

Bhutan

Executive Summary

This past year, 2015, marked the second year of the common United Nations Country Programme 2014–2018, which is aligned with the 11th Five Year Plan of the Royal Government of Bhutan. It was also the last year for achieving the Millennium Development Goal targets. Towards achieving results for children in Bhutan, the Country Office utilized 98 per cent of the total Programmable Budget of US\$5,213,530.07. Highlighted below are some of the significant achievements and key partnerships of the Country Office in 2015, and some shortfalls and unfinished business.

Significant Achievements:

UNICEF's support in scaling up Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) services by establishing community-based ECCD centres, particularly in the most remote and vulnerable communities, has helped the Government to increase access to ECCD from 9 per cent in 2014 to 17 per cent in 2015.

Implementation of a comprehensive capacity development programme on policing practices and procedures resulted in increased capacities of police personnel, including those from the Women and Child Protection Units/Desks, to respond more effectively and sensitively to women and child victims of violence.

Within a year, use of improved sanitation coverage has increased from 26 per cent to 63 per cent in Mongar and from 25 per cent to 46 per cent in Samdrupjongkhar Districts. This was made possible through a demand-driven approach – engaging whole communities, including schools and institutions, to motivate behaviour change – initiated by the Rural Sanitation and Hygiene Programme of the Ministry of Health (MoH), with UNICEF support.

Child malnutrition has significantly declined, from 33.5 per cent in 2010 to 21 per cent in 2015, and anaemia in young children from 81 per cent in 2003 to 35 per cent in 2015, as shown by preliminary data of the National Nutrition Survey 2015. For the first time, a national multi-sectoral food and nutrition security strategy and action plan was developed with targets to reduce chronic undernutrition in young children to less than 12 per cent, anaemia in young children to less than 40 per cent, and anaemia in women of childbearing age to less than 30 per cent by 2025. To achieve the global Polio Endgame, Bhutan has introduced inactivated polio vaccine into routine immunization. To reduce newborn mortality from 21 per 1,000 live births to 17 per 1,000 live births by 2023 and the stillbirth rate to 15 per 1,000 live births in the same period, the MoH, with UNICEF support, has developed Bhutan's Every Newborn Action Plan.

Shortfalls and Unfinished Business:

The draft National Youth Action Plan still awaits final Government approval, thereby delaying implementation. Securing adequate funding to effectively operationalize the action plan is another setback.

Bhutan has made overall progress in reducing child undernutrition. However, preliminary

findings from the National Nutrition Survey 2015 show significant disparities in the prevalence of undernutrition among different socio-economic groups. Children in the lowest wealth quintile (35.5 per cent) are more than six times more stunted compared with those from the wealthiest quintile (5.6 per cent). Similar disparities exist between rural and urban and between western (which is more developed) and eastern regions.

Collaborative Partnerships:

The partnership between UNICEF and the University of New England, Australia established in 2014 to develop an ECCD Diploma programme at the Paro College of Education has advanced well with the development of curriculum and course materials and the course validation by the Academic Board of the Royal University of Bhutan. This is the first ever ECCD Diploma in Bhutan, allowing teachers to specialize in ECCD leading to improved quality of ECCD programmes in the country. The programme was launched in December 2015.

The partnership with the Bhutan Nuns' Foundation ensured the expansion of the Menstrual Hygiene Management Programme to 10 more nunneries in eastern Bhutan in 2015. As part of this, the nuns have been trained and supplied with materials and sewing machines to stitch reusable sanitary napkins.

Towards enhancing the capacity of parliamentarians, civil society organizations, civil servants, researchers and the private sector in understanding, interpreting and influencing social policies, UNICEF partnered with the Royal University of Bhutan in developing a Certificate Course on Social Policy at Sherubtse College in eastern Bhutan. In 2015, this partnership was expanded to include the Jindal School of Government and Public Policy in India. The course, which will be offered in January 2016, focuses on three separate but related areas of policy analysis, governance, and public service delivery and leadership towards effective policymaking and implementation. It is expected to lead to further advocacy and progressive policies and programmes for children, women and other vulnerable groups.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

ANC – antenatal care
BCP – Business Continuity Plan
BSC – Business Support Centre, Nepal
CMT – Country Management Team
CSO – civil society organization
CWD – children with disabilities
CZO – Chief of Zonal Offices
DCT – Direct Cash Transfers
DYS – Department of Youth and Sports
EAB – Evaluation Association of Bhutan
ECCD – Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA – Environment Footprint Assessment
EMIS – Education Management Information System
GNH – Gross National Happiness
GSSC – Global Shared Service Centre
HACT – Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
ICT – information and communication technology
IMEP – Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
KPI - Key Performance Indicator
MDG – Millennium Development Goal

MoE – Ministry of Education
 MoH – Ministry of Health
 MHM – Menstrual Hygiene Management
 NCWC – National Commission for Women and Children
 NFE – non-formal education
 NGO – non-governmental organization
 OR – Other Resources
 PAS/ePAS – Performance Appraisals
 PME – Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
 PNC – post-natal care
 RBP – Royal Bhutan Police
 RENEW – Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women
 ROSA – Regional Office for South Asia (UNICEF)
 RR – Regular Resources
 RSAHP – Rural Sanitation and Hygiene Programme
 RMT – Regional Management Team
 TRIP – Travel Request Information Process
 UNCT – United Nations Country Team (Bhutan)
 VAC – violence against children
 VHF/HF – Very High Frequency/High Frequency
 VHW – village health worker
 WASH – water, sanitation and hygiene
 WCYC – Women, Children and Youth Committee (of Bhutan’s National Assembly)
 YDF – Bhutan Youth Development Fund
GLOSSARY OF TERMINOLOGY
 Dzongkha – National Language of Bhutan
 Dratshang Lhentshog – Commission for Monastic Affairs
 Dungkhag – Sub-district
 Dzongkhag – District (political and administrative unit)
 Gewog – Block (administrative unit made up of several villages)
 Je Khenpo – Chief Abbot (head of the Central Monastic Body)
 Kidu – Royal ‘well-being’ grant or land warrant
 Ngultrum (Nu.) – National currency of Bhutan
 Zhung Dratshang – Central Monastic Body

Capacity Development

Capacity development – a key area of UNICEF’s support to the Royal Government – focused on institutional capacity development and building the capacity of youth, children and parents to know and claim their rights.

UNICEF supported the Royal Bhutan Police (RBP) to design and implement a capacity development programme on child- and women-friendly policing practices. As a result, 40 personnel from Women and Child Protection Units/Desks acquired the essential skills to deal with children and women more sensitively. The RBP plans to institutionalize the programme in 2016.

The Paro College of Education, Royal University of Bhutan, with UNICEF, support developed a Diploma programme in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD). The curriculum was developed as part of UNICEF’s partnership with the University of New England Australia. Ten faculty members, who will teach the programme, attended an intensive attachment programme

at the university to upgrade their knowledge and skills. The programme was launched in December 2015.

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health's (MoH's) Rural Sanitation and Hygiene Programme (RSAHP) to initiate a demand-driven approach that engaged whole communities to motivate behaviour change. A total of 176 masons were trained to construct improved sanitation facilities and 25 Health Assistants were trained on facilitating demand-creation workshops. More than 10,000 households from two districts attended the workshops. Within a year of the initiative, improved sanitation coverage increased from 26 per cent to 63 per cent in Mongar and from 25 per cent to 46 per cent in Samdrupjongkhar Districts.

A four-day workshop on child protection, focusing on violence against children, was organized for parents working in Project DANTAK (Indian border roads organization) construction sites in three districts. It improved understanding among 250 parents and their children about child rights. The workshop also provided the Project DANTAK team with specific guidance on establishing response and referral mechanisms.

Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

A qualitative research to generate evidence on knowledge, attitudes and practices related to violence against children (VAC) in Bhutan was completed in 2015. This research, a second phase of the ongoing VAC study, identified drivers of violence, and children's and adults' perceptions on VAC. The study found that 'karma' (fate), alcohol abuse and divorce drive different types of violence against children. The findings have contributed towards designing the prevalence study (third phase of VAC) to be completed in 2016. It will result in a comprehensive plan including a communication for development strategy to respond to VAC in Bhutan.

A national nutrition survey in 2015 generated new evidence on prevalence and determinants of chronic undernutrition in children. Preliminary results of the survey show that stunting prevalence decreased from 33.5 per cent in 2010 to 21 per cent in 2015. Stunting prevalence is higher in rural (26 per cent) compared with urban areas (16 per cent). To sustain the gains achieved in reducing child undernutrition, a national nutrition strategy from 2016 to 2025, and an action plan from 2016 to 2018 have been drafted.

The Country Office's parliamentary engagement initiated in 2014 with the Women, Child and Youth Committee (WCYC) of the National Assembly resulted in key recommendations to relevant government agencies for follow up. Notable recommendations included increasing maternity leave for working mothers, improving institutional delivery in remote districts and a Disabilities Act to address the needs of persons with disabilities. The nationwide live telecast of the parliamentary sessions ensured wider advocacy on the recommendations. Some of the key results of this engagement has been the Government extending paid maternity leave to six months for working mothers in the civil service, and paternity leave for 10 days for working fathers. The Government has also initiated the development of a Disability Policy.

Partnerships

UNICEF initiated a partnership with Bhutan's Election Commission to launch the Bhutan Children's Parliament. It aims to scale up and institutionalize school-based Democracy Clubs in the country. The Children's Parliament held its first democratic elections in September, electing 43 members from a total of 153 contestants. The elected representatives act as an important bridge between democracy clubs and parliamentarians, highlighting issues that affect children and providing inputs on key national and policy matters that affect children.

UNICEF partnered with Ability Bhutan Society, a local civil society organization (CSO), to address protection concerns of children with disabilities (CWD). Following an extensive consultations, two manuals were developed for professionals and caregivers. Trainings based on these manuals enhanced the capacities of more than 100 professionals and service providers from eight districts working with children with disabilities to identify, report and address protection concerns of CWD. This initiative is expected to benefit nearly 200 CWD.

UNICEF's partnership with the Royal University of Bhutan to develop a Social Policy Certificate Course at Sherubtse College, was extended in 2015 to include India's Jindal School of Government and Public Policy. This helped develop a well-balanced curriculum. The first batch of learners, comprising civil servants, CSOs and parliamentarians, will attend the course in January 2016. It is expected to empower relevant stakeholders to understand and influence social policies, resulting in progressive policies and programmes for children, women and the vulnerable.

The Country Office continued its parliamentary engagement initiated in 2014, particularly with the WCYC of the National Assembly. The partnership has resulted in government agencies taking action on the Parliament's recommendations. These include drafting a policy on disabilities and extending paid maternity leave to six months for mothers and paternity leave for 10 days for fathers working in civil service.

External Communication and Public Advocacy

The Country Office continues to work closely with the WCYC of Bhutan's National Assembly to recommend on issues related to women, children and youth to the Parliament. In 2015, during its summer session, the Parliament made additional recommendations to a report from the WCYC and disseminated to relevant government agencies for follow-up. The nationwide live telecast of the parliamentary sessions ensures wider public advocacy on issues pertaining to children, youth and women.

A major highlight for the Country Office in 2015 was the visit of UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake in early November and hosting the Regional Management Team (RMT) and the Chief of Zonal Offices (CZO) meetings. This provided an opportunity for high-level advocacy on child rights in Bhutan by the Executive Director in his meetings with the Prime Minister and other key government partners.

A panel discussion led by Bhutan Prime Minister of Bhutan (Tshering Tobgay) on Gross National Happiness (GNH) and Results-Based Management was held as part of the RMT. It provided an opportunity to learn more about how the concept of GNH is applied in practice and an opportunity to advocate for including children younger than 18 years old in future GNH surveys.

To advocate on issues related to children, youth and women as well as to ensure visibility, the Country Office shared regular information via traditional and social media, especially during key UNICEF days.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

In partnership with the Ministry of Education (MoE), UNICEF participated in documenting good practices in Early Childhood Development organized by the Asia-Pacific Regional Network on Early Childhood to expand the knowledge base on innovative practices in the region. It brought together researchers and practitioners of ECCD from South Asia and Asia-Pacific. Each of the

participating countries documented good practices in ECCD in their respective countries.

Bhutan's case study was aimed at understanding the practices that enabled effective provision of ECCD support in hard-to-reach and resource constrained communities like Lhotokuchu, a remote indigenous community village in Samtse District in southern Bhutan. Interviews with various stakeholders and observations of the ECCD centres and the community indicate a range of positive outcomes. These include improved care of children, their readiness and adjustment to school, marked changes in self-confidence as apparent from their behaviour, improved health and hygiene, and changes in parental awareness and attitude towards the centre and learning.

Instrumental in making this happen was having one of the queen mothers as a patron; a multi-sectoral approach to improve the community that focused on basic needs; active parent and community involvement; nutrition supplement programme for children and facilitator quality and commitment. A mother shares that her 4-year-old daughter is very happy and enthusiastic to come to the centre because she can sing and play with her friends. The little girl now often wants her parents to sing nursery rhymes with her and makes her family members wash their hands before eating.

The case studies from Bhutan and other countries were presented at the Fourth International Conference on Poverty Reduction and Child Development, and the 2015 Asia-Pacific Regional ECCD Conference in Beijing, China, in October 2015. It will also be shared in other forums, including academic publications.

Identification and Promotion of Innovation

UNICEF partnered with four CSOs to support the empowerment of adolescents and youth by providing 35 grants for self-started initiatives. The initiatives, designed using comprehensive guidelines jointly developed by participating non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and UNICEF, are managed by young people in groups.

These 6–12 month youth-led initiatives have budgets ranging from US\$500 to US\$2,000. The initiatives cover diverse themes, including education through reading programmes, the environment (focusing on cleanliness, water conservation and waste management), awareness programmes on violence against women and children, substance abuse, employability and entrepreneurial skills (for setting up and managing small business units such as salons and carpentry workshops).

Through these initiatives, youth have gained exposure on grant management. The initiatives have contributed to enhancing the grantees' capacities in terms of managing an entire grant cycle, including grant application, implementation, monitoring, financial management, and reporting. The initiatives have also enabled adolescents and youth to be acknowledged as agents of change in their own communities. These are mostly start-ups by young people for a cause.

Support to Integration and Cross-Sectoral Linkages

Gaps in service provision and opportunities for cross-sectoral collaboration for CWD were identified through a mapping of disability interventions in the country led by the MOE and supported by UNICEF. The mapping indicates that CWD in Bhutan are excluded from social life and are unable to enjoy full participation in society. Currently, all CWDs do not receive prompt, timely or regular services in the health and education sectors. At the policy planning level, there

is low prioritization of disability interventions, tremendously impacting service delivery. Supporting CWD and their families is viewed as costly, and there is limited understanding of how investments now can reduce long-term costs of disability.

Based on the findings, technical working groups made recommendations on the way forward. These include creating awareness, improving accessibility, strengthening current systems for social services and, importantly, identifying a lead agency for coordinating services for CWDs. A key outcome of this process has been that the National Commission for Women and Children agreed to take the lead in coordinating issues relating to CWD.

Through the School Rationalization Project, UNICEF adopted a cross-sectoral approach, involving Education, Health and Nutrition and Child Protection sections to address challenges that children face in boarding schools. A school caregivers training incorporating elements of protection, nutrition, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) was developed. As a result, 32 trained caregivers are now providing care and protection services to 7,047 children, including 3,586 girls residing in 18 of the 158 boarding schools across the country. The training helped caregivers gain a stronger understanding of issues related to childcare and protection, health, sanitation and safety, and life skills including communication and listening skills. A Standard Operating Procedures to deal with issues faced by caregivers were also developed with UNICEF support.

Service Delivery

As half of maternal and newborn deaths occur in the first 48 hours of delivery, appropriate timing and quality of post-natal care (PNC) is critical for the survival and well-being of mothers and newborn.

According to the National Health Survey 2012, 97.9 per cent of pregnant women receive antenatal care (ANC) once and 81.7 per cent make four ANC visits. Increasing utilization of PNC services has remained a challenge, as 25 per cent of pregnant women still deliver at home. Most women who deliver in health facilities also do not return for recommended PNC visits.

To increase utilization of PNC services, particularly by women in remote rural areas, the MOH with UNICEF support integrated PNC in outreach services, targeting low-performing districts of Chukha, Samtse and Trashigang as a pilot. The districts were selected based on geographical diversity, difficult terrain, and maternal and newborn health outcomes. The outreach services aimed to ensure that all mothers and their newborns receive appropriate care immediately after delivery, for home deliveries, and within 3 to 5 days for institutional deliveries. Village health workers (VHW) line-listed and tracked pregnant women in their catchment areas and reported to health-care providers, who maintained follow-up contact through telephone. Results of the pilot showed no maternal and newborn deaths, and PNC visits increased from 83 per cent to 93 per cent in Chukha, from 62 per cent to 83 per cent in Samtse, and from 49 per cent to 86 per cent in Trashigang.

In 2015, the outreach service was scaled up to cover all 20 districts. Preliminary data showed improvement in performance of health workers in tracking pregnant women, timely home visits, increase in utilization of PNC services, no maternal and newborn deaths reported from home visits, and improved supervision and reporting from the districts.

Gender Mainstreaming and Equality

Monastic education in Bhutan has traditionally been male dominated including nunneries where young girls enrol for monastic education are managed by monks, who are responsible for teaching as well as care and supervision of the nuns. In 2015, UNICEF supported the Bhutan Nuns Foundation, a CSO working among nuns, to enhance the knowledge and capacities of 17 male principals and teachers from nine nunneries who were trained on child protection, especially focusing on issues relating to girls and women. This training helped the male principals and teachers to develop a better understanding on the nature of support they can offer to female teachers and nuns, including in terms of reporting cases of violence to the Child Care and Protection Office of the Dratshang Lhengtshog (Commission for Monastic Affairs) for counselling, short-term shelter and referral services.

During menstruation, adolescent girls often risk their health using unhygienic cloths and rugs and even missing out on class lessons. Recognizing this, UNICEF supported the Comprehensive School Health Division of the Department of Youth and Sports (DYS) to pilot a Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) programme in three nunneries and 10 schools in 2014. The programme aimed to educate young girls on MHM and train them to make reusable sanitary napkins.

Following successful piloting, the MHM programme was expanded to 10 more nunneries in eastern Bhutan in October 2015 (<<http://bit.ly/1mqUVQD>>). A total of 20 nuns were trained and supplied with materials and sewing machines to stitch reusable sanitary napkins. They are also training peers in their respective nunneries on how to make reusable sanitary napkins. The nuns are now able to easily manage the menstrual hygiene practices, increase class attendance and live a healthier life.

Environmental Sustainability

Environment sustainability is a priority area for Bhutan, and receives significant importance, including a constitutional mandate. Bhutan's development philosophy of GNH also clearly outlines sustainable development and environment conservation as one of its four pillars.

In recent years, adolescents and young people have started playing an important role as agents of change to address climate change issues. In 2015, the Country Office provided approximately US\$15,000 (5 per cent) for programmes related to environmental sustainability and waste management. The Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy, an NGO, through its Community Mapping workshop in Paro District focused extensively on waste management at the community level by strengthening partnerships between communities and local leaders.

Additionally, 10 projects under the Grants for Adolescent-led initiatives with four local NGOs also focused on environmental conservation and waste management. These projects cover diverse environmental issues such as water conservation, environmental cleanliness and hygiene, and systematic and scientific waste management. These adolescent-led initiatives on waste management and environmental sustainability resonate well with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Following successful piloting of stitching reusable sanitary napkins in three nunneries and 10 schools in 2014, the MHM programme was expanded to 10 more nunneries in eastern Bhutan in 2015. More than 20 nuns have been trained and supplied with materials and sewing machines to stitch reusable sanitary napkins. They are also training peers in their respective nunneries and helping to ensure better menstrual hygiene practices and healthier lives for the

adolescent nuns.

For emergency preparedness and response, the Country Office continued supporting the Department of Disaster Management in capacity building, establishment of a National Emergency Operation Centre and in pre-positioning emergency supplies. To create awareness on natural hazards and to examine Bhutan's vulnerabilities to such hazards, a 10-day School Initiative training programme at district level is planned by the MoE for early 2016.

UNICEF Bhutan staff members increasingly using Skype for Business to conduct online meetings and conferences has significantly reduced its information and communication technology (ICT) hardware footprint and simplified ICT disaster planning with critical data (i.e., email, OneDrive for Business) now hosted in the cloud.

Effective Leadership

The UNICEF Bhutan Country Management Team (CMT) met eight times in 2015 to review and make decisions on office policies, practices and operational issues, in a participatory and transparent manner. The Programme Implementation meetings served as an effective forum to monitor monthly performance and helped strengthen overall programme coordination. Monthly Operations meetings ensured efficient and timely support to the programme related to human resources, IT, finance, supply, logistics and administration.

Separately, meetings of the Joint Consultative Committee, Human Resources Development Team and All Staff were conducted to provide a forum to effectively discuss staff and management issues, review training needs and priorities, and for general briefings to all staff on important emerging issues.

The 2015 Annual Management Plan was prepared based on the Country Programme Document 2014–2018, highlighting key management priorities, opportunities and the office approach to risk management. These related to Advocacy, Programme Quality and Operations Effectiveness. The Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reports as of the third quarter reflect that the Country Office met regional benchmarks in respect of office governance, security, payment advice and Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) reporting.

Space redesigning of the UNICEF Programme, Common Operations and Reception areas of the office premises was done in 2015 with major budgetary support from the Regional Office. The newly redesigned office was formally inaugurated by the Regional Director on the side-lines of the RMT meeting in November. The office undertook a restructuring process for the Operations unit to align with Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) implementation. Following thorough review, abolishment of four existing post in finance and ICT and creation of two new post in IT proposed by the Country Office was reviewed and approved by the Regional Office. To ensure a transparent process, the office included the Staff Association Chair to be part of the entire restructuring process.

Financial Resources Management

The CMT and Programme Implementation Meetings ensured effective monitoring and management of programme budget as well as donor contributions. The donor report schedules, expiring Programme Budget Allocations and Direct Cash Transfers (DCTs) over six months are periodically monitored in CMT and Programme Implementation Meetings. In 2015, UNICEF Bhutan spent 98 per cent of its Regular Resources (RR) and Other Resources (OR). All the

grants were fully utilized before the expiry date. The outstanding DCT of over nine months for 2015 is 0 per cent.

The Country Office received proceeds of US\$76,000 from the sale of an old office vehicle in 2014. This was utilized to make payment for the UN Delivering as One common services and office redesigning. A major portion of funds (US\$120,000) for office redesigning was received from the Regional Office.

Through common shared services with other United Nations agencies, UNICEF ensured efficient cost savings. This includes common Long-Term Agreements for conference facilities, vehicle maintenance, travel, stationeries and office supplies. The office participated in the sharing of budgets for the joint HACT implementation, particularly in providing training to auditors of the Royal Audit Authority and implementing partners on the revised HACT framework, policies and procedures. The office efficiently utilized 100 per cent of the Support Budget in 2015.

Effective and efficient implementation of HACT through proper programme monitoring and scheduled spots checks of implementing partners ensured that resources were used for the intended purpose. The Country Office carried out 24 spot checks of implementing partners. Out of the three micro-assessments planned, two were completed under the joint assurance plan in 2015. The remaining implementing partner will be micro-assessed in the first quarter of 2016. In terms of programmatic visits, a total of 168 programmatic visits were completed in 2015 based on need. No audits were planned in 2015.

Fund-Raising and Donor Relations

In keeping with changing priorities for the Government as well as the donors, UNICEF Bhutan developed a Resource Mobilization strategy (2015–2020) in September. The overarching goal of the strategy is to raise unrestricted, flexible, predictable and long-term resources to achieve programme results for children in Bhutan. A key focus of the strategy is to improve existing modalities and exploring new opportunities of fund-raising.

An important follow-up activity based on the strategy was a webinar, which was organized with support from the Private Fundraising and Partnerships (PFP) in Geneva. A total of seven National Committees, participated in the webinar where the Country Office highlighted strengthening existing partnership and opening avenues for new partnerships.

In 2015, the Country Office was able to raise close to US\$2,000,000 for various programmes, much of it through proposals to National Committees and Global Thematic Funds.

UNICEF Bhutan continued to maintain a good track record of submitting donor reports on time. As in the previous years, the office made timely submissions of all 27 donor reports that were due in 2015. For quality assurance, the office followed a systematic review process involving Heads of Section, the Communications Officer and the Representative/Deputy Representative. It also included comparing the reports against a checklist developed to ensure effective donor reporting. To add voices from the field materials such as human interest stories and photo essays were included in the donor reports.

The Country Office successfully coordinated and hosted the Japan Committee for UNICEF and their donor, COOP Sapporo, in March, and the Swiss Committee and their donor, Stambach Foundation, between November and December. During these visits, the Country Office took the

opportunity to not only show where and how the contributions have been used, but also highlighted other key areas where the donors could focus their future support.

Evaluation

While no evaluations were planned for 2015, the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP) prioritized four studies (evaluability assessment of One UN programme, analysis of child poverty, nutrition survey and bottleneck analysis for newborns) and two researches [VAC study second and third phases and knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) study on disability]. The evaluability assessment of One UN programme was dropped in view of the anticipated changes in Country Programme Document with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. The second phase of the VAC study was completed in 2015 and the third phase which involves quantitative survey has started and will be completed in 2016. The Child Poverty Analysis was completed in December. The Bottleneck Analysis on Newborns was also completed, with the action plan to be costed in 2016. A National Nutrition Survey was conducted in 2015 and the report is awaiting final endorsement from the MOH for publication. The KAP study on Disabilities has commenced and is expected to be completed in 2016. The IMEP being a standing agenda for the CMT meetings ensures regular monitoring on the status of prioritized researches and studies.

UNICEF supported several evaluation-related activities in 2015. This included supporting the Evaluation Association of Bhutan (EAB) to register for gaining a CSO status. UNICEF supported an EAB member and a government official to participate in an International conference on National Evaluation Capacities in Bangkok. To further promote evaluation culture in Bhutan, a high level event, with more than 90 participants including parliamentarians, government officials, CSOs, private sector and other development partners, was held in December to mark the EvalYear 2015. The key outcome of the event was the draft Bhutan Evaluation Agenda 2016–2020.

Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

The 'Delivering as One' approach enabled the Country Office to improve efficiencies and synergies, helping resolve common issues and avoid duplication among implementing partners and United Nations agencies. The UN HACT and Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) Group guided and facilitated joint reviews and planning sessions ensuring consistency and coherence among theme groups. The Operations management team ensured smooth functioning of ongoing efforts to streamline business practices such as common procurement, Daily Subsistence Allowance surveys, travel and security.

In 2015 the office continued to make significant savings through common shared services in the One UN House. The establishment of common ICT infrastructure services and migration to fibre technology reduced telecommunications costs. The office made a submission of 'Environment Footprint Assessment (EFA) data to the headquarters in 2015 reporting on greening initiatives particularly in reduction of greenhouse gas emission and carbon footprint. The data fed into UNICEF's first global EFA. Shared services such as maintenance, electricity and generator fuel enabled the office to avail better services to help achieve 30 per cent reduced costs. The office leased a multifunction printer device to further optimize energy consumption and space utilization in the UNICEF Programme area. This was following the success of a multifunction device that was installed in the Common Operations area in 2014 shared by three United Nations agencies.

The Business Support Centre (BSC) in the Nepal Country Office has been supporting financial

transactions using the 'Push & Track' system. This has helped prepare UNICEF Bhutan for a smooth transfer of the processing of selected transactions to the GSSC. With the implementation of the GSSC in Budapest in November 2015, the payment processing has shifted from the BSC in Nepal to the GSSC. The Country Office has identified two Focal Points, one each from Programme and Operations, to work on transactions with the GSSC.

Supply Management

In 2015 the overall programme supplies amounted to US\$1.3 million, which includes procurement through government, constructions and operational activities. Support of programme supplies for 2015 was reduced by 25 per cent compared with 2014. However, there is an increase in procurement services by about 50 per cent compared with 2014. In terms of institutional contracts, the scale remains same.

With limited local market capacity for printing works, quality still remains a challenge. The office plans to establish long-terms agreements to resolve this issue in 2016.

The Supply work plan is reviewed monthly to ensure timely implementation and quality for both local and offshore procurements. Supplies involving large quantities and those not available locally such as vaccines continue to be sourced through Copenhagen. The Country Office ensures that goods are delivered on time to the end-users by closely following up on the status with individual vendors and relevant agencies. The final payment is made only upon receipt of the goods and services by the end user.

The office was able to achieve 76 per cent Requisition against the Supply Plan; 86 per cent Obligation against Requisitioned; and 93 per cent delivery against Obligation.

A manual Supply Plan is maintained for both goods and services and reported regularly during programme implementation and CMT meetings. To ensure transparent and compliant processes for bidding and management of constructions, approval for construction activity was sought from the UNICEF Supply Division in Copenhagen.

The details for 2015 supply management are shown in the table below, which includes a comparison to 2014.

UNICEF Bhutan 2015	Programme US\$	Operations US\$
Local Procurement (Programme)	125,841	57,871
International Procurement (Programme)	282,980	
Direct Order supplies	36,583	
Institutional Services	347,500	114,536
Procurement Services	146,408	
Donation (Kind)	33,468	
Procurement (Government)	209,580	
Construction (DCT)	122,493	

Security for Staff and Premises

UNICEF Bhutan, is compliant with the rules and regulations for safety and security of the United Nations' staff and premises. As part of Delivering as One, the office ensures proper dissemination of all safety and security instructions to all staff. The office ensures that the list of both local and international staff are kept up-to-date and shared with United Nations Department of Safety and Security. All new staff are given in-house security briefing upon joining.

A national security officer functions as the Local Security Assistance focal point for all United Nations agencies. Regular Security Management Team meetings are held to discuss and review security concerns. For emergency communication all staff are provided with Very High Frequency (VHF) radios. A common system – Crises Coordination Centre – has been established in the United Nations Unit premises with a radio room and communication equipment capable of operating 24/7 during emergencies. The inter-agency Business Continuity Plan (BCP) was revised in October 2015 by the Critical Response Team with support from the Resident Coordinator to further simplify the BCP format and to update the BCP format/guidelines of each agency.

Relevant security trainings such as road safety awareness, access control procedures, emergency methods of rescue training, earthquake and fire safety drills were conducted for all staff in 2015. Three staff also attended a certified first-aid training at the national referral hospital (Thimphu).

The office ensured that all staff processed security clearance using the Travel Request Information Process (TRIP) before proceeding with travel. The new United Nations premises are well equipped with proper access control system, fire alarms, closed circuit televisions, and alternate emergency exit in place. The Country Office spent US\$35,000 on security-related issues in 2015, compared with US\$24,000 in 2014. This increase is mainly due to additional security guards from 10 to 14 and increase in their salary.

Human Resources

The office undertook a thorough restructuring process, for the Operations unit to align with GSSC implementation and the existing common shared services as part of Delivering as One. Following thorough review abolishment of four existing post, (two in Finance and two in ICT) and creation of two new posts (for National Officers Category A and B) proposed by the Country Office has been approved by the Regional Office. One staff retired in the second quarter of 2015 after serving for 25 years as UNICEF driver.

The Human Resources Development Team reviewed Programme and Operations priorities to address the learning gaps in terms of technical and personal career development. A realistic learning and training plan was designed and funded (US\$10,000) to support trainings based on capacity development needs. In 2015, the office implemented 100 per cent of the learning needs planned. The Country Office organized two-days Influencing Skills training through an external consultant for 26 staff members, Social Inclusion and Gender training for 32 staff and a one-day training on donor communication and report writing focusing on programme needs and resource mobilization.

In 2014, two national staff members took up international positions in UNICEF, followed by one National Staff in 2015 moved as an international professional staff member. Few other Staff members were sent for stretch assignments in UNICEF offices, one in Afghanistan, two in Ukraine and one at the GSSC in Budapest for a period of two to three months to support the

countries as well as for individual capacity enhancement.

The 2014 Performance Appraisal (PAS & ePAS) was completed in the first quarter, well within the extended period. The PAS objectives for 2015 were set by the first quarter of 2015. PASs/ePAS were monitored through formal periodic performance discussions between supervisors and supervisees, with two mid-year reviews completed 100 per cent within the global deadlines.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

With implementation of the shared ICT infrastructure in the UN House, the office has made significant savings in recurring payments and operational costs. Five UN Agencies share common ICT infrastructure such as server room, UPS, network and telephone system. For example, the office continues to enjoy volume discounts (about 15 per cent) in Internet leased line with single subscription. The monthly telephone bill has reduced by 50 per cent for UNICEF with the introduction of new common Internet protocol private branch exchange (IP-PBX) system. Based on the recommendation of ICT Regional Chief, the UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) and UNICEF headquarters, the ICT has successfully implemented a common Help Desk for ICT support to all agencies, thus improving overall effectiveness.

The introduction of cloud based office automation tools (Office 365) in 2014 further reduced communication costs. Staff members using Skype for Business to conduct online meetings and conferences has significantly reduced the office ICT hardware footprint and simplified the ICT disaster planning, with most of the critical data (email, OneDrive for Business) hosted in the cloud.

Instead of three individual machines for scanning, photocopying and printing, the office leased a multifunction printer device to further optimize energy consumption and space utilization. This has reduced printing costs and the overhead of supporting multiple devices.

The old VHF/HF tower has been relocated to the new UN House premises. The fully functional base station and radio room houses the communication equipment currently utilized by all the five United Nations agencies (UNICEF, United Nations Development Programme, World Food Programme, United Nations Population Fund, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) and two project offices (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and UN Women) in the building. The World Health Organization office, although located outside the United Nations premises, shares the radio communication services. In addition to an online presence on Facebook and Twitter, the Country Office also launched a new website to further highlight UNICEF's work in Bhutan.

Programme Components from Results Assessment Module

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1: Programme Support

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Through this outcome, UNICEF ensured accountability and effective programme management and operations to support efficient delivery of programme results.

The standard practice of conducting monthly CMT and Programme Implementation meetings helped effectively monitor the programme budget utilization, donor report schedules as well as closely tracking expiring grants to ensure adherence to management indicators. The office through the CMT meetings chaired by the Representative along with Deputy Representative, Operations manager, all Section heads and Staff Association Chair reviewed office policies, major progress and operational issues relating to the overall management of the country programme. A total of eight CMT meetings were conducted in 2015. Monthly Operations meetings chaired by the Operations manager were also conducted regularly for efficient, effective and timely support to the programme in terms of human resources, IT, finance, supply, logistics and administration.

The 2015 Annual Management Plan was prepared based on the new Country Programme Document 2014–2018, highlighting key management priorities, opportunities, and identified risks and challenges. The three key priorities relate to Advocacy, Programme Quality and Operations Effectiveness. The Annual Management Plan reflects the entire governance mechanism, with clear terms of reference and membership of advisory bodies incorporating staff at all levels as part of each functional committees. The plan's results are monitored at mid-year and year-end. The KPI reports as of the third quarter reflect that the Country Office is on full compliance with regard to meeting regional benchmarks of CMT, All Staff and Joint Consultative Committee meetings as well as in terms of security, payment advice and HACT reporting. The office has no violations with regard to Segregation of Duties and is well on track with fund utilization, bank optimization reports and financial reporting. The office vigorously reviewed the Global Staff Survey reports in mid-2015 and identified the low rate areas that require improvement. These include work-life balance, office leadership and management, office efficiency and effectively and diversity. In consultation with all staff through the staff association and senior management, a plan with indicators were developed for improving on the identified low rate areas. Implementation of the plan is in progress.

In terms of fund utilization, the overall Programme Budget utilization as of 31 December 2015 was 98 per cent, accounting for US\$5,111,102. The utilization of Regular Resources (RR) was 24 per cent (US\$1,242,501) and the utilization of Other Resources (OR) was 74 per cent (US\$3,868,601).

The 2014 Performance Appraisal (PAS and ePAS) completion was achieved in the first quarter of 2015, well within the extended period. The PAS objectives for 2015 were set by the end of the first quarter of 2015. PASs/ePAS were monitored through formal periodic performance discussions between supervisors and supervisees, with 100 per cent completion of the two mid-year reviews within the global deadlines.

OUTPUT 1: Effective, efficient programme management, operations support to programme delivery

Analytical statement of progress:

Through this output, the Country Office ensured operation efficiency to support programme management and delivery.

The office completed eight CMT meetings, which helped address major office policies and operational issues relating to the overall management of the country programme.

In 2015 the office conducted a total of five All Staff meetings which enabled discussion and

information sharing on emerging and current issues such as transition to the GSSC, preparations for hosting the Regional Meeting Team and Chief of Zonal Office meetings together for the first time in Bhutan, and various issues related to the Global Staff Survey, staff retreat and other staff welfare issues. For the first time, the country also had the opportunity to hold one All Staff meeting with the Executive Director during his state visit to Bhutan in November.

The office conducted three Local Joint Consultative Committee meetings chaired by the Representative. These helped address issues on the outcome and proposal of Operations restructuring, staff welfare and benefits, salary survey progress and other general issues that affect staff and management.

The office made a submission of EFA data to the headquarters in 2015. It reported on greening initiatives, particularly in reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprint. The data fed into UNICEF's first global EFA.

The country's payment processing was shifted from the Business Support Centre in Nepal to the GSSC in Budapest, with the start of financial transactions with the GSSC since November 2015. The office identified two Focal Points, one each from Programme and Operations, to work on the payment transaction directly with the GSSC.

The outsourcing to the Nepal Country Office and the use of the 'Push & Track' system, which the office has been implementing for the past years, have proven to be effective platforms for smooth and efficient transition.

OUTPUT 2: Effective, Efficient Programme Management and Stewardship of Financial Resources

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Through this output, the Country Office ensured effective and efficient management of financial resources.

The overall Programme Budget utilization as of 31 December 2015 was 98 per cent, accounting for US\$5,111,102 million. The RR part was 24 per cent (US\$1,242,501) and the OR part was 74 per cent (US\$3,868,601).

The standard practice of conducting monthly CMT and Programme Implementation Meetings helped to effectively monitor the programme budget utilization and donor report schedules, as well as closely track expiring grants to ensure adherence to management indicators.

The office ensured that there were no outstanding DCTs beyond nine months. This was done through close follow-up with the implementing partners and updating on the status during the monthly Programme Implementation Meetings.

The office concentrated on effective implementation of HACT to ensure efficient use of resources. This was done through proper programme monitoring and scheduled spot checks to review that resources were being used for the intended purpose. Although only 17 spot checks of implementing partners were required for 2015, 24 spot checks were completed. In terms of micro-assessment, out of the three planned, two have been completed under the joint assurance plan in 2015. The remaining implementing partner will be micro-assessed in the first quarter of 2016. In terms of programmatic visits, a total of 168 programmatic visits were

completed in 2015 based on need, even though the minimum requirement as per HACT guidelines was 45 programmatic visits. No audits were planned in 2015.

The Bhutan Country Office continued to maintain a good track record of sending all due donor reports on time. As in the previous years, the Country Office submitted all 27 donor reports on time, achieving 100 per cent in 2015. A systematic process of review involving Heads of Sections, the Communications Officer and the Representative/Deputy Representative ensured effective donor reporting and quality assurance. Additional materials such as human interest stories and photo essays included in most donor reports to add voices from the field.

OUTPUT 3: Staff Travel

Analytical statement of progress:

Through this output, the Country Office ensured effective management of human resources.

The 2014 Performance Appraisal (PAS & ePAS) was completed in the first quarter, well within the extended period. The PAS objectives for 2015 were set by end of the first quarter of 2015. PASs/ePAS were monitored through formal periodic performance discussions between supervisors and supervisees, with two mid-year reviews completed 100 per cent within the global deadlines.

In 2014, two national staff members developed their career further by taking up international positions followed by 1 national officer moving as an international professional staff member in 2015. In addition, four staff members were sent for stretch assignments in Afghanistan, Ukraine and Budapest for a period of two to three months to support the countries as well as for individual capacity enhancement. A total of 25 staff members, including 10 General Service (GS) staff, benefited from individual trainings both within and outside the country on different areas.

The office undertook rigorous restructuring process mainly for the Operations section to align with GSSC implementation and the existing Common Shared Services as part of Delivering as One. Following thorough review abolishment of four existing post, (two in Finance and two in ICT) and creation of two new posts (for ICT National Officer, Category A and Operations National Officer, Category B) has been proposed. For fair and transparent process, the office ensured inclusion of the Staff Association Chair to be part of the entire restructuring process. The proposed restructuring was reviewed by the Regional Office and the submission was approved in October 2015. One staff retired in the second quarter of 2015 after serving for 25 years as UNICEF driver.

OUTCOME 2: Development Effectiveness

Analytical statement of progress:

A major highlight for the Country Office was the State visit of UNICEF Executive Director, Mr. Anthony Lake in early November and hosting of the RMT and CZO meetings. It was the first time that the RMT and CZO meetings were hosted together. The Country Office, under the leadership of the Representative, coordinated the Executive Director's visit and the two meetings successfully. It was a proud moment for all staff, as it gave good visibility and relevance to one of the smallest country offices of UNICEF. During this high-level visit, UNICEF took the opportunity to advocate on child rights issues through briefing notes and taking points prepared for the Executive Director's meetings with key government partners.

A panel discussion on GNH and Results-Based Management hosted as part of the RMT provided food for thought on the GNH concept as well as on including children younger than 18 years old in future GNH surveys. UNICEF Human Resources Advisor and the Regional Director for South Asia also held a meeting with the GNH Commission to better understand how the Government's performance management system works. Following the advocacy at the RMT, the Prime Minister of Bhutan has committed to scale up ECCD to the most deprived communities.

To advocate on issues related to children, youth and women and to ensure visibility the country office shared regular information via traditional and social media especially during key UNICEF days. Notable few include:

The UNICEF Executive Director's state visit and school visit stories were covered by different local newspapers. World Toilet Day supplements were in the national newspaper, *Kuensel*, and on UNICEF Bhutan's website and Facebook pages, as well as were promoted through SMS messaging. In addition, the International Day for Persons with Disabilities message from the Representative was included in newspapers and social media platforms.

The Country Office developed a total of seven thematic policy advocacy briefs. These pertain to Reducing Child Stunting, Reducing Neonatal Mortalities, Protecting Adolescents and Youth from Substance Abuse, Strengthening Child Protection Systems, Promoting equal opportunities for CWD, Enhancing access to ECCE, and Investing in WASH. These thematic briefs have served as a strategy for undertaking policy advocacy by the programmes sections and the front office. They have been well received by the implementing partners, especially the MoH and MoE.

Bhutan has achieved Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 4 and 5 with an under-five mortality rate of 37.3 per 1,000 live births and maternal mortality ratio of 86 per 100,000 live births. However, newborn mortality is still high, accounting for up to 67 per cent of all infant deaths. Thus, interventions – such as post-natal home visits, training nurses and health workers on advanced newborn care and standards, and supply of equipment (pulse oximeter) – are being accelerated to reduce newborn mortality and chronic undernutrition in young children. With UNICEF support, the MoH has developed Bhutan's Every Newborn Action Plan. For the first time, a national multi-sectoral food and nutrition security strategy and action plan have been developed together with the MoH, MoE and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, for implementation in 2016.

OUTPUT 1: Programme Coordination

Analytical statement of progress:

Through this output, the Country Office ensured effective programme coordination.

Within the approach of 'Delivering as One', the UN Theme Groups continued to improve efficiencies and synergies, helping resolve common issues and avoiding duplication among implementing partners and United Nations agencies. The UN HACT and the UN PME Group guided and facilitated joint review and planning sessions ensuring consistency and coherence among the theme groups.

To strengthen integration and cross-sectoral linkages, UNICEF Bhutan developed specific programme coordination mechanisms, such as Programme Implementation Meeting, Cluster Meetings to address the areas where gaps or challenges in cross-sectoral linkages were identified. It is expected that some of the issues related to ECCD, Care for Child Development,

CWD and Nutrition, among others, will help push the need for external coordination and coherence for effective outcomes and impacts.

Bhutan has achieved MDGs 4 and 5 with the under-five mortality rate of 37.3 per 1,000 live births and maternal mortality ratio of 86 per 100,000 live births. However, newborn mortality is still high, accounting for up to 67 per cent of all infant deaths. Thus, interventions – such as post-natal home visits, training nurses and health workers on advanced newborn care and standards, supply of equipment (pulse oximeter) – are being accelerated to reduce newborn mortality and chronic under nutrition in young children.

With UNICEF support, the MoH has developed Bhutan's Every Newborn Action Plan. The costing for the plan will be done in 2016. A national nutrition and anaemia survey was conducted to generate new evidences for planning and programming. The preliminary results of the survey showed that the prevalence of stunting has reduced from 33.5 per cent in 2010 to 21 per cent in 2015, wasting has reduced from 5.9 per cent in 2010 to 4.3 per cent in 2015 and underweight has decreased from 12.7 per cent to 9.0 per cent during the same period; anaemia prevalence among children under 5 has reduced from 81 per cent in 2003 to 44 per cent in 2015, anaemia among non-pregnant women is reduced from 55 per cent in 2003 to 35 per cent in 2015. For the first time, a national multi-sectoral food and nutrition security strategy and action plan have been developed together with the MoE, MoE and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, for implementation in 2016.

OUTPUT 2: Advocacy/Communication

Analytical statement of progress:

Through this output, the office ensured effective advocacy and communication on key child rights issues and concerns.

In 2015, a major highlight was the State visit of UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake in early November and hosting, for the first time, the RMT and the CZO meetings together. The office, under the Representative's leadership, coordinated the Executive Director's visit and the two meetings successfully. It was a proud moment for all the staff as it gave good visibility and relevance to one of the smallest country offices of UNICEF. The briefing notes and talking points prepared for the Executive Director's meetings with key government partners helped advocate on child rights issues.

The office also used key UNICEF days to advocate on child rights by sharing information via traditional and social media. These included World Toilet Day supplements and the Representative's message for the International Day for Persons with Disabilities on local newspapers and social media.

The country office continued parliamentary engagement initiated in 2014 with the WCYC of the National Assembly. Following a presentation of the WCYC's report, the Parliament provided additional recommendations to relevant government agencies for follow up. The actions taken were tabled at the Parliament's summer session in 2015. A key result of this engagement was the Parliament endorsing six months of maternity leave and six months of flexible time for working mothers. The nationwide live telecast of the parliamentary sessions ensured a wider reach of the issues highlighted in the report. Issues related to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were also tabled in the parliament for discussion and reporting by the Committee for ratification.

UNICEF's partnership with the Royal University of Bhutan, the Sherubtse College and India's Jindal School of Government and Public Policy enabled the development of a well-balanced curriculum for the Certificate Course in Social Policy. The first batch of learners comprising of civil servants, CSOs and parliamentarians will attend the course in January 2016.

In 2015, the Country Office successfully coordinated and hosted the Japan Committee for UNICEF and their donor in March, and the Swiss Committee and their major donor, Stambach Foundation, which visited between November and December. During these visits, the office not only showcased where and how the contributions were used, but highlighted other key areas where the donors could focus their future support.

OUTCOME 3: By 2018, increased and equitable access, utilization and quality of essential social services for all are in place, with a focus on women, children and youth, to sustain the MDGs and address emerging challenges.

Analytical statement of progress:

To ensure equitable access, utilization and quality of inclusive essential social services for all, the country office focused on health system strengthening, capacity development, strengthening data systems and evidence-based decision-making, effective procurement, supply and quality service delivery, and development of policies and guidelines.

Health: With an under-five mortality rate of 37.3 per 1,000 live births and maternal mortality ratio of 86 per 100,000 live births, Bhutan has achieved MDGs 4 and 5. However, newborn mortality (deaths in the first 28 days of life) is still high, accounting for up to 67 per cent of all infant deaths. There are no new data on adolescent fertility, institutional deliveries and proportion of 15–24-year-olds with comprehensive knowledge of HIV and Aids. Chronic undernutrition in young children has decreased from 34.5 per cent in 2010 to 21 per cent in 2015 and prevalence of anaemia has reduced from 81 per cent in 2003 to 44 per cent in young children, and from 55 per cent in 2003 to 35 per cent in non-pregnant women. The Infant and Young Child Feeding policy has been revised to include extension of maternity leave from four to six months. A multi-sectoral nutrition strategy and action plan has been developed to reduce chronic undernutrition in children to less than 30 per cent by 2025. Analysis of the newborn health situation was conducted and bottlenecks identified, based on which an action plan has been developed to reduce newborn deaths from 21 per 1,000 to 17 per 1,000 and stillbirths to 15 per 1,000 by 2023. A major challenge to sustaining the gains made is the increasing difficulty in securing long-term funding for Bhutan.

Capacity of health and nutrition programme managers was strengthened through training in programme management to better support the district health services. Capacity of district hospitals, basic health units and outreach clinics was strengthened to improve quality of services. This was done through provision of essential equipment and supplies, training of service providers in using the revised guidelines and standards of care for various interventions and through supervision and monitoring of service delivery for routine data collection, reporting and quality, timely feedback. A National Strategic Plan for health promotion has been developed and submitted to the Cabinet for endorsement.

Communication on public health issues to improve health seeking behaviour and key household practices related to health and nutrition was accelerated in 2015 through three approaches: information and education through media; key messages and counselling integrated with routine health services and delivered by professional health workers; and interpersonal communication skills at household and community levels through trained village health workers. An

interpersonal communication toolkit on common health issues has been developed for community outreach service providers and Multi-Sectoral Task Force. A handbook to sensitize astrologers on promoting health seeking behaviour in their communities has been drafted.

Education: With Primary Net Enrolment Rate of 97 per cent and Basic Completion rate of 93% in 2015, Bhutan has made steady progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goal targets for education. However, with high repetition rates of 7.08% at class IV and 9.7% at Class V, it is estimated that only 83.4 per cent of children enrolled in grade Pre-Primary reach Class VI, the last grade of Primary. The concern therefore, is about poor learning outcomes and the education quality. In addition, the Gender Parity Index has changed from 0.98 in 2014 to 1.06 in 2015 indicating a bias against boys – an issue that needs careful monitoring.

The gross enrolment ratio for ECCD has increased from 5 per cent in 2011 to 17 per cent in 2015. UNICEF supports scaling up of ECCD services by establishing community-based ECCD centres, particularly in the most remote and vulnerable communities. Parenting education and early stimulation programmes have been initiated in some of the most socio-economically disadvantaged districts. UNICEF supported the establishment of 139 of the 238 ECCD centres, benefiting nearly 2,905 children (1,468 girls; 1,437 boys). For a more sustainable and strategic approach to capacity building and institutional development, UNICEF supported the development of a pre-service ECCD Diploma programme at the Paro College of Education, Royal University of Bhutan. The course was launched in December 2015. ECCD is a priority advocacy issue for the Government's investment to scale up ECCD in the country.

Child Protection and Adolescent Development and Participation: UNICEF supported the Career Education and Counselling Division of DYS to address the needs of adolescents from families at distress and those at risk of dropping out of school. 60 adolescents – equal number of boys and girls – from four districts were selected for a month-long training programme focusing on resilience building. As a result, adolescents were equipped with personality development and resilience such as assertiveness and communication skills.

UNICEF supported the Youth Centre Division of the DYS to finalize a comprehensive service delivery plan for integrated youth-friendly services in one sub-district (Gelephu). This pilot intervention, launched in November 2015 aims to bring together diverse government and non-government stakeholders under one roof for service delivery and referrals for education, vocational training, employment, health and life skills. Staff from the district hospital, school, and the district's labour department will visit the youth centre regularly to provide direct services and referrals.

OUTPUT 1: Strengthened education systems capacity for improved education information and knowledge management for evidence based decision making.

Analytical statement of progress:

This output contributes to generating evidence that will inform policy decision making and strength the existing Education Management Information System (EMIS) to improve monitoring of all children, particularly the most vulnerable.

A nationwide survey is under way to gauge knowledge, attitudes and practices of Bhutanese people towards disabilities. The survey results to be available by early 2016 will help UNICEF and its partners in designing a communication strategy to create greater awareness on disability and advocate for full inclusion of children with disabilities into education, health, protection and other essential services.

In partnership with the MoE, UNICEF undertook a mapping of disability interventions in Bhutan to identify gaps in services and determine opportunities for cross-sectoral collaboration in areas of education, health, and protection of children with disabilities. Recommendations from the mapping include creating awareness, improving accessibility, strengthening current systems for health, education and protection of children with disabilities, mainstreaming disabilities data into existing systems, and more importantly identifying a lead agency for coordinating services for children with disabilities. A key outcome of this process has been that the National Commission for Women and Children agreed to take lead in coordinating issues relating to children with disabilities.

A web-based EMIS was piloted in 2015, enabling timely publication of the Annual Education Statistics report. Consultations are held to review the system and incorporate additional data such as on children with disabilities. UNICEF's support to the EMIS is expected to strengthen data use at the lowest level by enabling district and school level data generation and allowing deeper data analysis for evidence-based policy formulation, programme planning and monitoring.

In 2014, the government initiated a School Reform Programme to enhance efficiency and quality of educational outcomes and ensure sustainability of service provision. A key element of the programme involves closing down a number of smaller schools and establishing Central Schools, with boarding facilities. In 2014–2015, 24 Central Schools were set up. UNICEF's concern has been on the safety and protection of children in these central schools, since children as young as 6 years old are in boarding schools depriving them of the right to live with their families. To monitor the potential impacts of this reform initiative, the Country Office, in partnership with ROSA, is supporting the Ministry of Education to improve data collection and utilization, including on children who are out-of-school and at risk of dropping out.

OUTPUT 2: Stakeholders have the capacity to effectively coordinate, plan, implement and monitor the provision of quality and inclusive education services.

Analytical statement of progress:

To ensure equity and access to quality education UNICEF supports ECCD, Inclusive Education and Non-Formal Education (NFE) through this output.

UNICEF supported the development of operational guidelines for setting up ECCD centres with minimum acceptable standards of facilities and services. Proprietors and facilitators of private ECCD centres were oriented on the guidelines to ensure that ECCD centres across the country maintain standards.

In 2015, 30 community-based ECCD centres, including six supported by local NGOs, were established in remote areas of 16 districts. This has enabled nearly 1,500 children aged 3 to 5 years old to access ECCD services. ECCD facilitators, parents, school principals, and district education officers in two districts were trained to provide parenting education. As a result, facilitators will be able to work with parents to help them assess their children's well-being, stimulate social, emotional, motor, language and cognitive development of their children, as well as promote cultural and spiritual values in their children.

A total of 113 NFE instructors were trained to teach the revised NFE curricula. Quality monitoring tools were developed, pre-tested, revised, printed, and distributed. Education Monitoring Officers, District Education Officers, and parent school principals (55 in total) were

trained to use the tools. This will help monitor if the NFE programme is implemented as planned to bridge the gaps and provide timely feedback to the programme.

With UNICEF support, 37 instructors (from 9 nunneries and 15 monastic institutions) were trained to teach basic English literacy and numeracy. As a result, about 3,000 monks and nuns have the opportunity to learn English in 24 monastic institutions and nunneries across the country.

In 2015, two more schools were identified to provide education for children with disabilities thereby providing 448 children with disabilities (269 boys and 179 girls) access to education. UNICEF strengthened its partnership with the Draktsho Vocational Training Centre (a local CSO), focusing on improving capacity to provide vocational training for children and youth with disabilities.

To improve quality of education in rural areas for the most disadvantaged children, UNICEF through a cross-sectoral approach supported the school rationalization project. The approach included construction of new facilities, providing furniture, teaching-learning materials and training of teachers and caregivers. It was piloted in five districts. As a result, around 1,160 children (590 girls, 570 boys) in remote schools are benefiting from improved facilities and better quality of education and care.

OUTPUT 3: Health facilities are better able to provide quality maternal, newborn and child health care, nutrition, reproductive health and sexually transmitted infections/HIV services.

Analytical statement of progress:

This output enables provision of quality health and nutrition, reproductive health and sexually transmitted infections/HIV services for women and children through development of policies, strategies and action plans and demand creation.

Immunization coverage remains high at 97.8 per cent. No polio cases have been reported. To ensure vaccine security, potency and to improve immunization quality a national switch plan was developed to guide and monitor the shift from trivalent to bivalent Oral Polio Vaccine by April 2016. Effective vaccine management was assessed nationwide. Key findings are being used to update the improvement plan for implementation in 2016.

Immunization coverage was assessed in migrant communities in remote areas. Based on the barriers identified, strategies will be developed to increase access and use of services by these population. Guidelines on nutrition rehabilitation and management of acute severe malnutrition were developed and distributed to health facilities. A pictorial book with basic strategies on caring for children with disabilities was developed to guide health workers, parents and caregivers.

Health facilities implementing the Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illnesses, Care for Child Development; Infant and young child feeding and growth monitoring has exceeded the targets and the target for 24-hour comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care centres has also been reached.

Standards for midwifery and newborn care were revised. Routine vaccines, supplies and equipment were provided to health facilities, and health programme managers and service providers trained. Through a refresher training 30 health workers have enhanced skills in identifying paediatric disabilities and rapid neurodevelopment assessment reporting. Four

physiotherapists from the national and regional referral hospitals attended a month-long training on such screening.

A total of 110 health workers were trained to enhance their knowledge and skills in working with adolescents. HIV counselling and testing camps were established for communities living in remote areas in eastern Bhutan where higher HIV prevalence is reported. All HIV-positive pregnant women identified were put on anti-retroviral therapy. Peer outreach was initiated at community level to raise awareness on mother-to-child HIV transmission and to increase utilization of prevention services. A media campaign was conducted to raise awareness on the importance of the first '1,000 days (from conception to the first 24 months of life) for the survival, growth and development of children. Health workers and village health workers trained in interpersonal communication continue to improve care seeking behaviour and practices of mothers and caregivers on maternal, newborn and child health.

OUTPUT 4: Education systems have improved preparedness and response plans for disaster and emergencies, outbreaks and health security threats and ensure that all communities are able to access minimum basic services

Analytical statement of progress:

Through this output UNICEF supports the Government to build capacity and institute response and preparedness systems for emergencies and natural disasters in schools.

A Contingency Plan for the MoE has been prepared. It forms part of the ministry's coordination mechanism. The Contingency Plan will help mount a timely, consistent and coordinated response, during and after emergencies to ensure immediate and continued access to quality education for all children who are affected. Aligned to the ministry's contingency plan, schools across the country continue to prepare their own contingency plans as part of the school-based Disaster Management Plans.

To expand the scope of disaster risk reduction in the country, the MoE has developed tailor-made courses on ECCD in emergencies and emergency preparedness training for NFE learners. A total of 97 NFE instructors and 42 ECCD facilitators were trained in 2015. The training enabled the NFE instructors to create awareness among people at the household level on disaster risk reduction and equipped ECCD facilitators to be better prepared to tackle emergencies in their ECCD centres.

UNICEF is also providing technical inputs to develop an Education Sector Disaster Management Plan, which is being supported by Save the Children Bhutan. The plan is expected to be finalized in early 2016. It will be a comprehensive document guiding the MoE's disaster preparedness plan at the central, district and school levels.

UNICEF collaborated with the MoE and MoH to train teachers on Education in Emergencies, strengthening of school disaster management plan and building capacity for WASH in Emergency. To further strengthen and deepen UNICEF's engagement in emergency preparedness and response the country office is supporting the Department of Disaster Management in capacity building, establishment of National Emergency Operation Centre and in prepositioning emergency supplies. To create awareness on natural hazards and to examine Bhutan's vulnerabilities to such hazards, a 10-day School Initiative training programme at district level has been planned by the Ministry of Education for early 2016. Back-up telecommunication equipment will be supplied for the National Emergency Operation centre. Basic emergency supplies for WASH, Health and Education will be pre-positioned in three regions of the country

with UNICEF support, with funds from the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom.

OUTPUT 5: WASH in schools, monastic schools and nunneries is effectively implemented and water sanitation and hygiene is promoted through advocacy and demand.

Analytical statement of progress:

This output focuses on improving WASH among schoolchildren, monks and nuns in remote schools and monastic institutions in Bhutan. This will help reduce WASH related diseases contributing towards increased school attendance and retention, especially among girls. In the long-run it will contribute to Bhutan's achievement of the off-track MDG related to sanitation.

For the first time a Management Information System was developed for WASH in Monastic institutions. Data collection is ongoing. The report to be completed in 2016 will enable the Religion and Health Programme of the Commission for Monastic Affairs to track adequacy, functionality and usage of WASH facilities. This will help targeted interventions to improve WASH services for child monks and nuns. The health and hygiene curriculum for monastic schools was revised and 2,000 copies printed. Simultaneously, a teacher's guide for the curriculum was developed and 1,000 copies printed. The curriculum and guide is expected to help ensure proper use of toilets and hygiene promotion among child monks and nuns.

About 1,140 boys and 1,170 girls in 15 schools have access to child-friendly gender sensitive toilets. In addition, rehabilitation of toilets in one school is benefiting 880 boys and 1,000 girls. Installation of UV water filters in 15 schools has provided access to safe drinking water for 4,500 boys and 4,600 girls. Another 350 boys and 306 girls from seven schools enjoy improved water source. Coverage of improved sanitation facilities in schools has increased by 6 per cent and water supply by 2 per cent compared with 2014.

A total of 435 monks and 130 nuns enjoy access to improved water and sanitation through installation of aqua-privy toilets with bath houses in two monastic schools and two nunneries and water supply in two monastic schools and one nunnery. Water heating systems were installed in 50 monastic institutions benefiting around 1,000 monks and nuns. Following successful piloting of reusable sanitary napkins in three nunneries and 10 schools in 2014, the MHM programme was expanded to 10 more nunneries in eastern Bhutan in 2015. The nuns were trained and supplied with materials and sewing machines to stitch reusable sanitary napkins.

To facilitate proper use and maintenance, about 100 male and 20 female school water caretakers were trained and 100 schools supplied with tools. To promote key hygiene behaviours among school children and their communities, 100 male and 100 female school health coordinators were trained.

OUTPUT 6: Enhanced capacity of stakeholders to promote youth participation and provide youth friendly environment
2.7.5.3: Finalize and implement the NYAP
2.7.5.4: Capacity building of Counsellors
2.7.5.5: Youth Leadership Training for at risk youth
2.7.5.6: Child Protection in Emergencies manual (printing and roll out)
2.7.5.7: Finalization of the Bhutan Narcotics Control Agency's Communication strategy and roll out
2.7.5.8: Capacity building of service providers and awareness on drug education and prevention programmes
2.7.5.9: Skills development on drug education and livelihood skills for recovering clients/staff
2.7.5.10: Roll-out of Adolescent Development and Participation Training
2.7.5.11: Roll out of Rights, education and participation training of children with disabilities

Analytical statement of progress:

Through this output, UNICEF focuses on strengthening access to and utilization of quality services for adolescents and youth.

To create an enabling environment for youth, especially those out-of-school, to access integrated services and information related to life skills, health, education, vocational training and employment, UNICEF supported the DYS to finalize a comprehensive service delivery plan for a youth centre in one district. This pilot intervention is aimed at bringing diverse government and non-governmental stakeholders under one roof for better service delivery and referrals.

With the appointment of 17 school guidance counsellors by the MoE, there are now 73 full-time trained counsellors. The newly appointed school counsellors and principals have been trained on the counselling programme. Additionally, 88 primary teachers from three districts in eastern Bhutan were trained on basic skills in counselling. In 2015, as part of the school-based counselling programme, the counsellors handled more than 1,500 cases of students requiring guidance.

For life skills and resilience development of at-risk adolescents, UNICEF partnered with the Career Education and Counselling Division of the DYS to identify adolescents at risk of dropping out of school; 60 such adolescents – equal number of boys and girls – from four districts were identified. They underwent a month-long training, which included key aspects of resilience building such as personality development, psychological strengths and communication skills.

To promote awareness on the rights of children with disabilities, UNICEF supported the Youth Development Fund (YDF) to initiate community-based programmes through a group of seven trained young people. They conducted skits and performances in three districts, reaching more than 1,500 community members.

UNICEF partnered with civil society organizations such as RENEW (Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women) and YDF to engage directly with adolescents and youth on protection issues, including on violence against children and adolescents. Workshops conducted by 70 volunteers from six districts resulted in enhanced awareness among participants on protection issues. As a result, the participating youth have developed action plans to encourage child protection and adolescent participation in their communities.

UNICEF worked with the Bhutan Narcotics Control Agency, MoH and MoE, and NGOs to launch critical communication for development activities. A key highlight of this work in 2015 was a campaign, focusing on preventing substance abuse among adolescent and young people. A total of 1,800 adolescents and youth in three districts were reached through the campaign.

OUTPUT 7: Women, children, youth and other at risk population have enhanced knowledge and skills to adopt behaviours and practices for improved health, nutrition and well being

Analytical statement of progress:

Through this output, UNICEF supports interventions aimed at enhancing knowledge and skills of women and children to adopt practices for improving health, nutrition and well-being.

UNICEF supported expansion of postnatal care through outreach services in all 20 districts, for home deliveries, to increase coverage and utilization mainly for mothers and newborns in difficult-to-reach rural communities. Results show increased use of services and reduction in

deaths of mothers and newborns due to complications. No new data are available on the percentage of women who are aware of at least two danger signs of pregnancy and childbirth. Data on the third visit for post-natal care are scanty.

At the community level, 300 VHWs were trained on interpersonal communication skills and provided job aids like flipcharts with communicate messages on key family practices. Some 100 new VHWs were trained in five districts and 400 existing VHWs in nine districts attended refresher trainings. They line-list and refer pregnant women and young children, treat basic illnesses and provide information to households on health of women and children. To enhance knowledge on improved maternal and child health, messages on importance of antenatal and postnatal care check-ups, institutional delivery, six months exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding, hygiene, sanitation and dangers of teenage pregnancy were disseminated through the broadcast media and during the national mothers singing competition, a show on national television.

UNICEF supported the RSAHP and MoH to ensure that every household has improved sanitation facilities through demand driven subsidy-free approach. UNICEF collaborated with the RSAHP to develop a National Sanitation and Hygiene Guidelines, train masons and link private enterprises to household consumers. Through this, 1,950 toilet construction sets were sold by small and medium enterprises in Mongar and Samdrupjongkhar Districts. For demand creation, 23 Health Assistants were trained on workshop facilitation. Such workshops were conducted in the remaining 91 village clusters thereby reaching every household in the two districts. Within one year, improved sanitation coverage has increased from 26 per cent to 63 per cent in Mongar and from 25 per cent to 46 per cent in Samdrupjongkhar. Additionally, 18 health assistants from all basic health units in Wangdiphodrang District were trained on creating demand for improved sanitation and hygiene. These health assistants conducted demand creation workshops in 70 village clusters to bring about behavioural changes among rural masons in constructing improved sanitation facilities.

OUTCOME 4: By 2018, communities and institutions are strengthened at all levels to achieve enhanced gender equality, empowerment and protection of women and children.

Analytical statement of progress:

For this outcome, UNICEF focused on taking forward the work on policy and evidence generation, improving capacities to work effectively in strengthening child protection systems, as well as improving knowledge among children and adults on child protection issues and services. UNICEF engaged with a diverse set of partners, including the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC), RBP, Dratshang Lhentshog (Commission for Monastic Affairs), as well as local NGOs and youth groups.

As part of ongoing efforts to strengthen evidence and data on violence against children, the second phase of the VAC study was completed in 2015. This qualitative research provided important insights into the drivers of violence against children, as well as children's and adults' perceptions of violence among the Bhutanese people. The results of this research directly contributed to the design of the prevalence study, which is currently under way.

To operationalize the Child Care and Protection Act, UNICEF worked with the NCWC on finalizing the Standard Operating Procedures for children in difficult circumstances (they include victims of violence and those vulnerable to abuse and exploitation) as defined in the Child Care and Protection Act. Recognizing the close link between gender issues and child protection, the protocols also include working with victims of domestic violence. This Standard Operating

Procedures provide step-by-step guidance to all stakeholders in responding on time to victims and vulnerable children and women.

UNICEF continued to work closely with Royal Bhutan Police to enhance capacities of police on child protection issues – through Women and Child Protection Desks, child-friendly interview rooms, and capacity development of personnel. Through a partnership with the Scottish Police College, UNICEF supported the RBP in institutionalizing a capacity development programme on child and women friendly policing practices. As a result, 40 personnel from Women and Child Protection Units/Desks and others who come in contact with children and women as first responders, investigators and specialists have essential skills to deal with children and women in a sensitive and effective manner.

A child-friendly interview room was established as a pilot in one police station. This marked an important step in ensuring that children who come in contact with the police as victims, witnesses, as well as those in conflict with the law are interviewed confidentially and sensitively. The state-of-the-art facility ensures that children do not have to go through the interviewing and investigation process designed for adults, and are not interviewed repeatedly.

With a focus on children with disabilities, UNICEF worked closely with the Ability Bhutan Society, a local civil society partner. Through this initiative, more than 100 professionals and 200 caregivers and family members of children with disabilities improved their understanding related to protection of children with disabilities. Additionally, they were also equipped with skills to detect and respond to child protection concerns.

UNICEF continued and strengthened its engagement with faith-based organizations, through the Dratshang Lhentshog (Commission for Monastic Affairs) and the Bhutan Nuns' Foundation. A group of 17 male principals and male teachers from nine nunneries were trained on how to identify and respond to cases related to protection of girls, including through effective referral to the Child Care and Protection Office for counselling. This will in turn benefit more than 800 children in monastic schools and nunneries.

UNICEF partnered with the YDF and RENEW to initiate the process of promoting direct engagement of adolescents and youth on protection issues, including on violence against children and adolescents. The process undertaken through workshops with 30 Young Volunteers in Action and 40 Community-Based Support System volunteers from six districts resulted in enhanced awareness among participants on protection and violence related issues, and an agreement on actions to be initiated for child protection and adolescent participation in their communities.

Through the recently launched programme, Little Police Partners, the Royal Bhutan Police reached out to more than 5,000 children with child-friendly messages on the role of police, and encouraged children to come forward and report violations of their right to protection without hesitation.

UNICEF worked with NCWC on a number of initiatives, including the celebration of the International Day of the Girl Child and awareness programmes on the Child Care and Protection Act, with special focus on reaching out to children and adolescents. These programmes contributed to improving understanding of child protection issues among communities, as well as provided information related to available services and reporting mechanisms.

OUTPUT 1: The Legal and policy environment for the advancement of rights and protection of women and children is strengthened.

Analytical statement of progress:

In 2015, UNICEF continued working closely with the NCWC and other partners to strengthen legal and policy environment for protection of children. Notable progress included improving data and evidence-base on child protection through the completion of the qualitative research on violence against children, the formulation of Standard Operating Procedures for children and women in difficult circumstances, and initiating awareness programmes on legal provisions, especially designed for children.

The qualitative research on violence against children was completed in 2015. This was the second phase of the three-phase VAC study. The research identified drivers of VAC. These include alcohol abuse by parents, divorce among parents, poverty, cultural beliefs such as 'karma' and societal acceptance of physical means of disciplining of children. The research also identified children's and adults' perceptions on violence against children and generated important evidence on the existing knowledge, attitudes and practices related to violence against children. The findings of the second phase will contribute to the development of a communication for development strategy aimed at addressing child protection issues in Bhutan. The findings have also contributed to the design of the prevalence study on VAC, which is currently under way and will be completed in early 2016. It is expected to provide baseline data for planning interventions for prevention and response.

To provide clarity on the roles of stakeholders and to equip them with step-by-step guidance on dealing with victims and vulnerable children and women effectively and on time, UNICEF supported the NCWC to develop two separate but inter-linked Standard Operating Procedures on case management and referral system. The Standard Operating Procedures were finalized through an extensive consultative and review process. It operationalizes the provisions mandated under the Child Care and Protection Act and the Domestic Violence Prevention Act of Bhutan.

Improved understanding on the provisions of child protection legislation: Recognizing the importance of engaging children for their own protection, UNICEF worked with NCWC to develop an awareness raising programme focused on children. The programme aims to improve children's understanding on key child protection issues, and the laws that protect them from violence. In the first round of awareness programmes, more than 2,200 children and adults in Thimphu were sensitized. UNICEF is also working with the NCWC to develop child-friendly versions of Child Care and Protection Act.

OUTPUT 2: Boys, men, girls and women have increased awareness and display positive attitudes on the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence.

Analytical statement of progress:

In 2015, UNICEF worked closely with NGOs, the NCWC and the Royal Bhutan Police towards improving awareness on child protection, and to create an enabling environment at the facility level to deal effectively and sensitively with children in difficult circumstances (victims of violence and those vulnerable to abuse and exploitation).

UNICEF supported the NCWC to celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child. The theme for 2015 helped highlight the potential and power of adolescent girls and their role in realizing a better and sustainable future for all. To mark the day, students of Khasadrapchu Middle

Secondary School in Thimphu District produced and staged a skit on the theme 'The Power of the Adolescent Girls: Vision for 2013', highlighting the importance of girls' empowerment.

With the establishment of Women and Child Protection Desks in the Police stations in two more districts (Tsirang and Trashigang), specialized support and services for women and children are now available in 11 of the 20 districts. The Women and Child Protection Desks allow the police to deal with child victims, vulnerable children, and children in conflict with the law in facilities that are child-friendly and non-threatening. These Desks are separated from the main police station and have dedicated personnel trained on handling cases sensitively. UNICEF supported the establishment of Bhutan's first child-friendly interview room in the Thimphu police station. To ensure relevant support for children in contact with the law, the room has child-friendly information technology equipment for interviewing, child-friendly furniture and a disability-friendly ramp. Such facilities ensure that children who come in contact with police as victims, witnesses, and those in conflict with law are interviewed in a separate and secure place by trained police personnel using state of the art technology and recording facilities which will avoid repeated interviewing of children.

UNICEF's Adolescent Development and Partnership and Child Protection programmes partnered with the YDF and RENEW to promote direct engagement of adolescents and youth on protection issues, including violence against children and adolescents. Workshops conducted with 70 volunteers from six districts resulted in enhanced awareness among participants on protection issues, and an action plan on child protection and adolescent participation in their communities. These volunteers will undertake awareness generation as well as reporting work on child protection issues.

OUTPUT 3: Institutions, communities, families and children in at least four districts have the knowledge, skills, resources and mechanisms to prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect of children.

Analytical statement of progress:

To enhance knowledge, skills and the mechanism to prevent and respond to violence against children, UNICEF in 2015 engaged with diverse organizations ranging from police to faith-based and civil society.

UNICEF supported RBP to design and implement a capacity development programme on child and women friendly policing practices. Ten police officials –trained as trainers – trained a first batch of 40 police personnel, including officers at the Women and Child Protection Units/Desks. The training enhanced their skills on being sensitive and responsive as first responders, effectively interviewing victims and specializing as investigators of relevant cases. The RBP plans to institutionalize the programme in 2016.

UNICEF's work with the Ability Bhutan Society, a civil society partner, resulted in finalizing a training manual for caregivers and professionals in protection CWD. Subsequently, more than 100 professionals and service providers were trained to identify, report and address protection concerns of CWDs. Through such trainings more than 200 caregivers and family members of CWDs have improved understanding on protecting CWDs.

UNICEF worked with the Bhutan Nuns Foundation (faith-based organization), to enhance knowledge and capacities of male principals and teachers to work effectively with young nuns. A total of 17 principals and teachers, working with more than 150 nuns were trained on child protection and gender-based violence. It developed a better understanding of the nature of

support they can offer to female teachers and students, including on the available services such as the short-stay shelter and counselling services at the Child Care and Protection Office. Additionally, 16 teachers of monastic schools were trained on child protection. They are expected to reach out to more than 300 child monks with key messages on child protection.

In 2015, Little Police Partners, a programme initiated by RBP with UNICEF support reached 5,000 young children in schools. The programme gave children a glimpse into the work of police, and encouraged children to reach out to police in times of need.

To engage with vulnerable children and their families, a four-day workshop on child protection was organized for more than 170 children and 250 parents from the road construction sites of Project DANTAK (Indian border roads organization) of Chukha, Paro and Thimphu Districts. It resulted in improved understanding among children and parents about child rights and key child protection concerns. The workshop also provided the Project DANTAK team specific guidance on establishing community-based response mechanisms.

OUTCOME 5: By 2018, the Government and civil society have increased capacity for evidence-based decision-making, taking into account the views of young people, for equitable and right-based social policy.

Analytical statement of progress:

Through this outcome, UNICEF supports capacity building of stakeholders to enable better understanding and interpretation of policies and data, so that governance institutions and communities can better advocate for and influence decision-making.

UNICEF initiated partnership with the Election Commission of Bhutan to launch Bhutan Children's Parliament. The country office supported the signing ceremony of the Constitution of Bhutan Children's Parliament. Its first democratic elections were held in September 2015 where 43 members were elected from a total of 153 contestants.

The Children's Parliament aims to promote an active engagement of young people in civic life and governance. It will encourage students to learn about the meaningful roles and responsibilities of citizens in nation-building and sustaining democracy; provide a platform for school-based Democracy Clubs to come together, engage with the Parliament and the Royal Government, and contribute to discussions on policy and current issues that affect children. It will also provide a hands-on experience for young people to participate in discussions and decision-making at the national level. It also aims to scale up and institutionalize Democracy Clubs schools across the country.

In collaboration with the Royal University of Bhutan and India's Jindal School of Government and Public Policy, UNICEF supported the development and institutionalization of a certificate course on Social Policy at the Sherubtse College in eastern Bhutan. This course, which will start in January 2016, is expected to enhance the capacity of relevant stakeholders in understanding, interpreting and influencing social policies aimed at achieving better results for children, women and marginalized communities.

With UNICEF's support, the Youth Centre Division of the DYS brought together more than 180 adolescents and youth through forums and youth exchange programmes. These programmes helped young people to share their problems, exchange ideas and interact with experts and government officials, who provided guidance to young people on various issues such as education, vocational training, employment and entrepreneurship.

OUTPUT 1: Key national and local institutions strengthen systems for effective public finance management and integrated monitoring of plans and programmes, evidence-based decision-making based on harmonized national statistics and information.

Analytical statement of progress:

This output deals with capacity building of stakeholders on social policy and data generation including strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure equitable results for women, children and other vulnerable groups.

To empower the Government and civil society to better understand, interpret and influence social policies and related issues, UNICEF in collaboration with the Royal University of Bhutan initiated the development of a Certificate Course on Social Policy at the Sherubtse College in eastern Bhutan. In 2015, to ensure that the course offers the highest possible standards and relevance, four faculty members from the Sherubtse College and an official from the Royal University visited Maldives University to look at the Masters in Social Policy course there. To provide further support in the effective design and delivery of the curriculum, the Royal University collaborated with India's Jindal School of Government and Public Policy. The certificate course, targeting civil servants, parliamentarians and civil society organizations will be offered beginning January 2016.

UNICEF and the National Statistics Bureau conducted a child poverty study. The main component of this study is the quantitative analysis using the Alkire-Foster Multidimensional Poverty Measurement Approach. Child related indicators were selected from Bhutan Multiple Indicator Survey 2010 dataset and the results disaggregated by sex, age, location, wealth quintile and education level of household heads. This was further supplemented by qualitative research on child poverty in Bhutan.

To build national capacity evidence-based decision-making, and particularly in using existing national data to generate information and knowledge about inequities, UNICEF supported officials from the Ministry of Health, National Statistics Bureau and the country office to participate in a technical working session in Bangkok. Following the training, development of equity profiles on stunting and child poverty in Bhutan has been completed.

UNICEF supported several evaluation related activities in 2015. EAB is working towards gaining a civil society organization status. A work plan and a communication strategy, including a dedicated website (<www.evalbhutan.org>) was developed. UNICEF supported an EAB member and a government official to participate in an International conference on National Evaluation Capacities in Bangkok. To further promote evaluation culture in Bhutan, a high level event, with over 90 participants including parliamentarians, government officials, civil society organizations, private sector and other development partners, was held in December to mark the EvalYear 2015. The key outcome of the event was the draft Bhutan Evaluation Agenda 2016–2020.

OUTPUT 2: Women and youth have increased opportunities to participate in political leadership as well as in planning, decision-making, monitoring and implementation of policies and programmes at national and local levels.

Analytical statement of progress:

To promote engagement of adolescents and youth in policy and planning, and to provide them opportunities to innovate and apply ideas, UNICEF worked with a range of partners to enhance

the skills of adolescents, promote interactions, and provide grants for adolescent-led initiatives.

To enable adolescents and youth to find their voices and creativity, UNICEF together with the Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy organized a series of multimedia trainings for 43 boys and 26 girls (focusing on out-of-school adolescents). As a result, young people improved their skills in using digital media, photography, storytelling, creative writing and social media conversations. The trainings also enhanced their understanding on issues that affect young people, enabling them to share their voices through technology.

The Youth Centre Division of DYS organized four participatory and interactive programmes (two forums and two youth exchanges) bringing together more than 180 adolescents. Through these forums and youth exchanges participants had the opportunity to discuss and identify challenges faced by adolescents from across the country. Participants also got an opportunity to interact with experts and government officials, and received guidance on education, vocational training, employment and entrepreneurship. The issues and challenges identified during the forums and exchange programmes were further deliberated during the National Youth Forum held in December 2015.

To motivate adolescents to become advocates for community-based solutions and develop their skills in documenting and mapping strengths and risks within their community, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy, conducted community mapping of one district. The mapping exercise engaged 30 adolescents and youth. Replicating the concept of Voices of Youth maps, five communities were mapped in partnership with local leaders and communities. Findings of the project were presented to policymakers, local leaders and communities along with -recommendations for follow-up action.

UNICEF partnered with four civil society organizations to support the empowerment of adolescents and youth by providing 35 grants for self-started initiatives that were designed using comprehensive guidelines and managed by young people in groups. These 6–12 month youth-led start-ups with budget ranging from US\$500 to US\$2,000 cover diverse themes, including education, environment, violence against women/children, employability and entrepreneurial skills. This exposure to grant management has contributed in enhancing the grantees' capacities in terms of managing an entire grant cycle, including grant application, implementation, monitoring, financial management and reporting.

Document Centre

Other Publications

Title
A snapshot of youth groups and services in Bhutan (Brochure and flyers/info-graph)
World Toilet Day Supplement on national newspaper, <i>Kuensel</i>
UNICEF Bhutan Annual Report 2014
Health and Hygiene Curriculum for Monastic Schools (Student's Handbook)
Health and Hygiene Curriculum for Monastic Schools (Teacher's Guide)