

Update on the context and situation of children

The implications of Cambodia's social and economic transition create both opportunities for and risks to the realization of child and adolescent rights. **Cambodia has one of the youngest populations** in Southeast Asia, with one third of its 16 million people aged under 15 years and one fifth aged between 15 and 24 years.

Cambodia has recorded impressive steady economic growth, averaging 7 per cent for over two decades. In 2016, it transitioned from low-income to lower-middle-income country status, when the gross national income per capita reached US\$1,070.

Cambodia's Human Development Index score rose substantially in previous decades, from 0.364 in 1990 to 0.581 in 2018, placing it in the medium human development category. Despite overall improvements in human development, **disparities and inequities persist** and the nation will remain a least-developed country for the foreseeable future. **Around 4.5 million people in Cambodia remain near-poor and are vulnerable** to falling back into poverty. The National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPF) 2016–2025, which prioritizes cash transfers for pregnant women and children, provides a good opportunity to address poverty. UNICEF continued to support the **National Social Protection Council (NSPC)** to enhance the implementation of the NSPF, which encompasses social assistance, social security and health insurance. UNICEF support focuses on the social assistance component, prioritizing building government capacity to rollout the cash transfer programme for pregnant women and children aged 0-2 years. The social protection programme is expected to cover up to 100,000 pregnant women and children annually, with government investment of up to US\$10 million annually by 2021.

Within the NSPF, in 2019 the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport and the NSPC agreed to scale up **primary school scholarships for children from vulnerable families** from US\$5.2 million to US\$7.7 million between 2019 and 2023.

In 2019, Cambodia became the **26th Pathfinding Country** in the world, committing to ending all forms of violence against children. UNICEF and the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children are supporting the government to fully implement the **Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Violence Against Children**.

In 2019, UNICEF supported the government to prepare its periodic report to the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) committee, and in September Cambodia reported at the **pre-session on the CRC** committee in Geneva. The government will attend the committee in 2020.

Cambodia's **high rural-urban migration** will continue, due to rising unemployment and the impacts of climate change on resettlements, businesses and farming in rural areas. Rapid urbanization, a lack of appropriate policies to manage the influx of people, and insufficient expansion of basic social services in urban poor areas pose challenges to child wellbeing. These could aggravate sanitation and hygiene conditions or limit child-friendly spaces. Rapid industrial expansion and an unmanaged urban construction boom, especially in Phnom Penh, have resulted in poorer air quality, affecting people's health. Projections suggest that by 2030, over one third of the country's population will live in urban areas. Failure by urban authorities to expand social service infrastructure to match the increasing population will result in new dimensions of poverty, requiring new solutions. **UNICEF sharpened its urban focus** in 2019, including within the UNDAF.

In February 2019, the EU launched a review of the **Everything But Arms (EBA) preferential trade status** for Cambodia, submitting its preliminary report to the government in November. The final decision on whether to withdraw will be taken in early 2020. Cambodia's economic growth relies strongly on the **garment sector**, whose largest share is exported to EU markets under the framework of EBA.

Around 700,000 people, 85 per cent of whom are women from rural or vulnerable communities, are currently employed in the garment sector and form the backbone of the economy. Withdrawal of the preferential trade status could have devastating impacts on the economy and wellbeing of the population, especially women and children. UNICEF continues to monitor the situation.

Cambodia continues to face challenges with the quality of education, coverage for adolescent dropouts, and completion rates in secondary education. There are few alternatives for diversifying non-formal education that would prepare young people for their future in a country aiming to reach upper-middle-income status by 2050.

Cambodia's **economic growth relies heavily on foreign investments and markets**, making it highly vulnerable to external economic shocks. Its recent increased dependence on Chinese foreign direct investment and official development assistance constitutes another potential economic shock, as any slowdown in the Chinese economy could negatively impact Cambodia's growth prospects.

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The challenges of dealing with disasters and emergencies are expected to continue due to **climate change and land depletion**. Frequent typhoons and tropical storms are expected to increasingly cause damage to settlements, agriculture, rural businesses and natural resources. Land degradation and soil erosion heavily impact food security, as well as biological, agricultural and economic productivity. Frequent and highly unpredictable droughts and floods negatively affect agricultural production and increase the vulnerability of the poor and near poor, especially women and children.

Children with disabilities are invisible in mainstream development programming, a situation compounded by a lack of quality data. With some 9.5 per cent of the Cambodian population estimated to experience at least some form of disability, and an estimated 15 per cent of children aged between 2 and 9 years having an impairment, there is a need for early detection, inclusive education and social protection. In 2019, UNICEF worked on ensuring that children with disabilities remained high on the agenda in health, education and social protection. The Population Census (data collected in 2019 and due for release in 2020) should provide more information on the scale of disabilities.

Following the UNICEF Executive Board's validation of Cambodia's Country Programme Document (CPD) 2019–2023 in September 2018, the **CPD began in 2019**. UNICEF HQ assessed programme strategy notes as 'high quality'. Sections established and signed rolling workplans with ministerial counterparts before the March 2019 deadline. The country office held a mid-year and annual review of its programme; findings were documented and will be actioned in 2020.

Major contributions and drivers of results

Goal area 1: Every child survives and thrives

UNICEF continued to support the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) to reduce maternal, neonatal and child mortality by strengthening the capacity of the health workforce, mostly midwives in remote areas, and increasing coverage of health services to reach SDG targets. Key achievements include response support for the 2019 measles outbreak, rolling out the expansion of early essential newborn care, and strengthening the quality and coverage of services in primary care.

UNICEF supported the RGC in all aspects of health in line with the National Health Strategic Plan 2016–2020. Its response is closely linked to the relevant Cambodian SDGs and priority areas in the national Rectangular Strategy Phase IV. UNICEF continued technical support to formulating key strategies and policies related to universal health coverage and social protection.

UNICEF technical and financial support contributed to the reinforcement of equitable access to basic quality health and nutrition services for pregnant women, mothers, newborns and children under the age of 5 years, focusing on those living in the north-eastern provinces and marginalized groups. Evidence-based, targeted interventions in human resource capacity building (training, coaching, supportive supervision) and service delivery strengthening (neonatal care, outreach, screening/information and referral, severe acute malnutrition (SAM) management, iodized salt availability) contributed to improving equity and achieving target indicators in health and nutrition.

During the first nine months of 2019, the proportion of pregnant women with at least four antenatal checks before delivery was 63.1 per cent, a significant improvement from 57.6 per cent in 2018. In selected north-eastern provinces that receive UNICEF support, this proportion was 44.8 per cent, compared to 41.9 per cent in 2018. In UNICEF-supported provinces, deliveries attended by skilled personnel increased from 58.1 per cent in 2018 to 64.4 per cent in 2019, approaching the national average of 67.1 per cent. The proportion of post-partum mothers and babies receiving postnatal care within two days of delivery was 60.1 per cent in the UNICEF target area, 7 per cent higher than the national average of 53 per cent. Community participation through social mobilization and integrated health outreach planning were better harmonized and contributed to more efficiency.

Integrated outreach with trained midwives in hard-to-reach areas was strengthened, with more than 80 per cent of planned outreach sessions implemented during the first nine months of 2019. This contributed to improvements in the coverage of antenatal care, skilled attendance during delivery, postpartum care, and a reduction in dropout rates of Penta1-Penta3 vaccines.

To increase SAM treatment coverage, UNICEF supported the expansion of services into 74 additional health facilities in two provinces. Outreach services were complemented with facility-based service delivery and monitoring system strengthening. With UNICEF support, all health facilities in the north-eastern provinces now have at least two Expanded Programme on Immunization staff trained on the implementation of the new standard operating procedures for immunization supply chain management. UNICEF supports maternal, newborn and child health programme staff and hospital midwives to coach health centre midwives on intensive neonatal care and early essential newborn care.

UNICEF initiated and supported expanded community-based integrated services for children. Activities helped families,

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communities and school teachers identify and follow children with illnesses and/or impairments who could benefit from early, immediate and/or ongoing medical attention. Health screening at schools in Ratanakiri and Kratie provinces reached 61 preschools in Integrated Early Childhood Development enhanced monitoring districts (35 in Ratanakiri and 26 in Kratie), benefiting 1,932 children aged 3-6 years.

The proportion of iodized salt on the local market was good in the first half of 2019, but decreased considerably thereafter. This may be linked to a change in management of the local producing community, which led to a withdrawal of 30 per cent of producers from the professional association. UNICEF will continue to support the RGC to ensure that iodized salt remains a priority in Cambodia.

Goal area 2: Every child learns

Underpinning progress in this area is the productive and collegial relationship between the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), UNICEF Cambodia and other development partners in the education sector. UNICEF cemented its position as a key convener of development partners by continuing as chair of the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG), the coordinating agency for the Joint Technical Working Group for Education/Local Education Group, and the grant agent linked to the results-based Global Partnership for Education Phase 3 (GPE3) programme. As chair of the ESWG, UNICEF played a significant role in developing the new Education Strategic Plan, which will guide sector reform priorities in the medium term.

UNICEF continued to implement programmes with MoEYS on a national scale, and in a wide range of areas that directly support MoEYS reform priorities. These included programmes on public financial management (PFM) and the more efficient and effective use of scholarship investments, school-based management, teacher development, school inspection, and inclusive education, such as multilingual education, which continues to reach a greater number of students from a range of ethno-cultural backgrounds. As the Capacity Development Partnership Fund is one of the only UNICEF programmes to successfully combine financing modalities (upfront and results-based financing), audiences in Cambodia and internationally are interested in learning more about how this innovative fund operates.

Evidence generation and policy dialogue are two levers used by CDPF to inform policy formulation and implementation. Two evaluations on MoEYS' scholarship and multilingual education (MLE) programmes were completed in 2019, and four policy-based research studies by MoEYS were supported. The evaluation of the 2014-2018 Multilingual Education Nation Action Plan (MENAP) informed the development of the 2019-2023 plan and the expansion of the programme to another indigenous language. The scholarship evaluation informed significant changes to the administration of the MoEYS primary scholarship programme, and coordination between the primary and secondary programmes.

UNICEF continued to assist MoEYS to build an education system that is responsive to the needs of all children, including those poorest and most marginalized. UNICEF provided significant assistance in teacher development that benefitted 107 preschool teachers (91 female) and 206 primary school teachers (84 female) that taught multilingual education classes, attended by 2,137 preschool students (1,084 girls) and 4,786 primary school children (2,320 girls).

With UNICEF technical support, the Inclusive Education Action Plan 2019-2023 was finalized. This will guide the provision of quality education for children with disabilities. Nationally, 1,699 preschool teachers (1,552 female) and 972 teachers from 199 primary schools (359 female) received intensive 28-hour in-service training on inclusive education, benefiting an estimated 933 children with disabilities (373 girls). The first cohort of 18 teachers (13 female) graduated from a diploma course on special education and were deployed to two special education schools.

UNICEF Cambodia assisted MoEYS to establish the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) National Action Plan 2019-2023. UNICEF worked with MoEYS to assist 250 community preschools to reach minimum quality standards.

Several programme interventions continued to support adolescents within the formal school system to further develop their potential: 1,012 (519 female) indigenous ethnic minority upper-secondary students and 53 (35 female) indigenous ethnic minority teacher trainees received scholarships to further their studies. UNICEF assisted MoEYS to expand its life skills programme: 83 lower secondary schools provide life skills education for 32,771 students (17,349 girls) and 66 schools implement entrepreneurship education for 21,416 students (10,854 girls).

Goal area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

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Significant progress was achieved in gaining government support to adopt a systems-strengthening strategy for the child protection sector, by creating a robust legal and policy framework, strengthening human and financial resources, providing child protection preventive and response services and promoting positive social norms.

The Cambodia National Council for Children (CNCC) began developing a child protection law and standard operating procedures for case management of child victims of different forms of violence, after the prime minister approved a concept note signed by CNCC the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) and UNICEF. MoSVY committed to send the final draft of the law to the Office of the Council of Ministers by the end of 2021. The Ministry of Justice is leading the finalization of diversion guidelines for juveniles in conflict with the law and child-friendly justice guideline procedures. MoSVY and the Ministry of Interior (MoI) agreed to collaborate on developing a national child protection sector strategic plan, which will be implemented through agreed child protection coordination mechanisms (national and sub-national).

In 2019, Cambodia joined the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children as a Pathfinding Country, and an inter-ministerial steering committee was established to coordinate the implementation of the Cambodia Action Plan on Violence Against Children. The government committed to including SDGs targets 16.1 and 16.2 in the Cambodia SDGs during the mid-term review in 2022.

UNICEF supported MoSVY to reintegrate with their families and communities 38 percent of children who were living in residential care institutions, surpassing the Action Plan for Improving Child Care target of 30 per cent. s. As of September, 1,333 children (48 per cent female), had reintegrated into family- and community-based care. Most of these children and their families are receiving support from NGOs that are part of the 3PC NGO network. The number of residential care institutions decreased by 36 per cent, compared to 2015 mapping.

Some 189,330 girls and boys benefited from the implementation of the Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Violence Against Children (2017–2021). Of these, 4,317 girls and boys who experienced violence received services from social/welfare, health and law enforcement workers, and 185,013 girls and boys benefited from the training of parents/caregivers, teachers and monks on parenting skills and positive discipline. Members of the Adolescent and Youth Reference Group collaborated with communities to raise awareness on violence against children, ending child marriage, and teenage pregnancy.

There was progress on the implementation of the Juvenile Justice Law. The government appointed 50 social agents to support the implementation of the law and UNICEF supported the training of provincial social affairs officers. MoI is considering appointing specialist police officers for child protection at provincial, district and commune levels, based on the positive results of the work of the police in five provinces (Phnom Penh, Battambang, Siem Reap, Sihanouk and Kandal). With UNICEF support, commune police child protection desks were established in 25 communes to prevent and respond to violence against children.

Goal area 4: Every child lives in a safe and clean environment

The safety and cleanliness of children's environments improved in 2019 through a number of change strategies, including the development and leveraging of resources and partnerships in the area of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Notable results included the launch of the Rural WASH National Action Plan 2019–2023, with UNICEF technical support particularly evident in the plan's results framework, costing and financing gap analysis, and inclusion of climate change. Results in the humanitarian domain included the launch of the Emergency Response Contingency Plan for Rural WASH, with UNICEF technical support to the structure and content of the plan.

UNICEF continues to co-lead the WASH sector with the Ministry for Rural Development and has leveraged partnerships to support the government's application to join the global Sanitation and Water for All partnership – a mechanism to accelerate WASH sector progress. Through partnerships with national and sub-national government, donors and NGOs, and engagement with over 40 private and social franchise WASH service providers, UNICEF support resulted in some 62,315 people (33,027 female, 11,217 people with disabilities, and 21,187 children under 18) accessing sanitation, and an estimated 37,397 people (3,335 people holding 'ID Poor' certificates) accessing water supply. This contributed to achieving national WASH development priorities and UNDAF Result Area 3.

The change strategy of fostering innovation for children resulted in notable progress in Svay Rieng province, where mechanisms were established for delivering pro-poor household sanitation subsidies through private-sector channels, using the multi-dimensional national ID-poor system. This innovation allowed an estimated 1,434 poor households to purchase a partially subsidized toilet, decreasing sanitation inequities and barriers to access.

The change strategy of working with businesses and markets to shape contributions for children resulted in UNICEF creating partnerships with: 18 social franchise bottled water systems to start and strengthen supply; 13 private piped

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water system operators to expand and strengthen the climate resilience of water supply services, including to poor households; over 15 local latrine businesses to provide sanitation products and services to customers; and one private solid waste management service provider to enhance waste collection in two urban administrative areas, with the development of a solid waste collection schedule in target areas and facilitation of the bagging of waste.

Evidence was harnessed with the publication of the rural WASH Management Information System report. UNICEF and other sector partners provided technical support to the: data system and drafting of the report; completion of a baseline WASH survey in UNICEF target areas, which included disaggregated data for gender, disability and wealth quintiles; publication of microbiological water quality results for drinking water used by children in early childhood; and strengthening the local WASH evidence base to inform decision making.

UNICEF worked across sectors in schools and health facilities with MoEYS and the Ministry of Health (MoH) at national and sub-national level on menstrual hygiene management awareness, and gender-sensitive WASH facility development in 29 primary and five pre-primary schools. Work is progressing for a further 149 schools and 15 health facilities.

Goal area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life

UNICEF prioritized actions to improve budget allocations for children and strengthen evidence-based planning, budgeting and social service delivery. Significant results were achieved in promoting access of vulnerable children to social protection and social services in line with UNDAF Outcome 1.

A noteworthy milestone was an increase in the coverage of social assistance (at 5 per cent of the eligible population identified as poor – UNICEF estimates). UNICEF supported the RGC to establish readiness to deliver the child- and gender-sensitive conditional cash transfer programme for pregnant women and children aged 0-2 years. This will be rolled out in 2020 to cover an estimated 100,000 beneficiaries annually. The government has allocated an estimated US\$5 million in 2020, with projected increases of up to US\$10 million in 2021. UNICEF supported improving the capacities of MoSVY staff who implement the majority of social assistance programmes in Cambodia. Training commune workers in 1,600 communes created a basis to further strengthen the social service workforce to deliver new programmes, such as the old-age pension, and improve the delivery of the disability allowance programme. UNICEF supported the development of a management information system as the basis of integrated social assistance.

The government released the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2019–2023, developed with support from UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA, and finalized the results framework of the National Rectangular Strategy IV. This will inform future engagement with social ministries, the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) and the Ministry of Planning (MoP) in developing the sector results framework linking policy, planning and sector budgets.

UNICEF contributed to building the capacities of national and sub-national administrations (SNA) to plan, budget and deliver social services for vulnerable children. Delivery tools and mechanisms were established to provide clarity and guidance on certain aspects of planning and budgeting within the context of PFM and decentralization reforms in collaboration with MEF and MoI. Foundations to strengthen effectiveness and incentives for social service delivery of SNAs were established through the Award and Recognition Programme. MEF issued guidelines on social service budget formulation and execution for the capital, provinces and districts/ municipalities/khans in 2019. Its 2020 budget guidelines introduced a budget code for social service activities, referring to the Menu of Options of Social Service Activities issued by MoI in 2018. These are expected to improve planning, execution and tracking of social services. A team of trained coaches was established at central level to strengthen guidance routinely provided to SNAs. MoI and MEF were supported to implement a model of structured consultative workshops and meetings with SNAs to support budget development and negotiations in seven target provinces for scale up to all provinces. This contributed to an overall increase in budget allocations for social services to 1.82 per cent for provinces/capital (from 1.26 per cent at baseline) and 5.4 per cent for communes/sangkats (from 5 per cent at baseline).

UNICEF continued direct advocacy and facilitated budget negotiations among social sector ministries and MEF. As a result, selected social ministries increased budget allocations for priority child-focused sub-programmes, including for nutrition (RUTF procurement). Nutrition increased by 6% in 2019 compared to 2018; rural water supply and sanitation under the Ministry of Rural Development increased by 0.3 % in comparison to 2018; and the Disability Allowance Programme under MoSVY increased by 30 % though from a low base.

Successful partnerships included a collaboration between four key ministries (MoSVY, MoP, MoI and MoH) on the delivery of the cash transfer programme for poor women and children aged 0-2 years, which was formalized. A partnership between MEF and MoI to link PFM and decentralization reforms was strengthened to promote reform at sub-national levels. Important partnerships to promote programme delivery and increase available resources were forged with a number of development partners, including SIDA, EU and GIZ in support of social protection. UNICEF collaborated with GIZ to ensure the availability of technology solutions to support the cash transfer programme and strengthen the ID Poor national social

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registry. A collaboration with ILO and WHO was formalized through the SDG Fund for Social Protection and the EU-funded project 'Linking Social Protection and PFM', resulting in US\$1.6 million available for social protection and PFM reform programming. UNICEF continued to chair informal coordination mechanisms of development partners in preparation for its future role as the chair of the national development partner coordination mechanisms for social assistance, while playing an important role in promoting the UN agenda within PFM reform as the only UN agency participating in the PFM Technical Working Group.

Cross-cutting and integrated programming

Education and gender

UNICEF worked closely with MoEYS to promote gender-equitable, organizational and technical leadership at national and sub-national levels of the ministry. Work commenced on a participatory gender audit of MoEYS, which will identify practical opportunities for MoEYS to strengthen the representation of women within its management and leadership ranks.

Education, WASH and Health

Indicators on Minimum Requirements for WASH in Schools were introduced in the new Education Strategic Plan, and the School Health Department continues to provide in-service training, with UNICEF support, to school directors on the star ranking. UNICEF funded technical assistance to support the department with the coordination of textbook development for health education in Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10, with a nationwide rollout planned in 2021.

Education and Disability

The first cohort of 18 teachers (13 female) graduated from a diploma course on special education for children with sight and hearing impairments and were deployed to two special education schools

Health and Child Protection

As part of the Ending Violence Against Children National Action Plan, UNICEF continued to strengthen health system responses to child victims. Medical practitioners from 103 health facilities in eight provinces received training on the clinical handbook from MoH.

In 2019, the positive discipline programme expanded its reach to 1,143 primary schools, an increase of 339 primary schools. With UNICEF support, MoEYS began integrating positive discipline training content and practices into the pre-service teacher training curriculum. This is a critical step in scale-up and reach of the programme nationally.

Early Childhood Development

The ECCD National Action Plan was finalized after two rounds of inter-ministry consultation, with UNICEF support, and is expected to be endorsed in early 2020. In 2019, collaboration between the education and child survival team continued with follow-up work on the longitudinal study, including further cognitive testing of cohorts of children aged 3-5 years in five districts.

Education, Emergencies and Climate Change

For emergencies in education, UNICEF procured 250 'school-in-a-box' kits for pre-positioning in 11 disaster-prone provinces. MoEYS finalized and approved its Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, and UNICEF supported capacity development for school teachers to implement the plan in six flood-prone provinces.

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Lessons Learned and Innovations

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Goal area 1: Every child survives and thrives

Targeted interventions are effective in tackling inequities between population groups and achieving concrete improvements in health outcomes. Interventions included outreach to hard-to-reach populations in north-eastern provinces, which improved equity in immunization coverage and reduced drop-out among the target population.

Evidence-based programming helps identify gaps and redirect interventions towards increased effectiveness. A longitudinal study continues to provide valuable information for programming, for example on the importance of changing people's behaviour so that they separate human dwellings from animals and livestock. This reduces the risk of children coming into direct contact with animal faeces and ensures improved nutritional status.

Innovation is critical to tackling challenges. UNICEF supported the production of ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) through a local, private-sector food producer. This is now managed locally. The RUTF has been accredited for use in the treatment of malnutrition, reducing Cambodia's dependence on international supplies.

Government ownership is crucial for sustainable program implementation. The advocacy effort resulted to get 170,000 USD from the Government treasury for treatment of severe acute malnutrition. Effort is underway for increased amount of allocation and to further take full ownership to ensure program sustainability.

Goal area 2: Every child learns

Through persistent work in consolidating and increasing donor support for UNICEF Cambodia's education programme in 2019, UNICEF continued to implement programmes with MoEYS on a national scale, and in a wide range of areas that directly support the reform priorities of MoEYS. These included programmes relating to public financial management and the more efficient and effective use of scholarship investments, school-based management, teacher development, school inspection, and inclusive education, such as multilingual education. This continues to reach a greater number of students from a larger range of ethno-cultural backgrounds.

Evidence generation and policy dialogue continue to be important for policy formulation and implementation. Two evaluations of the MoEYS scholarship and multilingual education programmes were completed in 2019. An outcome evaluation, 'Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF) Phases I and II' was awarded the UNICEF 2018 Best Evaluation.

UNICEF commissioned a participatory gender audit of MoEYS to promote organizational learning and action on how to realize gender-equitable leadership. These strategic investments support MoEYS policy makers to use research evidence more for policy dialogue, policy implementation and resource prioritization.

Goal area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

UNICEF continues to work on strengthening child protection systems at district and commune levels so that child protection services can be delivered even closer to where children live. This includes strengthening social service and child protection workforces, specifically their capacity, data management and monitoring systems.

Data management for child protection is fragmented in Cambodia. Through its good relationships with different government agencies, UNICEF supported the coordination of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) and key ministries on how to systematically generate annual child protection data for the child protection information management system (CPIMS) as part of regular reporting systems.

Adolescent and youth groups reviewed the progress made in the inter-ministerial Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Violence against Children 2017-2021 and identified the gaps and recommendations through a series of consultations. These recommendations were compiled into a Children's Statement, which was handed over to the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation at the launch of Cambodia as a Pathfinding Country in September 2019. The Ministry, with support from UNICEF, will ensure that relevant ministries will take action following these recommendations throughout the implementation of the Action Plan

UNICEF worked with young people and supported them to engage with the government institutions in policy dialogues and programme development. As a result, the Ministry of Women's Affairs has included the child marriage issue in their plan as one of their priority areas. UNICEF also worked with the NGO CRC-Cambodia which supported young people to engage directly with communities in disseminating education materials, including short videos on the negative impact of child marriage as a first step towards changing the social norms which condone the child marriage practice.

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An innovative 'Roundtable for the Pathway to Safe Childhood: Leveraging Partnerships to End Violence against Children in Cambodia' was held on the same day that Cambodia was launched as a Pathfinding Country. MoSVY hosted the roundtable, in collaboration with UNICEF and the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children. It brought together more than 60 representatives of development partners, the private sector and government ministries.

Goal area 4: Every child lives in a safe and clean environment

Working with 15 local latrine businesses, and through pro-poor financing, UNICEF assisted poor households to purchase partially subsidized toilets.

There was promising initial progress in 2019 related to innovating with the private sector, government, and civil society organizations on future public-private partnership models for private piped water suppliers, as well as work with private bottled water suppliers. Work to support fuller realization is an important opportunity for 2020.

Goal area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life

Building on lessons learned UNICEF will strengthen inter-ministerial collaboration for social protection programming. To ensure efficient data collection and capacity building, the use of technology in service delivery and training will be further promoted, including the use of tablets and mobile device management tools that were introduced in 2019.

Funding under the SDG Fund for Social Protection, the sub-regional Public Financial Management Facility, and the EU-funded project on linking social protection and public financial management will lead to expanded coverage of social assistance programmes. UNICEF will work towards strengthening the existing disability allowance programme and the development of an integrated family package for social assistance.

Cross-cutting and integrated programming

A strong cross-sectoral focus was maintained in 2019, as collaboration between UNICEF Cambodia's education and child protection sections continued to show substantial results in preventing and reducing violence in schools. Technical partnerships were deepened on WASH, health and nutrition, as schools are increasingly mapping and improving their WASH facilities, and on health education, including comprehensive sexuality education, which is moving closer to nationwide rollout in 2021.

UNICEF innovated to strengthen climate resilience in water supply programming through a climate-sensitive risk analysis, water source improvements, and the drafting of climate-sensitive technical and management guidance for piped water system operators.

The formative evaluation of the Integrated Early Childhood Development approach implemented from 2016 to 2018 provided both strategic and service-level recommendations for future implementation of the new National Action Plan on early childhood care and development.

In September 2019, UNICEF held a Strategic Moment of Reflection on how its programming could be modified and advanced to improve the lives of adolescents in Cambodia. The rationale for the reflection was to deepen the understanding of links and synergies regarding adolescents in urban areas, and how they are affected by climate change, environmental issues and violence.