

UNICEF and Nelt Group strengthen school principals' leadership skills

Interactive workshops and real-life examples help principals improve team management and organisational culture

Belgrade, 24 October 2025 – The role of a school principal involves responsibility for the overall functioning of the school, leading a team, and creating an environment in which students and teachers can thrive. To support their professional development, UNICEF and Nelt Group organised a workshop for around 30 primary school principals in Serbia as part of their strategic partnership. The activity is part of UNICEF's broader support to the education system within its partnership with the Ministry of Education.

During the event, participants heard from business sector managers about building trust, motivating teams, and developing a culture of collaboration. Interactive sessions and practical examples fostered dialogue between education and business, focusing on leadership based on knowledge, empathy, and accountability.

In line with the needs of modern society and the labour market, developing school leaders has become essential to shaping education for the future.

"This is a pioneering initiative that connects the worlds of business and education through the exchange of knowledge and experience in leadership and management. School principals play a key role in creating a positive school climate, and through programmes like this, they have an opportunity to develop skills that help them inspire their teams and improve the quality of education," said **Tanja Rankovic, Education Specialist at UNICEF**.

Developing leadership in schools is only possible through joint engagement and mutual learning across sectors.

"We are proud that Nelt is the first company to partner with UNICEF on this endeavour. We believe that investing in education means investing in the community, and developing principals and teachers represents an investment in the future of our children," said **Bojana Nikolic, Senior Education and Development Expert at Nelt Group**.

Workshop participants agreed that the exchange of experiences and practical advice from the business world brought them a new perspective to their everyday work.

"As a school principal performing this role for 10 years, this training meant a lot to me, especially in the area of communication skills that are essential for every leader. Applying the knowledge I gained will contribute to a better atmosphere among teachers and all school staff, and consequently among our students, significantly improving the quality of our school's work," said **Darko Dimitrijevic, Principal of Olga Milosevic Primary School in Smederevska Palanka**.

Education becomes even more effective when linked with practices from other sectors. Principals who develop leadership and management competencies become more skilled at leading teams and driving changes that improve learning quality and create a better environment for every child.

The workshop was held as part of a three-year strategic partnership between UNICEF and Nelt Group in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Angola, which runs until the end of 2026. The partnership encompasses 15,000 students and 300 teachers, supporting schools with STEM tools, digital resources, grants, mentoring, learning clubs and activities in the area of digital safety.

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