Cambodia

Executive Summary

The new UNICEF-Royal Government of Cambodia Country Programme of Cooperation began in 2016. UNICEF achieved significant results in child protection, education, nutrition and social protection. While officially Cambodia achieved lower-middle-income country status in July 2016, disparities and inequities remain high; the country will remain a least developed country for the foreseeable future.

The new Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) programme outcome focused on Cambodia’s north eastern provinces, where socio-economic indicators are dire. In these provinces, nearly 50 per cent of the rural population lack sanitation access, and one in three children under the age of five is stunted. A longitudinal study was launched highlighting challenges in health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene and early childhood education affecting children under five years and pregnant women.

While good progress was recorded in national enrolment rates in early childhood education and primary school completion rates, the focus continued on quality of education to address drop out and repetition rates. Cambodia’s Multilingual Education National Action Plan (MENAP) was launched in March – one of the first in the region – marking the Government’s commitment to expanding multilingual education and to increasingly using its budget to sustain this equity-focused intervention for ethnic minorities in the highlands. After strong advocacy, the Government took over the majority of multilingual education teacher salaries, which were previously paid by UNICEF.

Over 60 per cent of all health expenditures are out of pocket. UNICEF Cambodia supported integrated maternal and child outreach services in northeastern focus provinces. UNICEF advocacy led to the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) including nutrition as a priority for the 2017 budget allocation and for the Ministry of Health (MoH), increasing funds for ready-to-use therapeutic food. UNICEF also advocated for budget allocations to the Ministry of Planning (MoP) to address salt iodization, which re-emerged in 2016 as an issue of serious concern.

UNICEF advocacy also resulted in a long-awaited law on juvenile justice, critical for a separate juvenile justice system that guarantees the respect of the rights of children in the justice process. In September 2016, the Government signed the National Action Plan and the development of five provincial operational plans for improving child care, targeting the goal of a reduction of 30 per cent of children in residential care by 2018. UNICEF provided technical and financial support to 13 ministries to finalise the intersectoral Cambodia Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Violence Against Children, to be launched in early 2017. Key programme interventions included expansion of the Positive Discipline initiative from 12 primary schools in 2015 to 172 in 2016.

UNICEF Cambodia continued to work on innovative programme solutions. In child protection, a digital application to improve inspection of residential care institutions was developed, which will decrease time for data collection and enable rapid response by authorities to children at risk of neglect or abuse. UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) to digitize data collection on child-friendly schools.
(CFS) with the aim to expand to as many as 200 schools by end 2017. To address malnutrition, UNICEF Cambodia and partners developed a nutritious, locally produced food supplement. UNICEF will support development of a sustainable business and social marketing model to bring the supplement to consumers.

UNICEF played a key role in supporting the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development and Ministry of Economics and Finance to formulate a new social protection policy framework, within which cash transfers for pregnant women and children under five years old were identified as a priority.

In 2016, humanitarian efforts largely focused on the effects of the El Niño-induced drought, one of the worst in recent years. UNICEF supported the Government to deliver assistance, particularly to drought-affected schools and health facilities through the provision of water.

UNICEF Cambodia supported Government participation at the High-Level Meeting on Child Rights in Malaysia in November. This was an opportunity for Cambodia to showcase progress in social protection and on the national violence against children action plan.

Amongst many significant collaborative partnerships, UNICEF Cambodia was voted chair of the Education Sector Working Group in February, and played an active role in policy development. UNICEF performed a lead role in the Joint Technical Working Group Retreat focusing on the MoEYS ambitious teacher reform. UNICEF was also nominated by MoEYS as Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Grant Agent for the variable part of GPE III to be combined with the Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF). UNICEF partnered with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in an Australian Government-funded Disability Rights Inclusive Cambodia initiative reaching 38,208 (11 per cent boys and girls with disabilities) through 15 civil society organization partners.

**Humanitarian Assistance**

In 2016, UNICEF Cambodia’s humanitarian efforts largely focused on the effects of the El Niño-induced drought, reported to be one of the worst in recent years. Due to a combination of below average rainfall and extremely high temperatures in 2015, the country witnessed drying up of surface water reservoirs thereby reducing water for irrigation, domestic and livestock use. In extreme cases, fish and small livestock died. In May, a Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) and UNICEF assessment conducted in 21 of Cambodia’s 25 provinces found that 30,044 wells and 2,024 ponds had dried out.

According to MoEYS, more than 2,500 schools nationwide experienced varying levels of water shortages, affecting close to 600,000 schoolchildren. Rapid drought assessments conducted with UNICEF support in six provinces found that 167 primary and secondary schools were severely affected by shortage of water for drinking, hand-washing and toilets. The MoH, through provincial health departments, reported 31 of 198 health centres assessed in seven provinces were severely affected by water shortages, affecting close to 800,000 people.

The World Food Programme (WFP), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and UNICEF conducted an in-depth drought assessment covering 2,400 randomly sampled households across 25 provinces. The proportion of households affected were reported as follows: water shortages (37 per cent), with sharp increase in price of water mostly affecting the poor; decline in paddy and cassava production (22 per cent); income losses (62 per cent); eating smaller amounts of preferred food (37 per cent); and reports of children younger than five years being sick, predominantly with diarrhoea (32 per cent). Follow-up assessments in 2017 will examine the long-term effects of the drought.
Under the new national disaster management legal framework, UNICEF Cambodia, as part of the UN and the Humanitarian Response Forum (Cambodia), continued to strengthen systems for disaster preparedness, needs assessment and information management during 2016. UNICEF helped develop tools and national capacity on humanitarian assessments and participated in joint national and provincial simulation exercises to enable communities and the Government to better prepare and respond to crisis.

In response to request for support, UNICEF Cambodia directly responded to the effects of drought, especially in health, education and WASH, including:

- Provided cash support to 157 primary and secondary schools in 16 districts in five provinces to purchase water for drinking and washing, benefiting an estimated 50,000 boys and girls;
- Reprogrammed existing funding to purchase water for 30 health centres and one referral hospital, benefiting 765,031 people, including 79,109 under-fives and 26,674 pregnant women, and;
- Distributed pre-positioned WASH non-food items to 12 provinces, including water purification tablets to treat 85 million litres of water, water filters, jerry cans, WASH safety leaflets and soap, benefiting around 150,000 families. A proposal was developed and funded to replenish pre-positioned WASH supplies, which have already been distributed and positioned in national and provincial warehouses of the Ministry of Rural Development.

In September, MoEYS, UNICEF, Save the Children, Plan International and World Vision held a strategic meeting on the drought situation and preparedness for floods. Later in the year, UNICEF also supported MoEYS to roll out the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan to 16 primary schools. Similarly, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), UNICEF, Save the Children, World Vision, Cambodia Red Cross and National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) reviewed and updated the Child Protection Contingency Plan and oriented sub-national emergency focal points in 19 flood-prone provinces on protection of children in emergencies.

UNICEF Cambodia also supported two staff members to participate in the UNICEF Regional Office for East Asia and the Pacific’s (EAPRO) 2016 humanitarian knowledge management workshop. During the workshop, three practice notes to share lessons on development of child-centred risk assessment, migration-related humanitarian crisis and the use of a well database to monitor the impact of drought in groundwater resources were shared.

With technical assistance from a Swedish Civil Contingency Agency-seconded disaster risk reduction specialist, UNICEF Cambodia produced a draft child-centred risk assessment, whose results were shared with the National Committee for Disaster Management.

In November, UNICEF Cambodia supported a UNICEF EAPRO-engaged consultant to assess the evolving role of UNICEF in supporting national stakeholders to prepare and respond to emergencies. Results are expected early in 2017.

**Emerging Areas of Importance**

UNICEF Cambodia focused on a range of cross-cutting and emerging issues during 2016.

**Integrated early childhood development (ECD).** With the new country programme having commenced, the newly-created IECD section started working in a much more cohesive way
on early childhood development. IECD interventions primarily focus on Cambodia’s northeastern provinces, where socio-economic indicators are poor.

UNICEF supported Government participation at the Early Childhood Care and Education International Conference held in Malaysia in July. UNICEF is also working with the Government to prepare for the important Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood conference to be hosted in Cambodia in 2017, which will strengthen the IECD approach in the country.

Climate change. As was seen in the increasing number of annual natural disasters, climate change is impacting Cambodia, and UNICEF continued to focus efforts in this area. In 2016, a severe drought impacted many areas of the country. UNICEF supported the Government to provide water to drought-affected schools and health facilities. With WFP and FAO, UNICEF carried out a rapid assessment on the effects of the drought on communities. It revealed negative effects on families’ livelihoods, nutrition and health. A follow-up assessment is planned for early 2017.

Migration. In 2016, a qualitative study on the impact of migration on children was finalized. It found that migration across borders and within Cambodia is common practice and results in both negative and positive effects on children and their families. Study recommendations will be shared with key stakeholders, including line ministries and sub-national governments, in 2017.

Urbanization is an issue in Cambodia, especially with migration to Phnom Penh for work opportunities. Through its Phnom Penh Zone office, UNICEF Cambodia is working on issues including integrated early childhood development, WASH, education and child protection in slum areas. An assessment of child protection and education in poor areas of the capital is underway, expected to be finalized in 2017. UNICEF Cambodia is also developing a strategy note on priority issues in the urban context that will be used to advocate for policy changes with the Phnom Penh administration and for resource mobilization.

Adolescents. UNICEF Cambodia continued to engage with the adolescent and youth reference group, consisting of around 30 members supported by various NGOs who meet regularly to discuss key issues facing young Cambodians. UNICEF is working with the group to more intensively engage in advocacy and child-focused policy dialogue and to promote innovative ideas that generate greater involvement of young people in community development.

In 2016, UNICEF Cambodia carried out a survey on adolescent media engagement. It revealed that in choosing appropriate channels for efficient communication with adolescents, there is significant difference in exposure to media depending on age. A 10 year old is less likely to own a mobile phone in Cambodia than older children and also less likely to be able to access the internet. This age group is more likely to spend time watching television and be influenced by their parents. As such, targeting parents as well as children appears to be a more efficient communication and programme strategy. For adolescents, consumption of media was found to be similar across age groups, but with an increase in smart phone ownership and access to internet proportionate to age. This was even more the case in urban areas as compared to rural areas.

Protection. Within the framework of the 3PC (the Partnership Programme for the Protection of Children), UNICEF Cambodia continued to work with NGOs to expand their programming in the five child protection focus provinces. The collaboration reached more out-of-school adolescents, including children living and working on the streets, and facilitated pathways to return to formal education including second-chance and catch-up learning models.
Child marriage and teenage pregnancy are major concerns that put both mothers and babies at high risk of illness and death. Research shows that the chance of child marriage and teenage pregnancy increases with lower education attainment among Cambodian women, with an even higher rate among girls from ethnic minorities. In Cambodia, one in three women aged 15 to 19 who have never attended school have begun childbearing. In 2016, UNICEF Cambodia supported the development of a provincial plan of action to tackle high rates of early marriage in Ratanakiri Province, northeastern Cambodia. The plan will be implemented in 2017.

**Acronyms**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>3PC</td>
<td>Partnership Programme for the Protection of Children</td>
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<td>ACER</td>
<td>Australian Council for Educational Research</td>
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<td>CARD</td>
<td>Council for Agricultural and Rural Development</td>
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<td>CDPF</td>
<td>Capacity Development Partnership Fund</td>
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<td>CFS</td>
<td>child-friendly schools</td>
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<td>CMT</td>
<td>Country Management Team</td>
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<td>CPD</td>
<td>Country Programme Document</td>
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<td>CPAP</td>
<td>Country Programme Action Plan</td>
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<td>CPS</td>
<td>community pre-schools</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>civil society organisation</td>
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<td>DTMT</td>
<td>District Training and Monitoring Teams</td>
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<td>EAPRO</td>
<td>Regional Office for East Asia and the Pacific (UNICEF)</td>
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<td>ECCD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Care and Development</td>
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<td>EMIS</td>
<td>Education Management Information System</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation</td>
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<td>GDI</td>
<td>General Department of Identification</td>
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<td>GDSNAF</td>
<td>General Department of Sub-National Administration Finance</td>
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<td>GPE</td>
<td>Global Partnership for Education</td>
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<td>HACT</td>
<td>Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>information and communication technology</td>
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<td>IECD</td>
<td>Integrated Early Childhood Development</td>
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<td>IRD</td>
<td>Institut de Recherche pour le Développement</td>
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<td>IVR</td>
<td>Interactive Voice Response system</td>
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<td>JCC</td>
<td>Joint Consultative Committee</td>
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<td>LTA</td>
<td>long-term arrangement</td>
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<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>monitoring and evaluation</td>
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<td>MAFF</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries</td>
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<td>MEF</td>
<td>Ministry of Economy and Finance</td>
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<td>MENAP</td>
<td>Multilingual Education National Action Plan</td>
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<td>MoEYS</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport</td>
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<td>MoH</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>MoP</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
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<td>MOSS</td>
<td>Minimum Operating Security Standards</td>
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<td>MoSVY</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation</td>
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<td>MoWA</td>
<td>Ministry of Women’s Affairs</td>
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<td>MRD</td>
<td>Ministry of Rural Development</td>
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<td>NCDM</td>
<td>National Committee for Disaster Management</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-government organisation</td>
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In education, UNICEF Cambodia continued to support implementation of the European Union (EU)-funded Capacity Development Partnership Fund (CDPF), which improves planning, management and monitoring of the education sector. CDPF funds were used to develop the education management information system master plan, which bolsters collection, quality and use of data by UNICEF and MoEYS. A vital tool for school planning and financing, the school report card, was developed. With Swedish Government funding, UNICEF strengthened school inspections and supported MoEYS to introduce the quality information management information system. Data will inform curriculum review, teacher training and deployment of teaching/learning materials.

Within Cambodia’s ongoing decentralisation and de-concentration process, a training needs analysis and functional transfers in Battambang Province were supported, followed by a training and management plan to prepare sub-national staff for the transfer.

UNICEF successfully advocated for functional review of the Child Welfare Department. A paper, summarising the child protection situation and guiding alignment with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Sustainable Development Goals, was also developed.

As part of the response to the 2013 Violence against Children Study, UNICEF piloted training on positive discipline. The Government plans to extend the course to selected provincial teacher training colleges. The Minister of Education agreed to integrate the training into pre-service teacher training, a major win for the approach’s sustainability and institutionalisation.

In support of public financial management reform to increase accountability and accessible quality public services, UNICEF supported a workshop by the Economic Financial Institute to all MoEYS budget entities on improved budgeting, management and monitoring.

UNICEF supported MoSVY to formulate and implement programme budgeting in 2016 and also assisted with new guidelines on WASH minimum requirements in schools. They will help advocate for increased investment in basic WASH facilities in schools, including operation and maintenance.
Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

UNICEF leveraged its strong relationship with MEF to influence 2017 national budget allocation, especially for child nutrition.

Over 60 per cent of mothers and children had been found to be iodine deficient (2014 National Micronutrient Survey) and more than 80 per cent of salt consumed in Cambodia was not adequately iodized and 21 per cent had no iodine (MoP/UNICEF Assessment August 2016). UNICEF advocacy led to MEF allocation of a significant amount of its 2017 budget for law enforcement, iodised salt monitoring and consumer sensitisation; to the MoP request for a portion of its budget to secure supply of potassium iodate (with the salt producers association); and for the first time, MoH allocation of budget for ready-to-use therapeutic food.

The long-awaited draft juvenile justice law was approved in July following escalated advocacy in 2015 by UNICEF Cambodia and partners. In January, MoSVY announced development of an action plan for safe return of 30 per cent of children in residential care to their families by 2018. The first national mapping of residential care facilities was conducted, providing essential information on facilities’ location and residents, marking a critical step in deinstitutionalisation and prevention of family separation.

MoEYS developed and endorsed a child protection policy in schools in 2016 to ensure schools are safe for children. Using an end-line knowledge, attitudes and practices survey that showed encouraging changes to classroom management and non-acceptance of corporal punishment, the positive discipline programme expanded from 12 to 172 primary schools in 2016.

The Multilingual Education National Action Plan (MENAP) was launched in March, led by the Minister of Education. It represented a major breakthrough in the institutionalization and expansion of multilingual education and Government commitment to expanding and increasing budget to sustain this equity-focused intervention.

Partnerships

Malnutrition, both severe and moderate, has remained stagnant over the last 15 years in Cambodia. Following MoH advocacy, a three-way partnership among the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), MoH and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and UNICEF was formed in 2014 to produce a local ready-to-use therapeutic food called “num trey” for treatment and prevention of acute malnutrition. The product was tested in 2016. Preliminary results from two studies involving more than 300 children aged 6-59 months show that “num trey” is as effective as the standard BP-100.

Together with the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA) and the adolescents and youth group, UNICEF Cambodia collaborated with four community-based organisations to expand interventions on violence against children and produced two video animations, which were disseminated and uploaded on the MoEYS website. In collaboration with MoWA and Plan International, UNICEF also engaged 15 youth-focused organisations to formulate an action plan with adolescent and youth participation to prevent child marriage and teenage pregnancies in Ratanakiri Province.

In partnership with the Royal University of Phnom Penh, an assessment of disciplinary methods in 24 primary schools in three provinces was conducted. The positive results led MoEYS to expand training to around 150 additional primary schools in 2016.
UNICEF also continued a number of collaborative initiatives:

- The UN-wide Disability Rights Inclusive Cambodia initiative reached 38,208 direct beneficiaries (11 per cent boys and girls with disabilities) with specialised services from 15 civil society organisation partners;

- Work funded by the Capacity Development Partnership Fund strengthened the MoEYS strategic reforms in human resources, financial management, decentralisation and information management;

- With assistance from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UNICEF, 3PC, MoSVY and Friends-International facilitated case management of 243 children (99 girls) from residential care institutions, of whom about 46 per cent were placed into community and family-based care.

**External Communication and Public Advocacy**

As part of the new country programme, a communication and public advocacy strategy was designed. It focuses on stronger voice, audience reach and engagement, in alignment with UNICEF’s global public advocacy strategic goals. Youth engagement and strengthening knowledge of Cambodian adolescents were highlights of UNICEF Cambodia’s external communication efforts in 2016.

UNICEF Cambodia piloted the local Voices of Youth internship for five adolescents who were trained on research, critical thinking, writing, blogging, and audience engagement. The impact of the internship has gone well beyond the training itself, with 29 published articles viewed by close to 26,000 readers, reaching at least 259,400 people and engaging 20,502 on Facebook.

A nationwide survey unveiling adolescent media consumption and social engagement trends, including those most vulnerable, was completed and published in November.

UNICEF Cambodia continued to build its relatively new digital presence and strengthen audience reach and engagement on priority advocacy issues such as juvenile justice, alternative care, malnutrition and multilingual education. In 2016, social media followers nearly doubled to 44,744 (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram), from 23,256 at the end of 2015. Total post reach on Facebook was recorded at 5,928,892 by mid-November.

Traditional media was engaged on a regular basis, with at least 146 known mentions and quotes of UNICEF Cambodia from January to November, indicating the position as a “go-to” agency and knowledge leader on issues related to children. Media field visits were among the reasons behind this strong engagement with local and international media such as Al Jazeera English and 60 Minutes Australia.

During the drought response, organisational key messages were developed and updated on an ongoing basis, guiding external messaging including with CNN and South China Morning Post. A list of potential influencers for future collaboration is being finalised for outreach and engagement in 2017.

**South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation**

The Cambodian Government participated in the 3rd High-Level Meeting for Child Rights in Malaysia. Council for Agricultural and Rural Development, MoWA and MoSVY representatives shared experiences in social protection system strengthening and prevention of violence against children. Participating countries also shared good practices
In December, an informal study visit was conducted with UNICEF Zimbabwe, MoEYS and non-governmental organisation (NGO) staff to share experiences in education, including implementation of the Capacity Development Partnership Fund and the Capacity Development Master Plan; sector coordination mechanisms and policy dialogue; roles of NGO Education Partnership; role of Education Research Council in supporting reform; operational plans and financing; and school grants.

In June, UNICEF supported five MoWA and NGO delegates to participate in the Parenting Support Interventions for Violence Prevention in East Asia and the Pacific in Manila. Cambodia presented the Positive Parenting Strategic Plan and Theory of Change, followed by review/feedback from international experts and representatives. Through peer review and exchanges, three action points were adopted: (1) reflect on and elaborate theory of change and include fathers, mothers and grandparents; (2) develop a costed implementation plan, including M&E; (3) integrate early childhood education, health, parenting and violence against children.

In support of the violence against children action plan, UNICEF supported the Steering Committee in the regional South-South workshop, in Beijing in May, to exchange experiences with other governments and international NGOs. The action plan is being prepared for the minister for approval.

UNICEF supported 35 Government officials and NGO members (34 per cent female), including participants from Thailand; border, tourist and immigration police; and the Poi Pet governor to share best practices on safe migration and protection of children, especially those at risk of trafficking.

Identification Promotion of Innovation

Since 2014, UNICEF Cambodia has prioritized and systematically pursued strategic application of innovation to enhance programming.

In 2016, UNICEF and the Open Institute developed a digital application to improve inspection of residential care institutions. Designed and pre-tested with more than 50 end-users, the application will be put to use in five priority provinces in the first quarter of 2017. The app enables comprehensive inspection of residential care institutions in half a day – a significant reduction from the five days that the previous paper-based inspection process took to complete. By enabling real time data sharing, it also enables triggering of a rapid response by authorities to engage institutions placing children at risk of neglect or abuse.

To address high child malnutrition rates, UNICEF Cambodia continued its partnership with IRD to develop a nutritious and locally produced food supplement that adds essential vitamins and minerals to daily food intake of children. The supplement was tested to demonstrate its ability to stem malnutrition among children in Cambodia. Based on the results, UNICEF will help develop a sustainable business and social marketing model to bring the supplement to consumers.

In education, UNICEF Cambodia supported the digitalisation of checklists for child-friendly schools, which are currently being used in six districts by select MoEYS training and monitoring teams. The checklist is tablet based and the data collected feeds into a dashboard that makes it easy to assess the child friendliness of the schools against key indicators. Plans are in place to scale up this innovation to be used in as many as 200 schools by the end of 2017.
Support to Integration and Cross-sectoral Linkages

UNICEF Cambodia worked with the National Committee for Democratic Development to establish guidance and tools for provincial committees that promote adequate early childhood care and development interventions. This work laid the foundation for strengthened collaboration among health, education, nutrition, WASH and child protection sectors at local and national levels to promote evidence-based policy development. Through collaboration with ministries of education and of women’s affairs in 2016, training on positive discipline and effective classroom management was rolled out to 172 primary schools, 265 school directors and 1,068 teachers, benefiting approximately 51,145 boys and girls. The end-line knowledge, attitudes and practices carried out by a local university showed positive changes to classroom management and non-acceptance of corporal punishment. Students confirmed positive changes evidenced by availability of guidelines to protect them from violence in schools.

Similar cooperation took place in Ratanakiri Province, where UNICEF programme teams worked together to support the development of the Provincial Action Plan on Ending Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy.

Multisectoral meetings with MoH and MEF resulted in new funding opportunities and increased national budget for nutrition interventions for 2017.

The development of the theory of change for WASH and nutrition was carried out in partnership with stakeholders, under the Council of Agriculture and Rural Development coordination.

UNICEF Cambodia launched a unique longitudinal study involving 4,000 children to determine the impact of an integrated approach on social outcomes for children younger than five years old. It involves MoH, MAFF and IRD and agents at service delivery levels and beneficiaries. This study links grassroots-level findings to relevant multi-sector high-level stakeholders involved in legal framework strengthening and aims to promote most-effective service system development for better health outcomes in Cambodian women and children.

Service Delivery

In 2016, all health centres in selected IECD focus districts implemented at least 80 per cent of planned outreach services to remote villages, with UNICEF-supported midwives providing antenatal and postnatal care to mothers and newborns. All health centres in the target areas have at least two midwives who received practical hands-on training to provide those essential care services.

UNICEF and MoH, MAFF and IRD implemented a longitudinal study on early childhood development by following a cohort of 4,000 children younger than five years old. Cases of malnutrition among children and women were detected and treated or referred to health facilities for better care. Key bottlenecks identified through the study were addressed immediately. This included installation of solar panels at health centres without electricity; 28 study locations received audio-visual communication on WASH, nutrition and health, reaching more than 60,000 individuals. The findings, complemented with additional qualitative research, informed development of key communication messages to promote demand and accountability for services.

UNICEF, MRD and partner NGOs promoted improved service delivery by supporting extension of piped water systems and water bottling kiosks, particularly in arsenic-risk areas, and strengthening service provider capacities in water testing and treatment at points of collection and consumption. As a result, cumulatively, 61,585 people gained access to
improved drinking water. A further 11,335 people are projected to gain access by the end of 2016. In addition, a further 84,864 schoolchildren had access to WASH facilities in schools as a result of UNICEF-MRD-NGO collaboration.

UNICEF supported Government partners to implement a cash transfer pilot for pregnant women and under-five children to promote demand and use of health services. Information sessions were conducted by commune council members and health workers at the day of cash payment. This model is expected to be rolled out nationally.

**Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation**

Children from indigenous minority groups, especially in the northeast, remain among the most excluded from education in Cambodia, with 73 per cent of primary-school age minority children estimated to be out of school in 2009. In 2016, the MENAP, developed with UNICEF support, set a regional precedent in its bid to ensure all ethnic minority children have the right to basic education, including use of mother language during preschool. The plan includes projections to increase the provision of multilingual schools by 100 per cent as well as the institutionalisation of overall support for multi-lingual education implementation.

A UNICEF partnership with MoSVY and CARE International Cambodia helped train new multilingual education teachers. It resulted in significant increases in enrolment: 4,957 children enrolled in multilingual education in 2016, an increase of 22 per cent in a year.

UNICEF Cambodia advocated for the increase of government scholarships as part of the Government’s pro-poor priority interventions to defray the cost of schooling. This scholarship should look to include children from indigenous minorities as among the most vulnerable to dropout along with children with disabilities.

UNICEF continued to support the Government’s commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and recognises the equity gap faced by Cambodian children with disabilities in accessing their rights. UNICEF partnered with the Government, UN and 15 civil society organisation partners to mainstream disability into birth registration, education, health, rehabilitation, protection and participation policies and programmes, resulting in 52,276 beneficiaries benefiting from disability-inclusive and specific support services in 2016. UNICEF also supported a situation analysis of children with disabilities in Cambodia, and advocated for the use of the Washington Group Short Set of Questions in data collection.

UNICEF joined other UN agencies to advocate for improvement of conditions in an infamous ‘rehabilitation centre’ in Phnom Penh, which is used to house people rounded up off the street. Advocacy focused on prevention of detention of persons living in the street, especially children. UNICEF worked with MoSVY, local authorities and NGOs to ensure that children were freed from the detention centre and provided with services.

**Gender Equality**

UNICEF Cambodia continued to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment. On International Women’s Day, blog and social media posts celebrating Cambodian women striving to improve children’s lives reached more than 102,000 people through Facebook alone. Messaging around the importance of menstrual hygiene education and management to promote girls’ education reached over 113,000 people and engaged more than 16,000 people on Facebook.

In 2016, 69 women administrators in 10 target districts were trained in programme design to increase prioritisation and budget allocation for social services in district investment plans. In
five target districts, 141 women commune administrators and village leaders were trained to use social service mapping to better identify and target vulnerable households. A total of US$55,400 of planned US$83,900 was used in 2016 to train local-level participants, including female leaders.

As part of the capacity development work with the Ministry of Interior on disability inclusion and the partnerships with CSOs for service delivery to families with disabilities, UNICEF supported the integration of gender-based approaches. This included actively engaging the proportionately less-represented local female leaders and female representatives of persons with disabilities. Civil society organisations monitored that boys and girls equally benefited from services delivered and that gender-specificities were taken into consideration in planning interventions.

Approximately 3,500 girls were better protected from violence and benefited from a protective family environment with support from UNICEF, MoSVY and 3PC. As of 30 September, 7,530 vulnerable children (46.5 per cent female) benefited from a range of targeted preventive and responsive child protection services. A total of US$500,000 out of US$1 million budget was used in 2016.

UNICEF, Plan International and MoWA developed a draft action plan to prevent and respond to child marriage and teenage pregnancies in highly disadvantaged ethnic communities. The plan will be rolled out in 2017. To create awareness of sexual abuse of adolescent girls, UNICEF, One World UK and People Health Development developed two video animations that were uploaded on MoEYS social media platform ‘Youth Chhlat’, with the goal of reaching 143,000 adolescents between November and December 2016. US$5,000 of the overall budget of US$50,000 was used in 2016.

Environmental Sustainability

In 2016, UNICEF Cambodia supported improved environmental sustainability in the area of water supply through the development of solar water pumping systems in 43 schools, and solar-powered water disinfection and lighting systems in 35 contracted water treatment and bottling kiosks. These activities reduced the carbon footprint of UNICEF’s work and helped disseminate innovative energy technologies. In addition, work was commissioned on the extension of four piped water supply systems. These technologies treat surface water, including in areas with a known risk of arsenic in groundwater, thereby reducing the need to treat the water using processes that have potential environmentally hazardous by-products.

In the area of sanitation, in 2016 UNICEF Cambodia supported decentralised wastewater treatment systems in 36 schools. These use anaerobic baffled reactors and planted gravel filters to provide onsite treatment to wastewater, improving effluent water quality (including biological oxygen demand) thereby reducing adverse environmental impact such as eutrophication, with associated damage to ecosystems.

Despite these achievements, challenges remain in the wider adoption and dissemination of such technologies throughout the country. Climate-related hazards such as recurrent floods and droughts, and socio-economic hazards associated with urbanisation, including generation of solid and liquid wastes, may result in inadequate capacity to cope among national actors.

In terms of UNICEF’s own operations, the overall objective is to become climate neutral by 2020. As part of this strategy, a 3 per cent carbon footprint tax is being charged to all flights used by staff. It is anticipated that the move to new offices in 2017 will offer opportunities for
improvements in energy efficiency and environmental sustainability in other aspects of UNICEF operations in the coming years.

**Effective Leadership**

The office achieved 100 per cent implementation of regular resources (RR), 92 per cent of other resources (OR) and 100 per cent of institutional budget due to effective mechanisms that assessed and ensured timely action on key financial, human resources, supply, administration and security issues.

The country management team (CMT) met monthly to review management indicators, implementation bottlenecks, assurance activities and direct cash transfer (DCT) liquidations. It also led the selection and review of new office premises and hires, and ensured funds for posts. The joint consultative committee (JCC) met four times; discussions fed into decisions including support to staff affected by structural changes, such as the job matching exercise. Regular all-staff meetings, including zone offices by videoconference, were held after each CMT meeting and enabled transparent feedback on management decisions. Weekly meetings with section heads were also held.

The contracts review committee met 17 times to review 22 submissions. The total value for institutional services and programme supplies approved by the committee in 2016 was about $1.1 million; procurement services represented about $14 million. All contracts review committee cases were approved on first submission, due to thorough preparation and adequate documentation. The property survey board met three times, to review submissions related to office furniture disposal in preparation of the office’s 2017 move.

Information and communication technology (ICT) equipment is modernised and compliant with UNICEF standards and guidance. The shared network drive was upgraded to 2TB disk space and all computers migrated to Windows 8.1.

To strengthen enterprise risk management, risk and control self-assessment were updated. Over 20 staff (international and national) spent one day identifying potential risks to programme implementation and deliberating on their mitigation. The results were uploaded on the INSIGHT portal. The business continuity plan was maintained. No testing was undertaken in 2016, but is planned for first quarter 2017 coinciding with the office’s move.

**Financial Resources Management**

In May 2016, UNICEF Cambodia shifted financial transactions to the Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) in Budapest earlier than planned after successfully completing all key readiness steps. However, challenges emerged, such as additional time required for completion of most MyCase transactions. This was overcome by adjusting planning at different steps of the process plus alerting partners/suppliers of the time required to issue payments.

The office supported the East Asia Pacific region by deploying a staff member to Budapest during the GSSC stabilisation roll-out transition, in response to a UNICEF headquarters request.

The office monitored direct cash transfers through financial spot checks and field monitoring activities undertaken by staff in Phnom Penh and the three zone offices. Through the timely submission and ongoing monitoring of direct cash transfer liquidation documentation, outstanding transfers over six months were well within agreed-upon benchmarks. UNICEF Cambodia maintained direct cash transfers over nine months at 0 per cent throughout the year.
As a priority in 2016, implementation of the Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) assurance plan was regularly monitored and reported to the programme management group and operations management group. Micro-assessments for nine implementing partners were completed (of ten planned); three of four implementing partners receiving significant cash transfers were internally audited; all planned programmatic visits were completed; and 81 per cent of planned financial spot checks were completed as planned.

Financial account records were regularly reviewed and maintained according to UNICEF financial guidelines.

The office continued to effectively use its bank optimisation and cash forecasting tools and performed well in meeting its closing bank balance targets. However, it was challenging to control month-end cash balances to meet the threshold as the GSSC is responsible for payment processing. Frequent shortfalls were experienced because payments were not processed as planned.

**Fundraising and Donor Relations**

UNICEF Cambodia developed four new donor toolkits for UNICEF National Committees, in WASH, health, nutrition and child protection. The resource mobilisation strategy for the country programme was also updated.

During the reporting period, UNICEF Cambodia submitted 41 high-quality donor reports, including a number of human interest stories. There were no overdue or late donor reports in 2016. Specific standard operating procedures on donor reports ensured that the high quality was maintained.

UNICEF Cambodia ensured over 90 per cent of its OR funds were spent in 2016 and remaining multi-year funds were transferred to 2017.

Good collaboration was maintained with a range of UNICEF National Committees. In total, US$1,849,654 was received in 2016 through UNICEF’s National Committees. Five donor National Committee visits from Norway, Australia and the President of the Korean National Committee were organised; and the 25th Team from the Canadian National Committee were hosted.

As a result of excellent partnerships with locally-based EU office and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) missions and a track record of delivering results, the EU will continue supporting the Education CDPF for a third phase (2018–2021). SIDA has also pledged to continue its support.

UNICEF Cambodia also successfully positioned itself within the education sector working group to become the grant agent for the variable tranche of the third phase of Global Partnership for Education funding, totalling US$6.2 million for 2019-2021. As a strong example of aid effectiveness, the GPE results-based financing will be added to the CDPF and the total expected total budget is US$23 million for 2018–2021. SIDA pledged further funding for inclusive education, expected to be US$5.5 million for 2017–2019.

**Evaluation and Research**

UNICEF Cambodia continued to enhance its evaluation function and national evaluation capacity development, with both evaluations completed in 2016 being rated highly satisfactory by the global evaluation reports oversight system (GEROS).
The evaluation of community preschool modality was concluded. The recommendations discuss how the community preschool experience can be integrated into a wider reflection on effectiveness of UNICEF support to make change happen on the ground and improve the quality of early childhood education for all children in Cambodia, irrespective of socio-economic conditions and location. This includes involving high-level authorities to strengthen implementation of the Early Childhood Care and Development National Action Plan, improving decentralisation reform by commune councils, and exploring field intervention and pilot-effective community preschools.

Jointly managed with MoEYS, the formative evaluation of the child-friendly school policy indicated the need for investment in a new architecture for effective child-friendly school implementation. It also highlighted that UNICEF should continue to support MoEYS to expand child-friend schools into junior secondary schools, further develop tablet-based checklist, increase advocacy in regards to WASH, and strengthen school clusters and teacher training centres.


Overall, 65 per cent of past management responses were closed, and the budget use for evaluation reached 0.6 per cent of total resources.

Master certification was supported to improve the ability of 30 professionals from key ministries to conduct results-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The MoP also produced a draft national M&E policy, including proposed institutional implementation arrangements. These are expected to be adopted by the Government’s Cabinet in 2017.

UNICEF Cambodia also advised the Cambodia Monitoring and Evaluation Society on submission of a proposal to EvalPartners to produce, with the Cambodian Government, Guidelines for Equity Focused and Gender Responsive Evaluation of Policies and Programmes.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

The office engaged in several efforts to improve efficiency and cost savings within UNICEF and the UN community. The UN Operations Management Team in Cambodia coordinated common procurement initiatives. UNICEF led inter-agency procurement through joint long-term agreements and Internet-based information sharing. In 2016, UNICEF had 37 active long-term agreements to support office needs and other UN agencies to secure favourable prices and reduced transaction time for commonly procured goods and services.

Furthermore, in June 2016 the operations management team created the UN Procurement Task Force to enhance common procurement and operations and improve common planning, identification of overlapping needs and increased collaborative procurement initiatives. UNICEF was instrumental in the creation of the task force and has assumed the role of chair for two years.

The office is anticipating savings in operating expenses as part of the move to the new premises planned for the first quarter of 2017. Costs will be reduced in several areas: fuel, as the current office location currently uses generators for electricity; security, as the new building provides security services using proven systems and technologies (e.g., security turnstiles and ground floor lobby access control); electricity, as air-conditioning will be included in the building service charge; and cleaning, as these services will be shared by
having the whole office confined in one space.

The use of public transport such as buses and personal vehicles for duty travel within and near Phnom Penh increased office efficiency, saving the office fleet for trips to remote and hard-to-reach areas.

**Supply Management**

In 2016, the procurement volume of programmatic and operational supplies and services as well as procurement services amounted to US$ 7 million in 2016, compared to US$18 million in 2015. Procurement of programme and operational supplies totalled US$1.3 million, including essential supplies for children as well as ICT equipment and printed materials.

At US$14 million, the value of procurement services continued to exceed UNICEF direct supply assistance and remains an important mechanism to leverage resources for children in Cambodia. Regular procurement services amounted to US$6.3 million, while procurement of vaccines for the National Immunisation Program (MoH) accounted for US$ 7.7 million. Vaccines are largely funded by the GAVI Alliance, but also include national budget for vaccine procurement. This further improves sustainability of immunisation programmes in Cambodia.

UNICEF Cambodia continued to be the default procurement agent for three Global Fund grants: HIV, TB and health system strengthening. The existing agreement began in 2013 and is valid until 31 December 2017. Over 95 per cent of total procurement of supplies in 2016 supported national availability and local delivery of essential supplies for UNICEF programmes, along with procurement services provided to government and other implementing partners. Main commodities included vaccines, pharmaceuticals, diagnostic test kits and nutrition supplies.

The value of service inputs (contracts) reached US$1.7 million, including services related to the move of the UNICEF Country Office to a new location in 2017. Other service inputs included broadcasting services in TV and radio, translation, interpretation and editing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2016 (in US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional services</td>
<td>1,707,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme supplies</td>
<td>1,117,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation supplies</td>
<td>209,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement services</td>
<td>14,036,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total procurement</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,071,100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At year-end, UNICEF Cambodia had 37 active long-term agreements (LTAs) in place to support UNICEF and other UN agencies, securing favourable prices and reducing transaction times for commonly procured goods and services.

In June, the operations management team created the UN Procurement Task Force, chaired by UNICEF, to enhance UN common procurement, operations and improve areas of planning, identification of shared needs and increased collaborative procurement initiatives.

**Security for Staff and Premises**

UNICEF Cambodia participated actively in security management team meetings. The current premises are compliant with the Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) and the
The proposed new office premises will enhance security for staff and equipment. Training and refresher training on staff safety and security were conducted by UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) in 2016. UNICEF security focal points and staff wardens attended all required training during the year, keeping them up to date on all issues related to security. The increase of incidents of bag and phone snatching and street crime in Phnom Penh and main cities remains a serious threat to staff and their dependents. UNDSS and office security focal points regularly advised staff to remain alert to this threat via weekly security updates.

In 2016, the main entrance gates and main doors to the offices remained closed and staff and visitors could only enter using access cards or after the security guards opened the doors. This greatly reduced the risk of intrusion by strangers.

An office move committee was established and regularly met to discuss progress and constraints in identifying and selecting new office premises as well as ensuring security issues for staff and equipment were adequately considered throughout the planning process. The committee regularly updated all staff members during general staff meetings to ensure transparency and feedback from all staff members on issues pertaining to the new offices, including security. The issue of vehicle parking was also discussed to ensure security of staff to and from parking lots.

The poor road conditions and the poor driving by so many in Cambodia, in addition to the isolation and lack of medical transportation or trauma facilities outside of the city boundaries, continued to pose risks to staff traveling by road.

**Human Resources**

The year 2016 was a stable one for UNICEF Cambodia staffing after changes from the new country programme were implemented. With the Global Shared Services Centre becoming operational in October, human resources focus shifted towards a more strategic function aimed at attracting talent, ensuring performance management on results, and enhancing support to partners. A thorough review of activities is needed in 2017, also given the fact that the human resources manager role, based in Cambodia, is now shared with two other countries (Laos and Viet Nam).

Almost all (99 per cent) of 2015 performance evaluations were completed. New tools were smoothly implemented (ACHIEVE, MyCase, Official Status File, and Talent Management Suite) enabling the office to effectively attract, hire, support and empower staff members. Seven full-time staff recruitments were completed and vacancy rate was 2 per cent. On average, recruitment took 66 days for national staff and 60 days for international professionals. Eight consultants, five UN volunteers and 11 interns were also recruited. The gender balance remained at 37 per cent female (27 per cent among national officers). In 2017, efforts will continue to be made to attract applications from females for national officer positions, and to foster an environment to retain female staff.

Throughout 2016, and particularly during the staff retreat, actions were taken to address all major issues from the 2014 global staff survey regarding office leadership and management, efficiency and effectiveness, and personal empowerment. A pre-retreat survey showed that 96 per cent of 77 respondents expressed satisfaction with their jobs and considered the work environment positive. A staff counsellor conducted sessions to help staff cope with change and create mental health awareness for managers.

A learning plan was developed and implemented by the HR development team, resulting in 56 of 64 individual activities and 18 of 21 office-wide initiatives from the 2016–2017 plan being completed.
Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

UNICEF Cambodia’s ICT equipment is modernised and compliant with the organisation’s hardware standard and guidance. In 2016, the network-shared drive was successfully upgraded to 2TB disk space; VEEAM backup software was migrated to a new recommended version; all computers were migrated to Windows 8.1; and 22 new laptops were procured, enabling all users, including drivers, to access learning resources and necessary transportation information via computer-based systems. In addition, ICT efforts contributed to the disposal of 116 obsolete pieces of equipment.

SharePoint Online was introduced with three sets of databases already developed by local ICT personnel. Cambodia transportation request was successfully rolled out, which effectively coordinates local transportation requests/arrangement; a travel authorisation document library and template was established to enable finance colleagues to post and share all approved authorisations; and an electronic request form for ICT accessories was made available to monitor, report and take stock of consumable items.

In order to maintain user access lists, including changing user access rights, deleting access and generating new accounts, 90 eSAF transactions were accomplished in 2016. UNICEF Cambodia participated in a global ICT project to implement the Enterprise Mobility Suite. The tool is ready for testing and implementation. In addition, the acquisition of equipment for execution of the LIGHT project and O365 telephony project is ready and all users will benefit from this project starting in 2017.

The primary and secondary Internet connectivity of country and zone offices is well maintained and running at speed of 15Mbps/15Mbps and 8/8Mbps and 4/4Mbps in order to further improve maximum implementation of cloud-based UNICEF business systems, VISION with SAP and Office 365.

Programme Components from RAM

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 The identity, direction and well-being of UNICEF and staff are managed efficiently and effectively to enable the achievement of results for children in Cambodia

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The office senior management conducted regular meetings to review, discuss, decide and take action on key financial, human resources, supply, and administration and security issues to facilitate and provide support for programme implementation.

The year started with the programme and management review in early January to plan and prepare for the year. The Country Management Team met monthly to review the key management indicators and provide guidance on key strategic issues including the approval of the rolling annual management plan 2016-2017. This is a critical internal office management tool to ensure that human, material and financial resources are effectively deployed to ensure meaningful and sustainable achievement of strategic results for children and women.

The office achieved 100 per cent percent implementation of Regular Resources, 93 per cent percent of Other Resources and 100 per cent percent of the Institutional Budget.

2016 was a stable year for UNICEF Cambodia, with staffing changes for new country
programme being implemented, resulting in further streamlining of operations. With the GSSC becoming operational from October, the human resources role in the office shifted towards a more strategic function. The office reached 99 per cent completion rate for 2015 performance evaluation. Seven recruitments for fixed-term staff were completed during the year and vacancy rate was 2 per cent. On average, recruitment took 66 days for national staff and 60 days for IP posts. The gender balance in the office remains at 37 per cent female staff, with 27 per cent among National Officers. In 2017, the focus will be to attract female applicants and fostering an environment to retain current female staff.

The procurement volume for goods, services and procurement services amounted to US$17.1 million. The office managed to maintain full and continued availability of ICT resources and efficient user support during the year through effective technical maintenance of infrastructure in accordance with UNICEF standards.

The CMT examined and addressed key management issues, reviewed progress against the rolling annual management plan and analysed progress and constraints encountered against key management indicators/results and regional office benchmarks. The programme management group (PMG) and operations management group continued to provide inputs to the CMT agenda. It lead and review of the office funding to support staff structure as part of the new country programme 2016-2018, ensuring full participation of all staff in the process. Participation of zonal offices in the CMT secured through teleconference enabling full participation, hence reducing the needs for their physical presence in Phnom Penh for the meeting.

Regular all-staff meetings with teleconference hook-ups with zone offices were held the day after CMT meetings and served as a platform for open and transparent feedback on decisions. Weekly meetings with all section heads were held.

**OUTPUT 1** Governance and Systems exist to support the direction of country operations.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
In 2016, UNICEF Cambodia active statutory committees included the country management team, joint consultative committee, contracts review committee, and partnership review committee. The membership was reviewed regularly to ensure full participation of the relevant staff.

The CMT met monthly to review management indicators, programme implementation, assurance activities to ensure adherence to the HACT guidelines, and outstanding liquidations on funds disbursement to partners. The CMT also led and reviewed progress towards selection of suitable new office premises, recruitment so that all staff positions of the new country programme 2016-2018 were issued in a timely manner, and ensured sufficient funds were secured for the approved staff positions.

The JCC met four times during the year. Its discussions were primarily related to CMT decisions; for example, supporting the few staff affected by the changes in line with established human resources rules and guidance, such as the job matching exercise.

The Contracts Review Committee met 17 times to review 22 submissions. The total value for institutional services and programme supplies approved by was about US$1.1 million, while procurement services represented about US$14 million. All submissions were approved on first time, due to thorough preparations and adequate documentation well in advance of the actual meeting. The Property Survey Board met three times before August 2016 to review a submission related to the disposal of office furniture due to the planned move to new office premises.
UNICEF Cambodia’s ICT equipment is modernised and compliant with organisational hardware standard and guidance. In 2016, the network shared drive was successfully upgraded to 2TB disk space; VEEAM backup software was migrated to a new recommended version; all computers were migrated to Windows 8.1; 22 new laptops were procured enabling all users, including drivers to have access to learning resources and necessary transportation information via computer based systems.

To strengthen its enterprise risk management, UNICEF Cambodia updated its Risk and Control Self-Assessment. Under the guidance of the Chief of Operations and the Deputy Representative, over 20 international and national staff spent a full day in February identifying potential risks to programme implementation, and deliberating on their mitigation. The revised Risk and Control Self-Assessment was uploaded on the INSIGHT portal.

**OUTPUT 2** Stewardship of Financial Resources creates the conditions to pursue country operations.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF Cambodia successfully rolled out the shift of financial transaction to the GSSC in Budapest earlier than the planned date of July 2016, having completed all the readiness key steps. The office managed to stabilise the transitional period of the roll out smoothly. Even though some of the financial roles have been shifted to be performed by GSSC the office discontinued the practice of carrying out postings as per the updated control policy. The office encountered some challenges in processing through MyCase but these were overcome in timely manner. One key challenge of the shift to GSSC was the additional time required for completion of most of the transactions. This was overcome by additional planning from all staff at the different steps of the process, plus alerting partners and suppliers of the time required for issuance of payments.

The office was not only able to manage smooth and successful shift to GSSC operations, but also provided support by deploying a staff member to Budapest during the stabilisation roll out transition period.

The office continued to monitor the use of DCT through financial spot checks and field monitoring activities undertaken by Phnom Penh-based staff and staff members in the three zone offices. Through the timely submission and ongoing monitoring of DCT liquidation documentation, outstanding transfers (greater than six months) were well within agreed-upon benchmarks. Cambodia office maintained DCT over nine months at zero throughout the year.

HACT implementation was one of the priorities for Cambodia office in 2016. The HACT assurance plan was prepared after the respective workplans were signed with implementing partners. The progress of the implementation of the HACT assurance plan was regularly reported to the PMG and office management group. Micro-assessments for nine implementing partners was completed out of ten planned. An annual internal control audit was planned for four implementing partners who received significant amount of cash transfers and had a significant risk rating of their financial capacity. Three of the four planned audits were completed. Other core piller of assurance activities, financial spot checks and programme visits were regularly conducted to the implementing partners to meet the minimum requirement of HACT. All planned programme visits were completed, and 81 per cent of planned financial spot checks were completed.

Financial accounts records were regularly reviewed and maintained according to the UNICEF financial guidelines.
**OUTPUT 3** Human resources have the capacities, skills, morale and motivation to support country operations.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
2016 was a stable year for UNICEF Cambodia, with staffing changes from the new Country Programme resulting in further streamlining of the operations. With the GSSC becoming operational from October, the human resources role shifted towards a more strategic function, with a focus on attracting talent, performance management focused on results, and enhanced ability to provide support to partners. A thorough review of the activities will be required in 2017, given the fact that the function of Human Resources Manager is split between three countries.

The office reached 99 per cent completion rate for 2015 performance evaluation. New HR tools were been smoothly implemented: ACHIEVE, MyCase, OSF, TMS-for online recruitment and on-boarding. These enabled the office to attract, hire, support and empower staff members effectively, supported by constant orientation on the new tools.

Seven recruitments for fixed term staff were completed during the year and vacancy rate was 2 per cent. On average, recruitment took 66 days for national staff and 60 days for IP posts. In addition to this, the office recruited eight consultants, five UNVs and 11 interns. The gender balance in the office remained at 37 per cent female staff, with 27 per cent among National Officers. In 2017, the focus will be to attract female applicants, and fostering an environment to retain current female staff.

Throughout the year, and particularly staff retreat, the office continued taking serious actions to address all the major issues from the 2014 Global Staff Survey regarding to Office Leadership and Management, Office Efficiency and Effectiveness and Personal Empowerment. A pre-retreat staff survey showed that 96 per cent of 77 respondents expressed satisfaction with their jobs and considered the work environment positive. In addition to this, a Staff Counsellor conducted sessions to help staff coping with change as well as on creating mental health awareness for managers.

A learning plan was developed - both office wide and individual - and reviewed by the HRDT, with good progress. Some 56 of 64 individual activities were completed as were 18 office-wide initiatives out of 21 planned.

**OUTPUT 4** Operational functions, including administration, efficiently and effectively managed.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Through monthly CMT and PMG meetings, the office closely monitored and ensured timely closure of travel authorisations after completion of travel. On average, open travel authorisations more than 15 days after completion of travel were about 11 per month, giving 11.3 per cent of the total up to mid-November. Twelve planned CMT meetings were successfully held to discuss and take decisions on key management and programme issues. Efficient transportation services were provided to support travel in Phnom Penh and to the field on programmatic assurance, monitoring and National Committee missions.

An office move committee was established and regularly met to discuss progress and constraints in identifying and selecting premises as well as regularly observe progress of work and proposed office layout. The committee regularly updated staff during general staff meetings to ensure transparency and feedback on issues pertaining to the new offices. The lease agreement was finalised incorporating key inputs from EAPRO and UNICEF headquarters. The Regional Chief of Operations visited UNICEF Cambodia during the last quarter of the year to assist with the office move process. The procurement processes for
new office furniture and fit out of the new premises is expected to be completed by second week of December and staff will move to the new office premises during the first quarter of 2017.

UNICEF Cambodia participated actively in the UN Security Management Team meetings. The current premises are MOSS compliant, and the proposed new office premises will enhance the security level for staff and equipment. Training and refresher training on staff safety and security were conducted several times during the year by UNDSS. UNICEF Security Focal points and staff warden attended all required training during the year keeping them up to date on all issues related to security. The increase of incidents of bag and phone snatching and street crime in Phnom Penh and main cities remains a serious threat to staff and their dependents. UNDSS and office security focal points continued to advise staff to remain alert to this threat.

The Business Continuity Plan for the country office was maintained up to date. However, no testing was undertaken during the year. It is planned for the first quarter of 2017, coinciding with the move to the new premises.

The poor road conditions and lack of adherence to traffic rules, in addition to the isolation and lack of medical transportation or trauma facilities outside of the city boundaries, continue to pose risk on staff traveling by road.

OUTCOME 2 Cambodia country programme is efficiently designed, coordinated, managed and supported to meet quality results based management standards and achieve results for children.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Following the approval by the Executive Board of the CPD in September 2015, UNICEF Cambodia worked closely with around 12 line ministries to elaborate the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP 2016-2018). The CPAP, aligned to the sustainable development goals, targets and draft indicators, was finalised and jointly signed by the Ministry of Planning and UNICEF on the 10th of February 2016.

During the annual review held in November, all six programme outcomes and 24 of the programme and management outputs were reported to be on track. 2016, being the first year of the new country programme, witnessed very slow start during the first three months due to lack of signed work plans that form the basis for requisition, commitment and disbursement of cash and supply inputs to Government implementing partners. Full scale programme implementation commenced in April following the signing of work plans with respective Government counterparts in March.

In 2016, UNICEF Cambodia managed to mobilise about $23 million of which 75.4 per cent was Other Resources. This amounted to 49 per cent of the overall programme cycle funding ceiling, against a 2016 target of 50 per cent and 86 per cent achievement against the 2016 requirements. Four National Committee donor toolkits focusing on child protection, health, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene were developed and posted on the UNICEF Private Fundraising and Partnerships market place. Combined with other resource mobilisation strategies, additional funding is anticipated in 2017.

A 91 per cent utilisation rate was achieved (92 per cent Regular Resources and 91 per cent Other Resources) against 2016 allocations. Through both Government and CSO partnerships in 2016, UNICEF managed to disburse approximately $11 million as direct cash transfers, in support of programmes aimed at improving the lives of children and women of Cambodia.
To ensure accelerated programme implementation, UNICEF Cambodia activated various mechanisms to closely monitor programme implementation, identify and address bottlenecks timely. Key mechanisms that were used included the monthly programme management group meetings, monthly section meetings and as well as the one hour weekly Monday morning meeting by senior managers. By the end of November 2016, all the ten planned Programme Management Group Meetings were held. The meetings helped to regularly discuss selected cross-cutting programme management issues as well as to regularly monitor budget and partnership management issues (grants expiry, outstanding DCTs and donor reporting). As a result, UNICEF Cambodia managed to submit all 41 due donor reports timely, utilise all donor funds within grant life and managed to keep outstanding DCTs more than nine months at zero.

As part of its results-based management approach to programming, UNICEF Cambodia continued to prioritise evaluation, including sharing an Evaluation Specialist post with two other country offices in the region (Malaysia and Myanmar). As of November 2016, UNICEF Cambodia completed two evaluations:

The Evaluation of Community Pre-School Modality - rated satisfactory by the Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System, which provides quality assurance and advice on evaluation reports for UNICEF;

The Joint Formative Evaluation of the Child-Friendly School Policy Implementation - rated highly satisfactory. This was jointly coordinated with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport.

In addition, UNICEF Cambodia participated as a case study to the Global Evaluation of UNICEF’s PMTCT/Paediatric HIV Programme and the Evaluation of UNICEF’s Strategies and Programme Performance in Reducing Stunting in Children, both led by the Evaluation Office in UNICEF headquarters.

UNICEF Cambodia launched an Expression of Interest for an Outcome Evaluation of the Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund (Phase II), and contributed to the writing of Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of the UNDAF 2011-2015 and 2016-2018; both exercises are planned to be carried out in 2017.

Terms of Reference for an Evaluability Assessment of the Adolescent Strategy, to be conducted in the first quarter of 2017, were prepared jointly with EAPRO. UNICEF Cambodia also offered to participate in the Global Evaluation of UNICEF’s Water Supply Programming, which is planned for the first quarter of 2017.

The implementation of management response plans of past evaluations is progressing as planned. At the end of December, 53 per cent of actions were completed or on track, 44 per cent were underway and 3 per cent were not started yet. When looking at actions completed within 12 months from uploading in the Evaluation Management Response Database, 65 per cent were closed, against a target of 100 per cent. The funding use for evaluation was about 0.6 per cent of the programme budget. An Evaluation Dashboard was shared with senior management on a quarterly basis to monitor the implementation of evaluations, and the status of the evaluation function and to collectively find solutions to identified bottlenecks.

At the UNCT level, UNICEF, through participation in Programme Management Team and Monitoring and Evaluation working group meetings, contributed significantly to the development of the Consolidated Annual Work Plan to operationalise the UNDAF by bridging the gap between high level UNDAF outcomes and agency specific contributions. Participation in the UNDAF M&E group meetings ensured coherent and harmonised monitoring and reporting on UNDAF outcomes. A workshop for scoping the upcoming
evaluation of the 2011-2015 and 2016-2018 UNDAF was held in October. The workshop was organised by the UNDAF M&E group and the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in collaboration with the United Nations Evaluation Development Group for Asia and the Pacific, including UNICEF EAPRO. The workshop helped assess the evaluability of the UNDAF, identify key evaluation criteria and evaluation questions, as well as clarify management arrangements to organise the evaluation, which is expected to be conducted in 2017.

**OUTPUT 1** UNICEF staff and partners are provided with guidance, tools and resources to effectively design and manage programmes.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
In order to operationalise the Country Programme Action Plan, nine work plans were signed with respective Government counterparts between February and March. The draft work plans were subjected to quality assurance to ensure compliance with operational and results based management, gender, humanitarian and equity principles, and met 100 per cent coding completeness rating.

In 2016, eight Partnership Review Committee meetings were convened to consider 21 partnership agreements, which were all recommended for approval by the Representative on first sitting. Over three-quarters were approved within the 45 days threshold between formal submission of documents and signature. This was possible due to effective quality assurance on documentation, budgets and results in advance of each Partnership Review Committee meeting.

Through support from a consultant and a National Committee stretch assignment, the office CO developed four new donor toolkits in line with the new CPD 2016-2018. The four toolkits - child protection, health, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene – were uploaded on the UNICEF Public Fundraising and Partnerships market place and shared with donors for resource mobilisation.

UNICEF Cambodia produced a draft Child-Centred Risk Assessment whose results were shared with the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM). NCDM raised some pertinent questions on some of the Child-Centred Risk Assessment results. Its finalisation has been stalled due to the focus on the drought and preparations for floods in 2016. Once finalised, the findings will be used in designing future work plans to better target vulnerable children, to strengthen community resilience, as well as to prepare and respond to emergencies. UNICEF Cambodia also actively participated in the Humanitarian Response Forum meetings as well as the Joint Action Group on Disaster Risk Reduction. UNICEF staff participated in emergency national and provincial simulation exercises that were jointly coordinated by the Humanitarian Response Forum and the NCDM in June and July.

WFP, FAO and UNICEF jointly conducted an in-depth drought assessment covering 2,400 randomly sampled households across 25 provinces. It was found that 37 per cent of households reported water shortages, sharp increase in price of water mostly affecting the poor; 22 per cent reported decline in paddy and cassava production; 62 per cent reported income loses; 37 per cent reported eating less preferred food, and 32 per cent of households with children under five years reported one or more being sick, diarrhoea being the most prevalent disease mentioned. In 2016, UNICEF supported the Government to respond to critical water shortages in worst affected school and health facilities thereby averting unnecessary stoppages in learning and health service delivery. Follow up assessments will provide key inputs future preparedness and response plans.

In addition, UNICEF Cambodia was selected as a case study country for assessing the evolving role of UNICEF in emergency preparedness and response in lower middle and
middle income countries. The consultant completed data collection in November involving key humanitarian stakeholders including the NCDM, selected line ministries, selected UN agencies and non-government organisations, and the results are expected early next year.

OUTPUT 2 UNICEF staff and partners are provided with tools, guidance and resources for effective communication on child rights issues with stakeholders.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Cambodia developed four new donor toolkits for National Committees (in WASH, health, nutrition and child protection). The resource mobilisation strategy for the new country programme was also updated.

During the reporting period, 41 high-quality donor reports were submitted including a number of human interest stories. There were no overdue or late donor reports in 2016. Specific standard operating procedures on donor reports ensured the high quality was maintained.

Over 90 per cent of other resources funds were spent in 2016, and remaining multi-year funds were transferred to 2017.

Good collaboration was maintained with a range of UNICEF National Committees. In total, US$1,849,654 was received in 2016 through National Committees. Five donor National Committee visits from Norway, Australia and the President of the Korean National Committee, and also hosted the 25th team from the Canadian National Committee.

As a result of excellent partnerships with locally based EU and SIDA missions and a track record of delivering results, the EU will continue supporting the Education CDPF for a third phase (2018–2021). SIDA has also pledged to continue its support. UNICEF Cambodia also successfully positioned itself within the Education Sector Working Group to become the grant agent for the variable tranche of the third phase of Global Partnership for Education funding, totalling US$6.2 million for 2019–2021.

OUTPUT 3 Strategies to address cross-cutting issues related to child rights are developed and applied.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In support to UNICEF Cambodia’s programming strategy, the procurement volume of programmatic and operational supplies and services as well as Procurement Services amounted to US$17.1 million in 2016, compared to US$18 million in 2015.

Procurement of programme and operational supplies totalled US$1.3 million, including essential supplies for children, as well as IT equipment and printed materials.

At US$14 million, the value of Procurement Services continues to exceed UNICEF’s direct supply assistance and remains an important mechanism to leverage resources for children in Cambodia. Regular Procurement Services amounted to US$6.3 million, while procurement of vaccines for the National Immunisation Program (MoH) accounted for US$7.7 million. Vaccines are largely funded by the GAVI Alliance, but also include national budget for vaccine procurement. This further improves sustainability of its immunisation programmes in Cambodia.

UNICEF continued to be the default procurement agent for three Global Fund grants, (HIV, TB and health system strengthening). The existing agreement is valid until 31 December 2017.
Over 95 per cent of total procurement of supplies in 2016 was done in support of national availability and local delivery of essential supplies for UNICEF programmes, as well as through Procurement Services provided to Government and other implementing partners. Main commodities included Vaccines, Pharmaceuticals, Diagnostic Test Kits and nutrition supplies.

The value of service inputs reached US$1.7 million, covering technical assistance, consultancies, research and advisory services as well as services related to the move of the UNICEF office to a new location in 2017. Other service inputs included broadcasting services in TV and radio, translation, interpretation and editing.

At year-end, the office had 37 LTAs in place to support UNICEF as well as other UN agencies, securing favourable prices and reducing transaction times for commonly procured goods and services, especially during humanitarian situations.

In June 2016 the UN Operations Management Team created the UN Procurement Task Force to enhance UN common procurement, operations and improve areas of common planning, identification of common needs and increased collaborative procurement initiatives. UNICEF was instrumental in the creation of the task force, and assumed the role of Chair for a period of two years.

Through the Emergency Core Team, the early warning early action online system was regularly updated and all the key actions were maintained up to date. In 2016, key preparedness actions were updated to position UNICEF Cambodia ready for drought and flood related emergencies. UNICEF Cambodia responded by supporting the Government to avert disruptions in learning and health service delivery caused by drought induced water services.

**OUTPUT 4** UNICEF staff and partners are provided tools, guidance and resources for effective communication, advocacy and partnerships on child rights issues with stakeholders.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
As part of the new country programme, a communication and public advocacy strategy was designed focusing on stronger voice, audience reach, and engagement by UNICEF Cambodia, in alignment with the organisation’s global public advocacy strategy’s goals. Youth engagement and strengthening knowledge on adolescents in Cambodia were some of the highlights of UNICEF Cambodia’s external communication efforts in 2016.

UNICEF Cambodia piloted the local Voices of Youth internship for five adolescents who were trained on research, critical thinking, writing, blogging, and audience engagement. The impact of the internship has gone well beyond the training itself, with 29 articles published engaging 25,836 readers, reaching at least 259,400 people and engaging 20,502 on Facebook. A nationwide survey unveiling adolescent engagement trends, including those most vulnerable, was completed and published in November.

UNICEF Cambodia continued to build its relatively new digital presence and strengthen audience reach and engagement on priority advocacy issues such as juvenile justice, alternative care, malnutrition and multilingual education among others, recording social media followership of 47,375 (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram combined as of 20 December); more than double the followers at the end of 2015 (23,256). Total post reach on Facebook was recorded at 7,631,757 by 20 Dec.

Traditional media was engaged on a regular basis, with at least 146 known mentions and quotes of UNICEF Cambodia, indicating that the agency is considered as a knowledge
leader in the country on issues related to children. Media field visits were among the reasons behind this strong engagement, for local and international media such as Aljazeera English and 60-Minutes Australia. During the drought response, organisational key messages were developed and updated on an ongoing basis, guiding external messaging including with CNN and South China Morning Post. A list of potential influencers for future collaboration is being finalised, for outreach and engagement in early 2017. To commemorate UNICEF’s global 70th anniversary, engaging content was produced for social media audience, including a short film, reaching on Facebook 734,227 people and engaged 61,882 people.

In collaboration with other UN agencies, a number of joint communication initiatives were carried out, including commemoration of International Youth Day, International Women’s Day, and UN Day. Additionally, UNICEF actively participated in the development of the joint UN-wide communication strategy in support of UNDAF. UNICEF also collaborated with CARE to jointly amplify messages on multilingual education, including organising a joint field media visit and creation of unbranded social media content.

UNICEF Cambodia hosted a number of visits by donors and National Committees, including Japan, Korea, Norway, Australia, and Canada.

Challenges facing external communication efforts include lack of sustainable and continuous staffing arrangements for content generation and social media management which are both time-consuming and resource-intensive activities. External factors include the current political climate and the need for UNICEF to be vigilant and aware of any potential reputational risk elements, so that the organisation is able to respond quickly.

**OUTPUT 5** UNICEF staff and partners are provided guidance, tools and resources to effectively plan, monitor and evaluation programmes.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Being the first year of the new country programme, full-scale programme implementation commenced following the signing of work plans in March 2016.

UNICEF Cambodia successfully held mid-year reviews with respective implementing partners followed by internal mid-year review meeting. These processes helped UNICEF and partners to reflect on progress and constraints during first six months of 2016, and use lessons to adjust plans for remaining half of the year.

UNICEF Cambodia also successfully organised and conducted the first joint field visit with Government counterparts in October, with three multi-sectoral teams covering five provinces. This helped hearing perspectives of children, women and sub-national policy makers and service providers about UNICEF assistance. The visit also provided a unique opportunity to strengthen collaboration and communication among different sectors as well as helping participants to understand children’s issues from a non-traditional perspective. The findings and recommendations from the joint visit fed into the subsequent annual review, reporting and planning processes.

There were delays in HACT implementation (spot checks, audits) in the first half of 2016, in part due to the new CPD rollout. HACT was given high priority in the second half of the year, resulting in achievement of set targets. Out of 63 planned spot checks and 158 programmatic visits, 76 per cent and 100 per cent implementation rates were achieved, respectively as of November.

A new standard operating procedure for research, evaluation and studies was used in 2016, and a Research and Evaluation Steering Committee was put in place to ensure quality assurance to evidence-generation activities. PRIME (Plan for Research, Impact Monitoring
and Evaluation) was rolled out in 2016 to share information about future and on-going activities. In 2016, UNICEF Cambodia prioritised 18 studies, two evaluations and three M&E capacity-development activities. The overall implementation rate of PRIME reached 35 per cent, with 52 per cent constrained and 13 per cent cancelled. However, 30 per cent of constrained activities are expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2017. The delayed start of programme implementation contributed to low implementation rate and budgetary constraints led cancellation of some activities.

Two planned evaluations were successfully completed, receiving satisfactory and highly satisfactory ratings on the GEROS assessment. They also made an effective contribution to the education and community development sectors through their findings, lessons learned and recommendations. Three M&E capacity-development activities were also successfully completed, and included the formulation of a theory of change for nutrition and WASH, a review of the Local Governance for Child Rights Programme 2011-2015, a theory of change for Community Development, and an M&E Master Certificate Course for about 30 participants from the Government.

Following several exchanges with UNICEF headquarters and UNICEF EAPRO on the introduction of eTools, UNICEF Cambodia successfully conducted an adoption workshop. This culminated in the elaboration of the office work plan, followed by training of the child survival and development section staff in preparation for data entry and on-boarding during release III early next year.

OUTCOME 3 By 2018, infants, children 0 to 5 years old and pregnant women in target provinces have improved and more equitable use of integrated early childhood survival, care and development interventions and practices, including in emergencies.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF continued to provide support towards the reduction of inequity in receiving maternal, newborn and child health through an expansion of integrated service delivery in hard to reach operational districts in the north eastern provinces of Cambodia.

The proportion of deliveries with a skilled birth attendant at the end of the third quarter was 64 per cent nationally, 51 per cent in Kratie and 56 per cent in Ratanak Kiri, exceeding the 2016 targets for IECD focus provinces. It may be assumed that strengthened outreach services (> 80 per cent of planned outreach activities implemented in the target zone) contributed to this. UNICEF supported, the participation of midwives in outreach services and provided antenatal care for pregnant women and postnatal care for postpartum mothers and their newborns in those communities. In addition, midwives from all health centres in the target area (minimum two per health centre) received practical hands-on training to provide essential care for pregnant women, postpartum mothers and their newborns.

Support for outreach services was complemented with assistance to strengthen service delivery monitoring systems based on rapid identification of and addressing bottlenecks towards ensuring steady quality essential MNCH interventions. UNICEF also supported integrated post-partum care, involving community care for mothers and newborns, communication, integrated management of childhood illnesses, and effective vaccine management improvement plan implementation.

With UNICEF support, periodic mass screening of children below five years for severe acute malnutrition (SAM) was initiated during the first six months in Phnom Penh and two northeastern provinces, and then extended to Mondolkiri in November 2016. There has been significant progress in treatment of SAM in these areas. Against a target of 3.4 per cent of children 6-59 months affected by SAM in the province and discharged (310 children), 12
per cent achievement (1,138 children) was recorded by the end of the third quarter and the coverage is expected to reach 17 per cent by end of December (1,548 children).

By the end of 2016, it can be estimated that UNICEF through the mass screening in the North East and Phnom Penh and on-going monitoring nationwide will have supported MoH to treat almost 5,000 children with SAM (14 per cent national caseloads: of which 1,800 were in-patients (UNICEF main focus). Combined measurement using both weight for height and middle upper arm circumference is needed in order to improve identification of SAM children. This evidence has been used to inform the ongoing revision of SAM management policies and guidelines.

According to results from the ongoing longitudinal study, the proportion of children 0-5 months exclusively breastfed is 10 per cent in Phnom Penh, 67.5 per cent in Kratie and 65.2 per cent in Ratanakiri. Phnom Penh may fail to reach the urban target of 50 per cent. However predominant breastfeeding is used by more than 95 per cent of mothers in the northeast and more than 75 per cent of mothers in Phnom Penh. UNICEF continued to promote proper breastfeeding and complementary feeding by mass campaign, enforcement of the code and other several activities.

UNICEF supported WASH sector coordination at the national level, including:

- Co-chairing of the Technical Working Group on rural WASH;
- Supporting the WASH and Nutrition Sub-Working Group (including developing a theory of change for WASH and nutrition workshop and national conference);
- Launching of the rural WASH National Action Plan to 2018;
- Support to water quality testing at national and sub-national levels;
- Development of Government emergency response capacities including identification of the national focal point at the Ministry of Rural Development;
- Pre-positioning emergency stocks at the national and provincial level.

The sanitation target of increasing coverage by 3 per cent in target IECD districts was surpassed. There was an increase of 5.73 per cent in two target districts in Kratie, and 4.69 per cent in three target districts in Ratanakiri. However, coverage remains below the national average of 49.63 per cent. Demand and supply side developments have been drivers for change. Work remains to be done in challenging environments and amongst poorer households. Based on data from the Education Management Information System (EMIS) the target of increasing the proportion of schools with water and latrines by 1.8 per cent in target areas was also surpassed in Ratanakiri (increase of 2.22 per cent water, 10.85 per cent sanitation), however progress in Kratie needs to be accelerated.

In 2017, UNICEF needs to develop technical approaches, regulatory frameworks, funding and implementation arrangements for WASH in IECD target areas for first 1,000 days, and strengthen coordination at the sub-national level.

Notable increases were recorded in birth registration rates within 30 days after birth from 64 to 90 per cent and community pre-schools enrolment among 3-5 year olds from 5 per cent to 15 per cent. This is attributed to strengthened capacity of all 65 targeted communes through training to identify community needs and deliver targeted social services. There was also a significant increase in investment in parenting education for caregivers, from seven to 25 communes.

An increase was recorded in children’s enrolments in Multilingual Schools at both pre-primary and primary levels. Altogether, 4,957 children are now enrolled in Multilingual Education (MLE) at the primary level and 1,588 children at pre-primary level, an increase of 22 per cent and 125 per cent respectively.
Despite increased investment, sub-national capacity to promote and support early childhood care and development (ECCD) is limited by absence of guidance, dedicated financial resources and cross sectoral coordination mechanisms at every administrative level. Some mitigation strategies included introduction of governance tools, guidance and communication initiatives as well as increased coordination and pooling of sector specific resources.

**OUTPUT 1** By 2018, strengthened capacities of administrators in six target provinces in analysing, planning, coordinating, implementing and monitoring actions that promote IECD.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The capacity of sub-national administrators (SNA’s) in all six target provinces to analyse, plan, implement and monitor social service delivery was strengthened in 2016. This happened by supporting training of 293 administrators (including 69 women) in all ten target districts in the use of newly developed guidance “District Service Project Preparations” aiming to increase prioritisation of social services delivery in District Investment Plans.

In five new target districts, 351 commune administrators and village chiefs (87 women), were been trained in using the “Social Service Mapping” process for identifying and targeting of vulnerable households with social services and support. In these new target districts all 228 CCWC members (72 women) were also trained in “Promoting Social Services with Equity”, while 336 commune administrators and village leaders (88 women) were trained in using the “Village Record Book” (VRB).

Sub-national administrators in all six provinces were also trained in and benefited from access to an Interactive Voice Response system for reducing supply-related bottlenecks hampering birth registration. The strengthened capacity is demonstrated by the doubling of commune managed Community Pre-schools, increasing access to early childhood education through these pre-schools from 5 per cent to 15 per cent of children aged 3 to 5. It is also seen through the increase in birth registration within 30 days after birth from 70 to 90 per cent as a result of all communes using the village record book. Birth registration in remote provinces such as Ratanakiri, inhabited largely by indigenous communities, remains constrained.

Capacity to coordinate IECD action and reporting at sub-national level has yet to be fully been strengthened and guidance for this has been drafted and will be introduced in 2017. Reporting is taking place in all target provinces using the annual reporting format for implementation of the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) National Action Plan.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2018, strengthened capacities of communities, caregivers and families to practice timely and appropriate birth registration, complementary feeding, hygiene, positive parenting and health seeking behaviour for children under the age of 5, especially in six target provinces.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Communication or parenting education initiatives promoting targeted caregiver practices took place in at least 24 communes, and was a contributing factor to an overall increase of caregivers practicing timely birth registration and enrolling 3-5 year olds in early childhood education.

Ongoing monitoring of the community-led total sanitation approach introduced in 2014, shows that just about half maintained open defecation free status in 2016. The approach has in 2016 been expanded to 77 villages in the six target provinces, where 14 villages were been reached with education sessions promoting water treatment and safe storage.
Field observations show that parenting education needs to be strengthened in terms of content and delivery methodology, and they need to be better in engaging fathers and community leaders. Strategic partnerships were established with Plan Cambodia, MoWA, and Save the Children to strengthen quality and impact monitoring of parenting education.

New research indicated that most caregivers in target communes do not have sufficient or correct knowledge to adopt some key caregiver practices, such as exclusive breastfeeding or positive parenting. It also indicated that most caregivers have sufficient and correct knowledge, but fail to adopt, key practices, such as delivery at health facility, birth registration, complementary feeding and handwashing with soap. These observations warrant more targeted communication and engagement with caregivers, community leaders and service providers that promotes not only targeted practices but how to jointly overcome related barriers and bottlenecks with accessing services and supplies. There is currently insufficient funding for developing and delivering such cross-cutting and integrated initiatives.

As of November, 25 villages in six target IECD convergence districts and an additional 55 villages in other geographical area had been successfully triggered with Community-Led Total Sanitation, and an additional 52 villages are expected to be triggered by end of year. An additional 426 villages in 11 provinces who were triggered prior to 2016, were followed up and monitored since 2014; and a total of 216 villages claimed to be Open Defecation Free, with 167 of them having already gone through the verification process.

Fourteen villages in six target IECD convergence districts were reached through household water treatment and safe storage education sessions. An additional 22 villages in Prey Veng, Kandal and Kompong Cham were reached following a community wide water safety planning process that includes household water treatment and safe storage.

The training of four members of the Provincial Department of Rural Development (PDRD) in each target IECD province on community-led total sanitation, hygiene promotion and household water treatment and safe storage, supported by UNICEF is considered an achievement that will strengthen capacity which will enable future progress.

Achievements were made possible through the development of partnership instruments with 11 NGOs, 19 PDRDs, MRD and MoEYS School Health Department over the years; as well as on-going provision of technical support including through co-chairing of the quarterly meetings of the national Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (RWSSH) Technical Working Group led by the Ministry of Rural Development.

Some challenges experienced in 2016 were associated with shifting to new IECD thematic and geographical focus areas because of the need to develop technical approaches, regulatory frameworks, implementation arrangements, and supporting funding streams.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2018, infants, children 0 to 5 years old and pregnant women in target provinces have improved and more equitable use of integrated early childhood survival, care and development interventions and practices, including in emergencies.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The percentage of health facilities providing nutrition-specific services in IECD targeted provinces SAM increased from 23 per cent (6 of 26) in 2015 to 35 per cent (11 of 26) in 2016. Due to mass monitoring in Kratie, Ratanakiri and Phnom Penh, health centres were trained to deliver nutrition services. In addition, in Kratie, UNICEF commenced testing a mHealth tools to provide nutrition messages to women of reproductive age through their mobile phone.
A radio campaign promoting breastfeeding and complementary feeding was broadcast more than 5,700 times during the last semester. UNICEF supported the activities of a mobile library raising awareness about “Nutrition, Health, and WASH” to the population in 90 target communities.

Findings of the longitudinal study support the latest 2014 Cambodia Demographic and Household Survey:
- 80 per cent of the children did not have the minimum acceptable diet;
- More than 20 per cent of the pregnant women were considered at risk during their pregnancy;
- The double burden of malnutrition among women is a reality in Phnom Penh;
- Exclusive breastfeeding is an issue, particularly in Phnom Penh, however predominant breastfeeding is highly prevalent;
- The high prevalence of stunting in Kratie and Ratanakiri among children 0-11 months shows the need to work on at-risk pregnancies.

The analysis of the findings was shared during the National Nutrition Workshop. The key challenge is that there are no national guidelines for treatment of pregnant women with low MUAC. Key nutrition interventions are being incorporated/updated in the guidelines for the minimum package of activity.

More advocacy efforts are necessary to lobby the Government to increase its budget for nutrition. The Government has included more than US$120,000 for ready-to-use-therapeutic food and US$40,000 for iodate in the 2017 budget. These investments are critical, as the recent Ministry of Planning and UNICEF study found that 85 per cent of the salt samples collected (n=250) in 11 provinces were not adequately iodised. The median urinary iodine concentration of 62.52µg/L (IQ: 42.61-104.69) for pregnant women and 73.55µg/L (IQ: 43.34-120.79) for non-pregnant women indicated inadequate iodine intake and none optimal iodine nutrition. While the primary strategy for sustainable elimination of iodine deficiency remains universal salt iodisation, UNICEF and WHO recommend a complementary strategy of iodine supplements as a temporary measure when salt iodisation cannot be fully implemented in Cambodia.

Due recent evidence on the etiology of anaemia, UNICEF involvement was scaled down in 2016 towards micronutrient powders. Over 40 per cent of the children with anaemia were not deficient in iron, zinc, vitamin B12, folic acid or vitamin A. The largest contributor to nutritional anaemia in children was zinc deficiency, with almost 40 per cent of the children having both anaemia and zinc deficiency. As two-thirds of anaemia is not iron deficiency for children 6-24 months, studies on the effect of micronutrient powders on zinc deficiencies need to be undertaken in Cambodia. UNICEF is also working on a fish snack, as a food supplement which will support the prevention of micronutrient deficiency and malnutrition.

**OUTPUT 4** By 2018, increased capacities of service providers to promote access by more newborns, children and women to quality primary health services, focussing on neonatal and maternal health and immunisation, especially in six target provinces.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF supported integrated outreach services to “hard-to-reach” communities with midwives delivering key maternal-newborn interventions to these underserved populations. In 2016, all health centres in selected IECD districts implemented at least 80 per cent of their planned outreach sessions for remote villages, surpassing the target of 60 per cent. Over 56 per cent of health centres (against annual target of 60 per cent) in selected IECD districts
experienced less than 5 per cent stockout of essential medicines/commodities, and four out of 16 health centres (25 per cent compared to 40 per cent in 2015) assessed experienced stock out of HIV test kit (finger-prick) mainly due to insufficient supply. Dipstick for malaria RDT and vitamin K were commonly in short supply. Fourteen (87.50 per cent) out of 16 health facilities in selected IECD enhanced monitoring districts had at least two midwives trained in antenatal care, newborn delivery, post-natal care, and early essential newborn care. By end of November, none of the operational districts had at least two cold chain/immunisation officers trained on newly developed standard operating procedures, due to delays in the recruitment of the consultant to develop training materials.

UNICEF Cambodia supported the development of the provincial newborn action plan for Kratie, Ratanak Kiri and Phnom Penh (Mekong operational district). Additional support was provided for enhancing skills and competencies of referral hospital staff in essential paediatric care, a media campaign and mother group sessions on the appropriate care for sick newborns and children with pneumonia at community level. An effective vaccine management improvement plan, containing clear follow-up action plan, was developed and disseminated to all relevant implementers and partners. In response to the drought, UNICEF also provided support to maintain smooth functioning of 31 health facilities affected by water shortages in the northeastern provinces.

In early 2016, funding support for outreach services had been limited due to the late disbursement of national and GAVI Alliance funds. The lack of UNICEF support during first quarter resulted in nearly 50 per cent of high risk villages in northeastern provinces being without outreach services. The delay in the recruitment of a consultant for the development of the standard operating procedure on immunisation supply chain management led to a subsequent delay in capacity development for EPI officers at sub-national level. Nearly half of health centres in the IECD enhanced monitoring districts had a stock-out of at least 5 per cent of essential medicines and commodities, and approximately 25 per cent of these facilities had stock-out for HIV test kits, mostly due to insufficient supplies. Furthermore, capacity building on interpersonal communication for village health support groups was delayed due to a lag in supplying communication materials. Health centres in remote areas with newly graduated staff require technical supervision and hands-on skill training.

OUTPUT 5 By 2018, strengthened commitment and capacity of government to provide more children and their families, particularly in the six target provinces, with increased access to quality WASH facilities/services.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Progress under this output showed mixed results, and progress against some indicators (notably water supply) has been stronger outside of IECD areas than inside those areas.

The PDRD-chaired quarterly coordination meetings took place in two IECD target provinces: Kratie and Ratanakiri. A package of water, sanitation, and hygiene improvements was supported in nine community pre-schools in Ratanakiri, although agreement on standards and approaches to WASH in pre-schools has yet to take place.

Improvements in water supply in target IECD convergence districts are not yet reflected in data. However, improvements can be seen in non-targeted communes, where access has increased by 4.43 per cent from 2014 to 2015, compared to an average increase of 1.27 per cent nationally.

Data on WASH in health care facilities in target IECD areas is being collected. Progress was recorded in improved drinking water supply, with 61,585 people gaining access to improved water source in 2016 as a result of extended piped water systems and water bottling kiosks,
particularly in arsenic risk areas. This was achieved in partnership with MRD-DRWS and the NGOs Lien Aid, Teuk Saat 1001, Cambodia Water Association and GRET.

Notable progress was also made in WASH in schools in IECD-convergence areas and beyond. An additional 98,481 school children gained access to WASH facilities in schools in 2016, as a result of UNICEF partnerships with the MoEYS and NGO partners. This also involved the support to expanding group hand-washing facilities through the national educational system. Additional systems strengthening WASH in schools was provided through the engagement of a group of junior engineers to provide technical and reporting support to MoEYS-managed WASH improvements in 216 schools nationwide. UNICEF also supported the development of inclusive WASH in schools guidance designs and materials, with a focus on gender and disability issues.

UNICEF Cambodia continues to provide technical support through co-chairing of the quarterly meetings of the national RWSSH Technical Working Group led by the Ministry of Rural Development.

Challenges encountered in 2016 in shifting to new IECD thematic and geographical focus areas were due to the need to develop technical approaches, regulatory frameworks, implementation arrangements, and supporting funding streams. Adjustments required in 2017 include:

- The need to continue to intensify and accelerate activities in IECD districts;
- Mapping out and developing approaches for WASH in pre-schools, health care facilities, in urban areas, and ensuring water, sanitation and hygiene linked to the first 1,000 days strategy;
- Strengthened support to MRD and PDRD emergency preparedness and response functions in terms of planning, operating procedures, and supplies;
- Increased fund mobilisation, particularly for WASH in target IECD areas;
- Further work on supporting operation and maintenance systems for rural water supply, and developing perennial water sources to support improved functionality, sustainability, and climate resilience.

In the area of rural water supply, the functionality of water sources, and the development of perennial water sources remains a challenge.

**OUTPUT 6** By 2018, strengthened commitment and capacity of Government to provide more children under 5 with increased access to inclusive quality early childhood education, particularly amongst children with disabilities, indigenous minority children, and those living in the six target provinces.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
An increase was recorded in children’s enrolments in multilingual schools at both pre-primary and primary levels. Altogether, 4,957 children are now enrolled in multilingual education at the primary level and 1,588 children at pre-primary level, an increase of 22 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. Provincial Offices of Education reported that 100 per cent of children enrolled in MLE pre-school were promoted to Grade One in school year 2016/2017.

Important achievements in 2016 include the finalisation of research with Hong Kong University. This was a more in-depth study than the regional study, analysing the national data from Cambodia. The research was presented to and endorsed by the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) National Committee chaired by the Minister of Education, Youth and Sport. It will be presented at the upcoming Asia Pacific Research Network for Early Childhood Development Conference in Cambodia in March 2017. Demonstrating the
increased institutionalisation of the integrated approach, the first ever progress report on the implementation of the ECCD National Action Plan was presented to and endorsed by the National Committee.

UNICEF played a lead role in the early childhood education sub-sector joint review and made a formal presentation on the challenges of community preschools (CPS) at the Education Congress. This helped to catalyse the inclusion of community preschools data in EMIS, as well as annexing the pre-schools to primary schools, thereby strengthening overall management. In addition, the Government has developed a draft Inter-Ministry Prakas on CPS with the objective of ensuring sustainable management of the pre-schools by the commune/Sangkat administration, based on minimum standards of quality.

OUTCOME 4 By 2018, boys and girls in Cambodia have more equitable access to and completion of quality inclusive education with improved learning outcomes.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
2016 marked the first year of the country programme as well as the establishment of a number of new initiatives related to digital innovation and social accountability and a further embedding of cross-sectoral approaches related to child protection in schools and WASH. Strong progress was made in 2016, with high financial utilisation rates.

Good progress was recorded in national enrolment rates in early childhood education for five year olds, increasing from 61.4 per cent (2014/2015) to 64.1 per cent (2015/2016) against a 2016 target of 62.4 per cent. In terms of shares of the overall enrolment, state pre-schools covered 52 per cent, while community pre-schools covered 20 per cent, with the remaining children in private pre-schools and the home-based programmes. The gross enrolment ratio for lower secondary school increased slightly from 53.3 per cent to 53.8 per cent (0.1 per cent off the 2016 target). The basic education survival rate increased from a low baseline of 35.7 per cent to 44.6 per cent, against a 2016 target of 36.4 per cent.

In 2016, the pass rate of the Grade 12 exam – one of the Ministry priority reforms – increased from 56 per cent to 62 per cent. This is indication of improved quality of the education system, although there are some concerns that the reform has focused mainly on the administration of the exam rather than on ensuring a rigorous process of evaluating children’s learning.

The results of standardised assessments in Grades 3 show some decline between 2009 and 2015. It is noteworthy that the learning assessment results for Grade 3 decreased in 2015. The low results show the need for a stronger focus on quality early childhood education as well as Early Grade Reading and Early Grade Maths Assistance which was foreseen by the Global Partnership for Education.

UNICEF continued to play an active role on policy development, and was voted chair of the Education Sector Working Group in February, thereby serving as the Coordinating Agency for the GPE. UNICEF performed a lead role in the Joint Technical Working Group Retreat focusing on the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport’s ambitious teacher reform. It was agreed that in-service teacher training would become a key focus of the reform and has formed the basis for the third GPE grant currently under development. As a result of extensive consultations, it was agreed that UNESCO would be the Grant Agent for the fixed part of GPE and UNICEF the Grant Agent for the variable part pooled with the Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund. The final application will be submitted in March 2017.

In 2016, through UNICEF advocacy, the Government allocated its budget of US$700,000 to support the construction of latrines and handwashing facilities in 216 schools. UNICEF also
supported MoEYS in the localisation of the SDGs and their integration into plans and data collection systems with a focus on learning outcomes, WASH, inclusive education and ethnicity.

Important achievements in 2016 include the finalisation of the Early Childhood Development Scales research with Hong Kong University. This was a more in-depth study than the regional study, analysing the national data from Cambodia. The research was presented to and endorsed by the ECCD National Committee, chaired by the Minister of Education, Youth and Sport. It will be presented at the upcoming Asia Pacific Research Network for Early Childhood Development Conference in Cambodia in March 2017. Demonstrating the increased institutionalisation of the integrated approach, the first-ever progress report on the implementation of the ECCD National Action Plan was presented to and endorsed by the National Committee.

Following support from UNICEF and other partners, MoEYS developed and endorsed a Child Protection Policy in Schools. This policy sets out to ensure all schools are safe for all children, including those with disabilities, orphaned or otherwise vulnerable. It mainstreams the roles and responsibilities for child protection into existing mechanisms, and aims to increase knowledge of child protection among relevant education and community stakeholders.

A joint formative evaluation with MoEYS examining the implementation of the Cambodian Child Friendly School Policy was conducted focusing on school monitoring by District Training and Monitoring Teams (DTMTs). The evaluation found that CFS have been instrumental in promoting a broad understanding of overall school improvement criteria, as well as strengthening inclusiveness, gender responsiveness, community participation, health and protection. Findings shared with MoEYS demonstrate that many schools are not being reached as part of the monitoring process, and that DTMTs are unable to provide training and support to schools.

Linked to this topic, UNICEF supported the strengthened monitoring of schools by DTMTs through a technological innovation involving: 1) digitalisation of the CFS checklist; 2) development of a tablet-based CFS data collection tool, and; 3) groundwork to develop a MoEYS dashboard to monitor schools against the CFS checklist. The MoEYS, DTMTs and school directors across six districts were trained in the use of tablets for school monitoring, resulting in more accurate and timely data on school performance. Plans are in place to expand their use.

To mitigate one of the worst droughts in decades, UNICEF provided cash assistance to 133 schools in 15 districts in four provinces to purchase drinking water and soap and water for handwashing benefiting 45,000 boys and girls in the worst affected schools. This helped to ensure children’s continuous attendance in school.

OUTPUT 1 By 2018, strengthened government capacity for policy development, planning and financing of quality education.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

The quality of the provincial annual operating plans almost tripled to 32 per cent (from three to eight). This is due to the fact that operating plans are now better established at the provincial level and benefited from substantial support from the Education Capacity Development Partnership Fund over the years, including the provision of education management advisers through a Programme Cooperation Agreement with Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO). The Government budget allocation for scholarships was 34 per cent above the 2016 target (increased from $3.5 to $9.4 million against 2016 target of $7 million). This is
a reflection of the ongoing advocacy by UNICEF and partners to the MoEYS and MEF regarding the critical importance of ensuring an equity focus and social protection support for disadvantaged boys and girls within the budget.

Notable achievements in 2016 included:

The Mid-Term Review of the Education Strategic Plan involving in–depth review of the indicators and targets and projections up to 2020. UNICEF also supported a Rapid Education Sector Analysis report which provided complementary analysis to Mid-Term Review and has informed the development of the GPE 3 2018-2021 proposal;

A strategic policy paper on the linkages between the education strategic plan and the budget strategic plan, with recommendations to strengthen the alignment of budget with policy in line with public financial management reform. Support will be provided to develop a ‘bridging table’ to this end starting with the early childhood education sub-sector in 2017. In the report on school financing supported by UNICEF, it was clear that the current weighting for small and rural schools – the schools with the lowest performance in learning assessments – does not result in a proportionally larger budget as the distribution remains in favour of large schools. UNICEF recommended a financing formula which is more sensitive to provincial-level poverty and based on number of classes rather than enrolment figures;

A comprehensive Training Needs Analysis was conducted in Battambang as part of the decentralisation reform to ensure capacity development is foreseen within the context of the transfer of functions. UNICEF supported the finalisation of the decentralisation and deconcentration policy, as well as the sub-decree on functional transfer making MoEYS the first line Ministry to reach this stage;

UNICEF supported the development of the education management information system (EMIS) masterplan 2017-2021 and capacity development related to data verification, validation and reporting. In addition, adaptations were made to the EMIS based on the SDGs, with a particular focus on quality and equity indicators on children with disabilities as well as WASH;

The NGO Education Partnership was supported to conduct research on teacher deployment, as well as on mapping of all education NGOs and the thematic areas in which they engage, thus strengthening overall coordination and harmonisation.

Progress was made on the forthcoming Out of School Children report, with a validation meeting conducted with MoEYS and internal consultations on the report including with EAPRO and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. It is expected to be launched in early 2017.

OUTPUT 2 By 2018, increased Government and non-government capacities to provide access to inclusive basic education particularly amongst indigenous minorities and children with disabilities including in emergencies.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
An increase was recorded in children’s enrolment in multilingual schools at both pre-primary and primary levels. Altogether, 4,957 children are now enrolled in multilingual education at the primary level and 1,588 children at pre-primary level, an increase of 22 per cent and 125 per cent respectively. Provincial Offices of Education reported that 100 per cent of children enrolled in MLE preschool were promoted to grade one in school year 2016/2017.

A number of factors contributed to the progress. Launching of the Multilingual Education National Action Plan in March by the Education Minister was a major breakthrough in the institutionalisation and scale up of the approach. It marked the Government’s commitment to
expanding multilingual education and to increasingly use its budget to sustain this equity-focused intervention for ethnic minority communities. Through UNICEF’s advocacy, the Government took over the majority of MLE teacher salaries. As of 2015/2016, 80 per cent of MLE teachers are now on the Government payroll.

UNICEF Cambodia played a lead role in the early childhood education sub-sector joint review and made a formal presentation on the challenges of community pre-schools at the Education Congress. This helped to trigger a number of policy wins, namely the inclusion of CPS data in EMIS as well as annexing CPS to primary schools thereby strengthening overall management. In addition, the Government developed a draft Inter-Ministry Prakas on CPS with the objective of ensuring sustainable management of the pre-schools by the commune/Sangkat administration. In the area of inclusive education, two companies were selected to develop Cambodia’s first-ever diploma course on special needs education, through a Programme Cooperation Agreement with Krousar Thmey.

In 2016, the new training on positive discipline to reduce all forms of violence against children in schools was rolled out in three provinces to National Core Trainers and District Training and Monitoring Teams. In turn, 265 school directors and 1,608 teachers from 172 primary schools were trained in positive discipline and effective classroom management, benefiting approximately 51,145 boys and girls. The end line knowledge attitudes and practices survey results showed positive changes to classroom management, non-acceptance of corporal punishment and approaches to anger management.

Important progress was made with the established minimum requirements for WASH in schools guidelines implemented in 210 primary schools. These schools are among the 400 schools which received group handwashing stations based on the GIZ Fit for School model, benefitting approximately 50,000 boys and girls. In promoting menstrual hygiene management awareness and understanding among students, UNICEF supported the printing and distribution of self-learning puberty booklets for girls called ‘Growth and Changes’ in 2014 and self-learning puberty booklets for boys in 2016.

UNICEF supported the Curriculum Development Department to roll out the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan which was launched in 2014. As a result, 16 (3.4 per cent) flood-prone primary schools in Kampong Thom have at least one teacher oriented in emergency preparedness and response. One of the results from the orientation was the integration of emergency preparedness and response into School Development Plan.

OUTPUT 3  By 2018, strengthened capacity of education authorities at national level and in targeted districts to provide quality and measurable primary and lower secondary education.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Assessments are one of the reform priorities of MoEYS. In collaboration with the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) UNICEF is supporting MoEYS to pilot a regional assessment initiative in Cambodia called the South-East Asian Primary Learning Metrics to measure children's learning achievements in Khmer and Maths in Grade 5, as well as global citizenship. To this end, a fully equipped National Assessment Centre was established through support from UNICEF, and a series of capacity development opportunities were provided to the technical team to ensure high quality implementation.

A field trial was successfully conducted in June in 12 provinces and 35 primary schools, with the test was administered to approximately 1,800 children. SEAMEO and ACER researchers observed the process and a report was produced outlining some lessons and challenges around translating the test items from English to Khmer ensuring consistency due to software issues. In some cases, stakeholders were not clear about their roles and
responsibilities exacerbated by heavy workload of the Education Quality Assurance Department. An additional challenge was the need to ensure that primary learning metrics not a discrete project but feeds into a broader assessment system, from teaching practice to policy.

Twenty percent (against 30 per cent target) of lower secondary schools and communities in target districts in three provinces received additional training and are implementing the local life skills programme. The perception of life skills as livelihood activities rather than related to developing social and emotional skills continues to be a challenge. This is affecting the way life skills are taught in schools and the way pedagogies are employed. The national core trainers and District Education Officers organised sensitisation workshop with communities and local experts about their roles and responsibilities in the local life skills programme leading to identification of locally relevant life skill topics in targeted schools for the next school year. The topics, to be taught by trained life skill teachers in collaboration with local experts, using problem-based learning and sharing experiences, include social issues such as drug abuse, domestic violence, and migration and livelihood development such as vegetable growing, animal raising, and sewing. The Asian Development Bank has also employed the same approach for their life skills support.

Substantial support was provided for the implementation of the Teacher Policy Action Plan one of the key Government reforms to raise the qualifications and competencies of teachers. UNICEF played a lead role in the Joint Technical Working Group Retreat which was dedicated to this topic. A number of policy papers were supported to strengthen the evidence base for the ambitious reform, including an institutional assessment of Provincial and Regional Teacher Training Centres which will become future Teacher Education Colleges, on Teacher Career Pathways and also on School Director Standards. Through the partnership with VSO and the Ministry, UNICEF supported the development of a framework for the new Bachelor of Education degree programme for future teacher trainees.

**OUTPUT 4** By 2018, enhanced community capacity to demand for and accountability of inclusive quality basic education, particularly in target districts.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Slow progress was recorded against the targets related to increasing demand for quality education. Awareness-raising communication events targeting parents and children regarding inclusive quality education standards are in the planning stage. The pre-tested communications materials to be used in the events were available at the end of December. In addition, functional forums for engagement between community members and schools / councils on inclusive quality education are in the planning phase.

UNICEF identified the core objectives and approach of this component aligned with the World Bank-supported project on the Social Accountability Framework and with NGOs working to support implementation of the framework.

UNICEF contracted a communications firm (Open Institute) to assess existing attitudes of communities toward education. They also developed a set of pre-tested and finalized multimedia materials, such as SMS, social media content, radio spots and print materials which will be used to promote greater awareness of rights and entitlements of communities to education. The Open Institute developed a baseline survey to assess existing attitudes across three targeted northeastern provinces, aligning this work with the World Bank-supported project on the Social Accountability Framework and with NGOs working to support implementation of this framework. These tools will be used in communications events and functional forums for engaging community members on inclusive quality education planned in 2017 and beyond.
The amount of time required for developing this major new intervention was underestimated. There was a need for detailed discussions within UNICEF and with external partners in order to adopt an appropriate approach. It was also noted that this is a potentially sensitive area for Cambodia, and as such, there was a need to proceed carefully with full Government buy-in, wider consultation and better planning will be undertaken to accelerate implementation of the accountability initiative to achieve better results for children.

**OUTCOME 5** By 2018, girls and boys vulnerable to and exposed to violence, and those separated from their family, or at risk of separation, are increasingly protected by institutional and legislative frameworks, quality services, and a supportive community environment.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
2016 saw significant progress made in relation to child protection in Cambodia. This included an increase in the number of girls and boys benefiting from essential child protection services, the generation of new knowledge and data, new legislation and national planning to prevent and respond to violence and unnecessary family separation, and a strengthening of the continuum of protection care for fostering adoption.

Approximately 8,000 children were better protected from violence and benefited from a protective family environment, thanks to the support from UNICEF to the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and in collaboration with the Partnership Programme for the Protection of Children/3PC. An additional 25,000 children were reached with mine risk education messages, while more than more 100,000 adolescents were reached with core messages to prevent sexual assault of girls and violence more generally. USAID, the David Beckham 7 Fund, the Government of Canada (through the Together for Girls Partnership) and the UNICEF National Committees from Australia, UK, Germany, Japan and Norway are key partners in this work.

The Government’s commitment to safely return 30 percent of children in residential care to their families and communities is starting to have a real and positive impact on the lives of children in the five focus provinces. Approximately 50 per cent of the 800 children targeted for reintegration in 2016 now have a case plan, with 140 being placed back with their families as part of UNICEF’s support to MoSVY. USAID is a long term strategic partner in this work. To strengthen continuum of protective care for adoption, adoption, including inter-country adoption, UNICEF entered into a new partnership with The Hague and the International Institute of Social Studies to support the Government’s efforts to strengthen its capacity in these areas.

The rights of Cambodian children recently took an important step forward with the long-awaited draft juvenile justice law finally being approved by the National Assembly on 30 May 2016. The law reform process started in 2002 and stalled in 2010. In 2015, UNICEF developed a new advocacy strategy (which included direct advocacy, a study tour and workshops) that directly contributed to this result. UNICEF National Committees from Germany and Australia were direct partners in this work.

Children subjected to violence will have greater protection as a result of the Government’s commitment to ending violence against girls and boys. UNICEF provided technical and financial support to 13 ministries to finalise the inter-sectoral action plan to prevent violence, which will be launched in early 2017. The action plan is aligned to INSPIRE, the global framework for ending violence against children. As a parallel approach to fast track the design and roll out of key programme interventions while the action plan was being developed, UNICEF along with Save the Children, provided technical support to MoWA to finalise the positive parenting strategic plan. The positive discipline initiative in schools expanded its reach from 12 schools in 2015 to 172 primary schools in 2016. Some 1,608 teachers were trained in positive discipline and effective classroom management, benefiting...
approximately 51,145 boys and girls. Together with a range of partners, UNICEF is supporting the development of a Government-led, five year communication for development strategy, to address violence against children and keeping families together, as part of a broader office-wide C4D approach. Together for Girls and the Government of Canada are key partners in this work.

In 2016, UNICEF was able to strengthen strategic partnerships with USAID and its new initiative of Family Care First. UNICEF engaged in the collective impact process, which brings together more than 40 NGOs and other partners, aimed at catalysing significant energy toward advancing care reform. UNICEF provided technical expertise and complemented the actions that have been funded through Family Care First, with a particular focus on strengthening the Government capacity on alternative care.

Significant progress was achieved in generating new knowledge and evidence on alternative care, child marriage, adolescent engagement and violence prevention and response. A theory of change on violence against children was completed, based on a systematic literature review and analysis of existing datasets providing more rigorous evidence and knowledge on the determinants (including the risk and protective factors). An action plan to prevent and respond to child marriage in highly disadvantaged ethnic communities in remote areas of Cambodia was drafted based on an analysis of the data and estimations up to 2030, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

With support from the data and analytics team in UNICEF headquarters, a snapshot of key child protection data was prepared for launching in 2017. For the first time, a national mapping of all residential care facilities was conducted, providing essential information that details where the facilities are and how many children live in them, offering an immense opportunity to access these places of care and assess their situation. A study on funding and financial models of residential care institutions was also completed, providing key knowledge for advocacy.

Despite this progress, the social services envelope remains fragmented and insufficient and the child protection system is only partially operational. Continued efforts are required in advocating for more Government budget allocation and improved national and sub-national planning.

**OUTPUT 1** By 2018, strengthened capacity of national Government and five provincial authorities to formulate and implement the institutional and legal framework and costed plans for the scaling-up of child protection prevention and response interventions, including deinstitutionalisation and reintegration services.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The child care sector reform national action plan was formulated and signed by the Minister of Social Affairs in September 2016. The plan promotes family preservation, deinstitutionalisation, reintegration, better gatekeeping and alternatives to institutional care, and also outlines key principles, implementation strategies, expected results, responsibilities and critical success factors. USAID is a key partner in this work.

A key bottleneck in the oversight of residential care facilities by government has been the process of conducting inspections of residential care institutions. With support from the Fund Star Wars: Force for Change and the UNICEF Innovation Fund, UNICEF and the NGO Open Institute developed technology for a digital inspection system using tablets. The technology was designed and tested and will be rolled out in five provinces in early 2017. UNICEF partnered with the Permanent Bureau and The Hague Conference and International Institute of Social Studies to provide technical assistance for the development of a capacity development plan to strengthen foster care and adoption.
The Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Violence against Children was endorsed in July 2016 by the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee, composed of 13 ministries. The action plan includes high impact interventions to address violence against children. UNICEF supported the work of the Steering Committee, including the participation of some of its key members in regional south-to-south workshops in Thailand in March 2015 and China in May 2016, to exchange experiences and lessons learnt with government and INGOs from different countries.

The development of a theory of change on violence against children in Cambodia was completed in September 2016. It is a key advocacy tool to inform policy makers and practitioners on how to address violence against children in Cambodia more effectively and strategically. It is also a key reference document for the behaviour change communication strategy which is being developed.

A concept note and project document has been finalized to guide the establishment of a National Child Protection Information Management System which is being developed in partnership with Family Care First, USAID, Global Alliance for Children, Save the Children and World Vision. A concept note proposing the development of a three-year strategic and operational plan of the Juvenile Justice Law was drafted and submitted to the Ministry of Social Affairs for review. Children living in natural disaster prone and mine-contaminated areas are receiving more timely response due to UNICEF support. This involved bringing together Government and NGO representatives to review the child protection in emergency plan, capacity building of service providers and of data collection staff of the Cambodian Mine/Explosive Remnants of War Victim Information System. The UNICEF National Committee from Japan contributed to this work.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2018, strengthened capacity of social service providers (health, education, justice, and child protection) to provide quality services that protect girls and boys vulnerable to and exposed to violence, those separated from their family, or at risk of separation, and those being deinstitutionalised and reintegrated.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Approximately 8,000 children were better protected from violence and benefited from a protective family environment through an innovative partnership called 3PC, involving MoSVY, UNICEF and Friends International. It brings together ten NGOs and 40 CBOs to provide essential child protection services as part of a broader approach to strengthening the service delivery component of the child protection system. As of 30 September, 7,530 vulnerable children (46.5 per cent female) benefitted from a range of targeted preventive and responsive child protection services, including: (1) education - formal, remedial and non-formal education classes; (2) community prevention - outreach awareness sessions on alternative care, prevention of child maltreatment, child rights, safe migration and other life skills; (3) vocational training and job placement; (4) drug prevention.

Children who have experienced violence will be provided with a better response from practitioners due to the newly developed Child Protection Clinical Handbook. UNICEF also coordinated with different partners including UNFPA, UN Women, CARE and GIZ on the health sector response to violence against women and children to strengthen approaches to ensure that all women and children subjected to violence in Cambodia receive appropriate care and treatment. Implementation of the Child Protection Clinical Handbook has been constrained, due to extended time required for final approval.

With technical guidance from UNICEF, an end-line knowledge, attitudes and practices survey was conducted by the Royal University of Phnom Penh to assess disciplinary methods in primary schools. This targeted 1,080 students, 145 teachers and 24 school
directors in 24 primary schools in three provinces. The report will be finalised by the end of 2016. UNICEF Cambodia closely monitored the training of master trainers in Phnom Penh and the training for teachers and school directors in different provinces. It reached 172 primary schools with 265 school directors and 1,608 teachers, based in schools with 51,145 children.

With funding support from UNICEF Japan, more than 25,000 children in schools and 13,500 children out of school were reached with mine risk education sessions by trained teachers and children peer educators, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. In addition, 500 child survivors of landmines or remnants of war received community-based rehabilitation assistance, including medical, material and education support, thanks to UNICEF support to local accredited CBOs.

More than 600 children in residential care and separated from their families benefited from more effective case management. This was following UNICEF support for the deployment at sub-national level and capacity building of 24 social workers working with the Ministry of Social Affairs and NGOs of the 3PC. At least 400 children deprived of family care were provided with a range of services, including short-term and long-term placements. A learning needs assessment exercise with the social workers was conducted and a capacity development plan for social works is in the process of being developed with support from USAID.

OUTPUT 3 By 2018, strengthened capacity of commune councils and religious leaders to protect girls and boys vulnerable to and exposed to violence and those separated from their family, or at risk of separation.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
One of the key actions in the draft violence against children action plan is the development of a C4D strategy to prevent violence against children and unnecessary family separation. To fast track this action, UNICEF engaged consultants to draft the Strategy which should be completed by early 2017. This is expected to promote positive changes in mentality, attitudes, and practices. To make the pagoda a safer place for children and promote the role of Buddhist monks in protecting children in the community, as well as preventing violence against children and family separation, a consultant is in the process of being recruited to design the child protection pagoda programme. UNICEF continued to provide financial and technical support to Friends International to reach 1.5 million people through the international and national campaigns on harmful effects of orphanage tourism, ‘voluntourism’ for the prevention of family separation.

Children will receive increased access to appropriate and timely parenting support following UNICEF’s work with the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Save the Children in developing the Positive Parenting Strategic Plan. The development of positive parenting training toolkits was initiated in collaboration with a local NGO, Improving Cambodia’s Society Through Skilful Parenting. It aims to build the capacity of social workers, community volunteers and local authorities who will further support parents and caregivers in communities.

UNICEF continued to take the lead in mobilising civil society organisations to work together with the Ministry of Cult and Religion and faith leaders to end violence against children through the promotion of interfaith dialogues and celebration of the Day of Prayer and Action for Children. Following the official incorporation of the subject on “Buddhist’s response to violence against children” in the Buddhist Education programme, the curriculum is being finalised by the technical working group of the Ministry of Cult and Religion and the Buddhist graduate programme division. A booklet, titled “Novice Sokha”, which aims to enhance the capacities of Cambodian monks to contribute to the prevention of violence against children, is being printed. At least 23,188 Buddhist monks (of whom 50 per cent are children) will be
reached through the curriculum and booklet.

To reduce children’s vulnerability to trafficking, UNICEF supported 35 Government officials and NGO members (34 per cent female), including participants from Thailand, border police, tourist police, immigration police and the Poi Pet governor, to be trained on safe migration. The event focused on sharing best practices and better collaboration to protect children at risk.

For the first time, the support needs of children vulnerable to and subjected to violence, abuse and exploitation and their families will be able to access services funded by commune budgets. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Economy and Finance to review the Guidelines of Social Expenditures for commune budgets. The draft guidelines now include budget lines for referral for child protection services, case management, prevention of family separation and family reintegration support.

**OUTPUT 4** By 2018, strengthened capacity of at least 20 adolescent and youth focused organisations to work with and for adolescents (10-19) and implement age-and gender-appropriate interventions to promote safe and protective behaviours and practices.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Life skills education for adolescents was scaled up in 2016 and key data systems redesigned to better capture service delivery interventions through the 3PC partnership, funded by UNICEF. Through this partnership 9,375 adolescents (46 percent are female) vulnerable to violence, exploitation, trafficking, substance use and HIV infection received various support services such as remedial education to facilitate their entry back into the formal education system, targeted life skills, vocational training, career advice, business development and labour programme. In addition, approximately 244 participants from NGOs partners (21 per cent are from 3PC partners) received training to work with/for adolescent and youths, including how to find support job placement. Life skills was taken on line to scale up the interventions on violence against adolescent girls. UNICEF, One World UK and People Health Development developed two video animations which were uploaded on the MoEYS social media platform called “Youth Chhlat”, with the goal of reaching 143,000 adolescent between November and December 2016.

With one in four girls marrying before the age of 18, girls in ethnic minority communities are particularly vulnerable. In collaboration with MoWA and Plan international, an action plan to prevent child marriage and teenage pregnancy in ethnic communities in the remote corners of Cambodia province has been drafted, supported by a theory of change. The Together for Girls partnership and the Government of Canada are partners in this work.

UNICEF continued to engage the Adolescent and Youth Reference Group in developing their capacity to enhance participation of adolescents and youth in policy dialogue and programme development including the process of finalising the VAC Action Plan, led by MoWA. UNICEF supported six capacity building sessions and a consultative workshop with the adolescent and youth reference group and NGO partners on various topics related to violence against children and interventions to promote safe and protective behaviours and practices. Through these sessions and workshop, 39 adolescents and youth were trained on various topics including proposal writing, communications and advocacy skills. The adolescents and youth participated in the annual 16 day campaign to end violence against women, with the goal of reaching 143,100 children and adolescent between November and December 2016. To sharpen and better guide UNICEF’s work with and for adolescents, a strategic action plan on adolescents was drafted.
OUTCOME 6 By 2018, child rights and equity are increasingly prioritised in social sector national and sub-national policies, budget allocation, social protection systems and public discussion.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In the context of Cambodia’s graduation to lower-middle-income economy, and limited fiscal space due to civil servants salary increase among others in 2017, UNICEF was still able to influence the Ministry of Economy and Finance to allocate additional budget for nutrition and iodisation programme for poor and vulnerable children. UNICEF, building on its close working relationship with MEF, held two closed door meetings and other direct intervention with the General Department of Budget in May to increase their understanding on the importance of child nutrition for human and cognitive development and to include nutrition as a cross-sectoral budget policy priority. The approach proved successful, with MEF including nutrition as a priority in their circular on 2017 budget preparation. This allowed line ministries to request funds for nutrition-related programmes.

For the first time, MEF allocated funds (approximately US$160,000) to the Ministry of Health for treating around 2,600 children with severe acute malnutrition. Similarly, the Ministry of Planning received a budget line (approximately US$119,000) to enforce salt producers to comply with iodisation sub-decree. UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation to prepare its programme budget 2017 and as a result, key child welfare indicators and related activities received budget allocation. It is anticipated that children living in residential care institutions and alternative care will receive better quality of care services due to the increased resources available.

The Government, led by MEF, is moving toward developing an effective and functioning social protection system through development of National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF) and an umbrella law on social protection, a framework and law integrating contributory social insurance and non-contributory social assistance. UNICEF took a lead role in collating inputs for formulation of social assistance chapter of this policy. A cash transfer programme for pregnant women and young children, directly indicated by the MEF Senior Minister, was prioritised in the policy, details will be specified in the strategic plan. The policy will be submitted for final approval by the Prime Minister.

The UNICEF-Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) cash transfer pilot modality using sub-national structures was included in the NSPPF. The programme, currently benefitting 1,300 pregnant women and young children PWYC, is being considered by MoSVY, and UNICEF will support them to prepare 2018 budget proposal to MEF for expanding the pilot. Thousands of poor and vulnerable pregnant women and young children will have improved nutritional status and access to better services through this programme. UNICEF addressed the budget execution bottleneck of the disability grant programme which has not been rolled out since 2011. As a result, a total of 3,133 poor people with disability, including 372 children, benefited from this programme implementation in 2016.

Cambodia’s decentralisation reform to move services closer to the people also reached a turning point in 2016 as a political decision was made to transfer key ministries major functions to sub-national administrations. The MoEYS will transfer three main functions: preschool education, non-formal education, and primary education. The actual transfer has not been completed yet due to a delay in transferring budget and human resources. Similarly, the Sub-Decree on Conditional Grant, to finance the transferred functions to SNA, is not yet finalized, and the 2017 budget has not been allocated for the SNAs to carry out new functions. Through UNICEF technical support and input, the Ministry of Planning finalized the new SNA planning guidelines, giving an emphasis on participatory planning including involvement of youth and people with disabilities. This will ensure that their needs are prioritised in the planning and budgeting process.
The MoP initiated a draft national policy on M&E which will be validated with the MEF for their critical role in monitoring the programme budget, before a broader consultation and validation with other government stakeholders is held in 2017. UNICEF contracted the Economic Policy Research Institute to strengthen MoP’s capacity in child poverty assessment. Two workshops were conducted and key parameters for multidimensional child poverty assessment were agreed by an inter-ministerial technical team. The inclusion of monetary and multidimensional child poverty as part of Cambodia SDGs has been agreed by the team. To institutionalise child poverty measurement, the MoP revised the scope of the national working group for poverty assessment to include child poverty both in monetary and multidimensional terms.

The inclusion of children and families with disabilities has been promoted and strengthened through a partnership with the Ministry of Interior and CSOs. Partners provided direct support services to 6,127 children with disabilities, while 357 sub-national authorities were sensitised to disability inclusion in local governance practices. Additionally, the Ministry of Interior issued a letter to all Provincial Governors that new public buildings should be built with consideration for accessibility by people with disabilities.

**OUTPUT 1** By 2018, increased capacities of four social sector ministries to formulate, execute and monitor programme budget with a focus on equity.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Capacities of four social ministries for programme budget formulation and execution have been improved following technical support from UNICEF and other development partners in collaboration with MEF. For example, UNICEF facilitated MEF and MoEYS to design and implement practical programme budget execution training addressing the needs of officials at central and provincial level, which directly contributed to improve their budget execution this year to 60 per cent in 2016 from 55 per cent in 2015. According to the MEF report, the average execution rate of the key social ministries improved from 51 per cent to 56 per cent in the third quarter of 2016, compared to the same period of 2015.

UNICEF supported MoEYS to review alignment of its policies, plans and budget. The recommendations of the study were endorsed by the Minister of MoEYS for future improvement of quality of the programme budget and Budget Strategic Plan to make them better tools to achieve results.

In 2016, UNICEF worked closely with the General Department of National Treasury for revision of the social service expenditure guideline for communes. This initiative was based on the findings from the study on commune expenditure conducted in 2015. The findings included details of the complexity of fund execution for social services, which led to low expenditure for social sectors. In addition, the General Department of Sub-National Administration Finance (GDSNAF) is revising the sub-decree on commune/sangkat fund allocation formula and financial process, and is interested in UNICEF support in the process. UNICEF will use this opportunity to advocate for more budget allocation to the commune/sangkat fund for social services and use of an equity-based formula.

UNICEF also promoted strengthened inter-ministerial collaboration to support communes for better planning and budgeting for the most vulnerable children. Joint field visits were organised in the third quarter and MEF, Ministry of Interior and National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development officials joined the visit and had series of meetings with the Commune Councils in Siem Reap and Ratanakiri Provinces. As a result of the visit, all ministries gained a better understanding on the roles of Commune Councils and agreed to
take relevant actions to support and facilitate them to provide better services for the most vulnerable, especially children.

After participation in the UNICEF-supported master certificate course on M&E, capacities of MEF officials in the General Department of Budget and GDSNAF improved, as evidenced by interesting initiatives taken by the participants. For example, Budget Formulation Department officials have developed a performance indicator guide for use within their department and General Department of Budget; GDSNAF officials demonstrated strengthened capacity in guiding and training provincial administration in developing Budget Strategic Plan and piloting programme budget in six provinces. As the capacity of M&E for Programme Budget formulation has been identified as a major gap by a World Bank review conducted in 2015, MEF has prioritised strengthening this capacity. In 2017, UNICEF plans to support MEF for a Programme Budget review of social sectors, training on M&E for MEF and social ministries, and development of M&E guideline for the Programme Budget.

OUTPUT 2 By 2018, strengthened national social protection system to address the needs of the most vulnerable children and families and to enhance resilience against shocks.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The Government aims to develop social protection system through development of new national social protection policy framework 2016-2025 led by MEF. Taking this opportunity, UNICEF, in collaboration with CARD and development partners, actively led the drafting of social assistance chapter for the new policy, building knowledge and experience of MEF and line ministry officials on cash transfer programme implementation. As a result, MEF prioritised the cash transfer programme for pregnant women and young children in the new NSPPF, to be adopted by Council of Ministers. Establishment of a national cash transfer programme for pregnant women and young children is anticipated in the next three years and its expansion to reach national coverage is scheduled for 2020. Thousands of poor and disabled children will benefit directly from cash transfer programme, if implemented and expanded successfully. In 2017, UNICEF plans to provide technical support for drafting the social assistance chapter of this new legislation, and designing the national cash transfer programme.

To support designing of the national cash transfer programme, UNICEF, OECD/EU Social Protection System programme and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) jointly contracted a local consultant. The consultant conducted a social assistance capacity assessment to inform the Government on future social assistance governance mechanisms and the selection of implementing ministry for cash transfer programme. Additionally, UNICEF developed and presented a policy option paper on different options for social assistance coordination and implementation to key Government stakeholders at an inter-ministerial technical working group hosted by MEF. The paper contributed to the Government design of the social assistance agency, to be finalized in 2017.

UNICEF worked with CARD to roll out the cash transfer pilot for pregnant women and young children in Prasat Bakong district, Siem Reap province. The first cash delivery to the beneficiaries was in May, followed by three more bi-monthly payments as planned. Communication sessions with the beneficiaries on child care practices, nutrition, and health were conducted by communes and health workers just before payment delivery, resulting in high attendance rate of beneficiaries. The successful cash transfer implementation using existing Government mechanisms and staff served as evidence that it could be implemented at larger scale. At the same time, it served as an important learning on limited feasibility or practicality to implement a conditional payment, as the recording on key conditionalities such as growth monitoring was not done properly. In 2017, UNICEF plans to document lessons learnt from the pilot to inform national cash transfer programme design for pregnant women and young children, including use of communication for development.
With direct support from UNICEF, MoSVY was able to implement its disability grant programme for the first time since it received national budget allocation in 2014. UNICEF helped resolve fund flow bottlenecks, leveraging its good working relationship with MEF. To support MoSVY expansion of this programme to other provinces, particularly to benefit all children with a disability, UNICEF recruited a local consultant to develop the programme operational manual. MoSVY decided to revise its identification tools, and in response, UNICEF and other development partners will support formulation of the new tool in 2017.

OUTPUT 3 By 2018, strengthened capacities of provincial and district administrations to develop and monitor child-centred and equity-focused investment plans and budget in the framework of national decentralisation and deconcentration programme, especially in the six target provinces.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The Ministry of Planning completed the revision of subnational planning guidelines with technical and financial support from UNICEF, resulting in its alignment with budgeting processes, which is expected to be effective from 2017. UNICEF facilitated a high level inter-ministerial dialogue to streamline subnational planning and budgeting processes and include participatory approaches where children’s would be considered. The new guidelines require: 1) alignment of planning and budgeting; 2) use of multiple data sources; 3) engagement of vulnerable groups in the process, and; 4) sharing of approved budget allocation information with citizens. To facilitate implementation of this new guidelines, the Ministry of Interior agreed to issue annual instructions to SNAs for commencement of investment programme formulation in March, ahead of the budgeting process which starts in late April.

Provincial administrations integrated the findings of UNICEF-supported situation analysis of children into their provincial analysis and some issues in relation to children were included as priority projects proposed in investment programmes. Whether these priority projects will be financed is yet to be seen. Due to misalignment of the timing of investment planning and budget formulation, by the time the 2017-19 investment programmes were formulated, the annual budget formulation for 2017 was already conducted. UNICEF will closely follow-up with the target provincial administrations to monitor the budget allocation for the proposed projects for children.

UNICEF supported the Government to strengthen social accountability of local administration and service providers, including health centres and schools through integrated social accountability framework programme. The support included database development for production of information materials for citizens who are monitoring the Framework implementation and the results achieved. The information materials and details of results produced by the database triggered discussion among relevant ministries on possible changes of indicators for easy communication with citizens. The database development is expected to be completed in first quarter of 2017, reflecting these changes.

Some progress was recorded in the functional transfer in 2016 of authority under the Government’s decentralisation and deconcentration process. MoSVY drafted a sub-decree for transferring three functions to be piloted in Battambang: the management of state residential care institutions, inspection of NGO-run residential institutions, and management of services for victims and vulnerable people. In the beginning of the year UNICEF agreed with MoSVY to support costing of these functions in order to secure budget allocation for subnational governments. However, during the course of the year, MoSVY made the decision to formulate a comprehensive package of social functions for transferring to different tiers of SNA, and this process is underway. The delay affected progress with a costing exercise undertaken on the original three functions. As a result, no budget allocation for 2017 was provided to effect new functions at the local level, which will pose significant
challenges on the ground. Across the ministries, slow progress to realise financial and human resource transfer has been a challenge.

**OUTPUT 4** By 2018, increased capacities of government and non-government institutions to generate and utilise quality data and evidence, and to monitor and evaluate the realisation of child rights.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The capacities of MEF, MoP and other line ministry officials in monitoring and evaluation improved following UNICEF support. Based on the assessment of the national M&E system conducted in 2015, a series of actions to strengthen national capacity were carried out in 2016. These were based on the National M&E Implementation guideline developed by MoP.

To address the limited technical capacity in this area, UNICEF contracted IDEA International in Canada to provide a four-month training course on Master Certificate in Results-Based M&E to 30 mid-to-senior level officials from key ministries: MoP, MEF, MoSVY, MoEYS, MRD, and Ministry of Civil Services. Twenty-five of them successfully completed the course.

Towards the objective of establishing an institutional set up for strengthening monitoring and evaluation, MoP, with technical support from UNICEF and other partners, drafted a national M&E policy to be discussed with MEF in early 2017 before validation. In addition, UNICEF engaged in the development of the Government Guideline for Equity-Focused and Gender-Responsive Evaluation of Policies and Programmes, in collaboration with the Cambodia Evaluation Society, UN Women and EAPRO.

In support of the Government’s SDG localisation, UNICEF in collaboration with other UN agencies (mainly UNDP and UNFPA) provided support for MoP to lead a series of consultation workshops with line ministries with aim to review, adopt SDG targets, indicators’ definitions, baseline and targets. The draft SDG framework is in place and is expected be reviewed by policy makers for approval by mid-2017. UNICEF programme sections have been collaborating closely with respective ministries for indicator definition and setting baseline and targets.

In relation to SDG #1 on poverty reduction, UNICEF collaborated with MoP for measurement of monetary and multidimensional child poverty. UNICEF contracted EPRI to conduct child poverty analysis and capacity development starting in August 2016. Through two inter-ministerial stakeholder workshops, the Government technical team agreed on the key parameters for multidimensional poverty assessment. A decision by the senior level stakeholders is anticipated in the first quarter of 2017. UNICEF will further support training for an expert group of National Working Group for Poverty Measurement on monetary and multidimensional child poverty assessment to enhance their skills in conducting child poverty analysis as part of routine national poverty calculation beyond 2017. The legal document (ministerial Prakas) on the establishment of the National Working Group for Poverty Measurement was amended to add a new task related with child poverty analysis, covering both monetary and multidimensional aspects.

To strengthen Government capacity with monitoring key child-related indicators, UNICEF supported the National Institute of Statistics to conduct the CamInfo user training for the Cambodia National Council for Children and MEF. Further use of CamInfo by the Government to monitor SDG indicators is under discussion.

In knowledge generation on emerging issues affecting children, a study on impact of migration on children was finalized and is awaiting final approval by the Cambodia National Council for Children for its launch in early 2017. A quantitative study on education and child protection challenges in urban poor communities in Phnom Penh was also conducted and is
awaiting review by an inter-sectoral advisory group chaired by the Deputy Governor of Phnom Penh capital.

**OUTPUT 5** Increased capacity of district and commune level authorities, civil society organisations and families to support children with disabilities to realise their rights.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
A total of 52,276 out of 62,465 targeted direct beneficiaries benefited from disability-inclusive and specific support services provided by 15 CSO partners in the 12 targeted provinces and Phnom Penh. Of these, 6,127 (2,602 girls) or 12 per cent were children with disabilities who directly benefited from the Cambodia Disability Inclusive Development Fund initiative.

UNICEF’s grant partners delivered on track against their planned results for 2016. Programme monitoring visits revealed that partners provided critical support for children and families with disabilities in the absence of specialised support services. Sustainability of results around service delivery for children with disabilities is a challenge, with little to no public investment and no long-term plan to fund services currently provided by NGOs.

A training package for sub-national decision makers on disability inclusion was finalized under the leadership of MoI along with stakeholders including UNDP, WHO, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, MoSVY, the Disability Action Council and the Cambodian Disabled People’s Organisation. Two training-of-trainer sessions were organised to form a pool of ‘core trainers’, consisting of 59 people from the national level and the focus provinces.

The second half of 2016 saw the pilot implementation of the training at commune and some districts reaching 357 (73 females) officials from three districts, one each in Kratie, Battambang and Ratanakiri. The training was led by the core trainers and Cambodian Disabled People’s Organisation resource persons. The training model will be monitored for ‘watering down’ of content, and will require UNICEF staff to provide support in the local level training in 2017.

A situation analysis on the children with disabilities in Cambodia, in partnership with the on-governmental organisation CBM-Nossal has been drafted and is under review. The quality assurance for the research will be overseen the Government-led Research Advisory Group consisting of members from MoSVY, MoH, MoEYS DAC, Cambodian Disabled People’s Organisation and UNICEF. It is expected that the situation analysis will contribute to the body of knowledge on children with disabilities in Cambodia and that practical recommendations are developed and disseminated to stakeholders.
# Evaluation and research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sequence Number</th>
<th>Type of Report</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theory of Change for Integrating WASH and Nutrition in Cambodia</td>
<td>2016/003</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters Certificate in Results Based Monitoring and Evaluation and Information System</td>
<td>2016/001</td>
<td>IMEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Review of Disability Rights Initiative Cambodia</td>
<td>2016/005</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Governance for Child Right-Seth Koma 2011-2015 Programme</td>
<td>2016/004</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent Engagement In Cambodia</td>
<td>2016/001</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF’s PMTCT/Paediatric AIDS Programme: Cambodia Light-Touch Study (completed as part of a global thematic evaluation)</td>
<td>2016/002</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Community Preschool Modality in Cambodia</td>
<td>2016/001</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
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## Lessons learned

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<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Innovative food supplements take a bite out of malnutrition in Cambodia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Harnessing mobile technology to improve birth registration systems</td>
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## Programme documents

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<td>AWP/RWP</td>
<td>Social Inclusion and Governance RWP 2016-2017 - MOP-CNCC</td>
<td>2016 RWP-Output 4-MoP-CNCC.pdf</td>
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<td>2016 RWP-Output 2-CARD-MEF.pdf</td>
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<td>Signed annual workplan_WASH.pdf</td>
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