-20	16 social institutions for child protection in 14 cities	UNHCR	2,300 masks, 1,150 pairs of gloves, 60 litres of ethanol	Yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Other	UNHCR	\$ 5,065	Blankets for reception centres in Presevo and Miratovac	01-04-20	Reception centres in Presevo and Miratovac	UNHCR	1,010	Yes

Pillar	Activity	Participating Agency	Budget (\$)	Description of Activity	Time of Delivery	Location	Donor	Quantity	Completed
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Other	UNHCR	\$ 7,660	Blankets and sleeping bags for Reception Centre in Morovic	03-04-20	Reception Centre in Morovic	UNHCR	510 blankets and 512 sleeping bags	Yes
Pillar 2: Risk communication and Community engagement	Development/ dissemination of tailored made communication	UNHCR	\$ 20,000	Media messages on protection, access to rights including asylum procedure and services.		FB, Twitter, UNHCR Serbia website	TBC	TBC	
Pillar 2: Risk communication and Community engagement	Development/ dissemination of tailored made communication	UNFPA	\$ 15,000	General information about GBV ,SRHR during pandemic, information for pregnant women, old people, youth against Covid social media campaign, Dad in quarantine social media campaign to promote positive gender norms during isolation		FB, Twitter, Youtube, UNFPA Serbia website	UNFPA	TBC	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Transportation (Cargo flights) cost	UNDP	\$ 7,500,000	Airlift support 15 flights from China & India	31-05-20	Belgrade	EU	15 flights	Yes
Pillar 2: Risk communication and Community engagement	Development/ dissemination of tailored made communication	UNDP	\$ 20,000	Messaging on emergency response ; Social capital building; Digital/Tech solutions; Vulnerable groups (Roma, elderly); VaW through Instagram, FB, Twitter, UNDP website, traditional media		Instagram, FB, Twitter, UNDP website, traditional media	TBC	TBC	
Pillar 2: Risk communication and Community engagement	Development/ dissemination of tailored made communication	No Agency ATM	\$ 50,000	TBC - Marketing agency to develop joint package of comms materials.		Media	TBC	TBC	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of laboratory test kits/ reagents	No Agency ATM	\$ 73,000	Standard sets of RT-PCR (real-time polymerase chain reaction) equipment, consumables, primers and probes for 2000 tests	07-05-20	TORLAK Institute	IAEA	200 tests	No

Pillar	Activity	Participating Agency	Budget (\$)	Description of Activity	Time of Delivery	Location	Donor	Quantity	Completed
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	IOM	\$ 140,000	Large-scale tents which can accommodate up to 140 people each in order to alleviate pressure on existing accommodation capacities	15-04-20	Kikinda, Sombor, Principovac, Obrenovac	EU	4	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	IOM	\$ 155,000	Bunk beds for tents, including mattresses	20-04-20	Sombor, Obrenovac, Principovac, Kikinda	EU	560	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	IOM	\$ 32,500	Bed linen, blankets and pillows for bunk beds	20-04-20	Obrenovac, Principovac, Sombor, Kikinda	EU	560	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	IOM	\$ 200,000	NFIs (clothes, personal hygienic kits for migrants)	05-03-20	TBD	EU	6,000	
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Disinfectants	IOM	\$ 96,000	Procurement of hygienic supplies (hand sanitizers, liquid soap, one-time use sanitary gloves, masks)	20-04-20	TBD	EU		
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Disinfectants	UNDP	\$ 48,000	disinfectants, food containers	01-09-20	Belgrade	Norway	100	yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Vehicles	UNDP	\$ 50,000	vehicles	02-09-20	Belgrade	Norway	2	yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Ambulance Vehicles	UNDP	\$ 771,232	ambulance vehicles	03-10-20	TBD	EU	12	no
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Protective equipment	UNDP	\$ 243,750	encapsulated suits	01-10-20	TBD	EU	75	no

Pillar	Activity	Participating Agency	Budget (\$)	Description of Activity	Time of Delivery	Location	Donor	Quantity	Completed
Pillar 2: Risk communication and Community engagement	Development/ dissemination of tailored made communication	UNDP	\$ 1,389	Design, printing, and distribution of information materials on infectious waste in Roma settlements	01-05-20	Serbia	UNDP	100	yes
Pillar 3: Strengthening the response of the national health system	Procurement of Personal protective equipment	UNDP	\$ 5,409	protective masks for Roma	01-05-20	Serbia	UNDP	100	yes
Pillar 2: Risk communication and Community engagement	Procurement of hygiene items for older population	UNFPA	\$ 37,000	Procurement of hygiene products for 4430 the most vulnerable older people in 31 municipalities in Serbia	30-05-20	31 municipalities in Serbia	UNFPA	4,430 parcels	Partial
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$ 24,622,721</b>						



## ANNEX 4: GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS IN SERBIAN LANGUAGE

### General guidelines

1. WHO Policy considerations for the European Region: [Strengthening and adjusting public health measures throughout the COVID-19 transition phases](#).
2. WHO [Advice](#) on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19

### Covid-19 and all vulnerable groups

3. UN Women Serbia guidance [How to include marginalized and vulnerable groups of people in risk communication and community engagement](#)

### Refugees and migrants

4. WHO Interim [guidance](#) for refugee and migrant health in relation to COVID-19 in the WHO European Region  
UNHCR [Advice to Refugees and Migrants in Serbia](#)

### Elderly

5. WHO [Interim Guidance - Infection Prevention and Control guidance for Long-Term Care Facilities in the context of COVID-19](#)

### Healthcare workers

6. WHO has developed courses on the following topics to support the COVID-19 response in Serbian language including: A general introduction to emerging respiratory viruses, including novel coronaviruses (available in [English](#), [Serbian](#)); Infection Prevention and Control for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) ([English](#), [Serbian](#)).

### Women

7. UNFPA technical brief [COVID-19: A Gender Lens Protecting sexual and reproductive health and rights, and promoting gender equality](#)

### Persons with substance use disorders

8. UNODC [Guidance for the treatment of persons with substance use disorders](#)
9. UNDOC [guidelines](#) on comprehensive HIV prevention, care and support services for drug users during the COVID-19 pandemic

### Parenting

10. UNFPA [Q&A on pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding](#)
11. UNODC [information on parenting](#) during COVID-19.

### COVID-19 and human rights

12. Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, with the expert support of UN Human Rights Team Serbia presents the first brief analysis HUMAN RIGHTS AND COVID-19 - [Analysis of the changes in legal framework during a state of emergency and impact on enjoying human rights - Freedom of Movement, Freedom of Assembly, Freedom of Religion or Belief](#).

### Guidance and statements relevant for the position of the vulnerable rights holders groups and for specific contexts during the COVID-19 crisis:

13. Special Procedure (SP): Leave no one behind during COVID-19 epidemic – [link](#)

14. SP: Freedom of assembly and association & COVID-19 – [link](#)
15. High Commissioner for Human Rights: COVID-19 requires coordinated action - [link](#)
16. CRC Committee: Children & COVID-19 - [link](#)
17. SPs: Violence against children & COVID-19 - [link](#)
18. CESCR Committee: Economic and social rights and COVID-19
19. CRPD Committee: Persons with disabilities and COVID-19 - [link](#)
20. SP: IDPs & COVID-19 – [link](#)
21. SP: Minorities and COVID-19 – [link](#)
22. WHO: Prisons and COVID-19 Guidance - [link](#)
23. SPs: Domestic violence and COVID-19 – [link](#)
24. SP: Older persons and COVID-19 – [link](#); UNSDG Policy brief, UNFPA technical [brief](#)
25. SP: Xenophobia and racial discrimination, & COVID 19 - [link](#)
26. SPs: Safe water and COVID-19 - [link](#)
27. SP: Global recession and COVID-19 - [link](#)
28. SP: Freedom of expression, freedom of information & COVID 19 – [link](#)
29. SP: Housing and COVID-19 – [link](#)
30. SP: Persons with disabilities and COVID-19 - [link](#)
31. SPs: Emergency powers, human rights & COVID-19 - [link](#)
32. SPT: Advice to States Parties and National Preventive Mechanisms relating to the Coronavirus Pandemic - [link](#)
33. SPT: Advice on compulsory quarantine for Coronavirus-COVID-19 - [link](#)
34. The UN Refugee Agency calls for the full inclusion of refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless and internally displaced persons into COVID-19 recovery strategies and plans - [link](#)
35. UNHCR Advice to Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Serbia - [link](#)
36. UN Refugee Agency is urging Governments worldwide to pay urgent attention to the plight of millions of stateless people - [link](#)
37. UNHCR: The Impact of COVID-19 on Stateless Populations: Policy Recommendations and Good Practices - [link](#)

38. Coronavirus: UNHCR offers practical recommendations in support of European countries to ensure access to asylum and safe reception - [link](#)
39. Beware long-term damage to human rights and refugee rights from the coronavirus pandemic: UNHCR - [link](#)
40. Council of Europe: GUIDELINES ON PROTECTING NGO WORK IN SUPPORT OF REFUGEES AND OTHER MIGRANTS – [link](#)

#### LIST OF UNICEF POSTERS AND LEAFLETS:

1. UNICEF: Protect yourself and your family from the coronavirus ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
2. WHO and UNICEF: Helping children cope with stress during the COVID-19 epidemic ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
3. WHO and UNICEF: Coping with stress during the COVID-19 epidemic ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
4. WHO and UNICEF: Symptoms of the new coronavirus ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
5. WHO and UNICEF: The new coronavirus: recommendations on how children can protect themselves ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
6. WHO and UNICEF: The new coronavirus – how to protect yourself? ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
7. WHO and UNICEF: How to use a mask correctly ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
8. WHO and UNICEF: COVID-19 Parenting: Bad behaviour ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
9. UNICEF: COVID-19 information ([Serbian](#))
10. UNICEF: Key messages for adolescents and young people ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
11. UNICEF: What parents can do to prepare the child and themselves for possible hospitalization during the COVID-19 epidemic ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
12. UNFPA and UNICEF: Coronavirus - Recommendations for pregnant and breastfeeding women ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
13. UNICEF: How to fight against the coronavirus ([Serbian](#) and [Roma](#))
14. WHO and UNICEF: Helping children cope with stress (Farsi, Pashto, Arabic, English)
15. WHO and UNICEF: Parenting tips (Arabic, Farsi, Pashto, English)