2014 Regional Office
Annual/Analysis Report

UNICEF
East Asia and Pacific Regional Office

28 February 2015
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<td>AeHIN</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific eHealth Information Network</td>
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<td>Asia-Pacific Coalition for School Safety</td>
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<td>ART</td>
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<td>ASEAN</td>
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<td>C4D</td>
<td>Communication for Development</td>
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<td>CATS</td>
<td>Community Approach to Total Sanitation</td>
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<td>CCA</td>
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<td>CCWG</td>
<td>Cross-Cutting Working Group</td>
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<td>CLMTS</td>
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<td>CO</td>
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<td>CPD</td>
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<td>CRBP</td>
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<td>DaO</td>
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<td>IPV</td>
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<td>MDTF</td>
<td>Multi-Donor Trust Fund</td>
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<td>MMR</td>
<td>Maternal Mortality Rate</td>
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<td>MNP</td>
<td>Multiple micronutrient powder</td>
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<td>MoRES</td>
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<td>PSV</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
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<td>ENAP</td>
<td>Every New-born Action Plan</td>
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<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer</td>
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PART 1: OVERVIEW

1.1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During 2014, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific (EAP) made advances in strategic programming, operations and private sector fundraising. Its commitment to an equity focus and achieving results at scale translated into major gains for children in many countries through: better evidence and understanding of equity-informed analysis, planning and monitoring; leveraging of new policies and resources to address the drivers of vulnerability; scaling-up of high impact interventions; and internal strategic shifts to strengthen effective engagement with partners at national and regional levels.

Regional advocacy efforts mobilized political commitment and raised the profile of specific issues affecting children. Results include the Declaration of an Asia-Pacific Decade of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS); approval of the Plan of Action on Strengthening of Social Protection by Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) members (which included action points on ECD and the First 1,000 Days); production of a Joint Action Plan on New-born Care; establishment of a common ICT platform for Universal Health Care and unique identity markers for all; establishment of South East Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEAPLM); and defining quality baselines for Violence Against Children (VAC).

Stronger cross-sectoral strategies were achieved through a focus on five cross cutting areas (gender, disability, resilience, adolescence and early childhood development). A regional consultation on children with disabilities led to clear commitments to improve evidence, disability-inclusive development, resource mobilization and disability-friendly work environments. Risk-informed development programming to underwrite resilience to disasters employed social protection approaches in combination with comprehensive disaster-proofing models for services (such as schools, health facilities, water supply systems). Work commenced on minimum standards for a holistic early childhood development framework in the region.

Acknowledging that many governments in this disaster-prone region have significant capacity for emergency preparedness and response, UNICEF continued to invest in national capacity building and explored innovative approaches to enhance resilience and accountability during disasters. The Real Time Evaluation (RTE) of the typhoon Haiyan response in the Philippines produced constructive lessons for UNICEF, the UN and partners. EAPRO contributed to policy and strategic discussions on the UNICEF Strengthening of Humanitarian Action Agenda (SHA) and the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) Regional Consultation.

In terms of oversight, EAPRO revised its key performance indicators (KPIs) to 18, monitoring them through a Regional Dashboard. EAPRO also strengthened its capacity to support the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) at country level, which resulted in 94 per cent improvement in indicators. The RO supported UN Coherence at country level, providing technical guidance and oversight to Country Offices (COs) for UNDAF preparation and implementation, joint programming, common operations and UNCT participation. EAPRO also provided guidance for Indonesia UN Country Team during their roll-out of the Partnership Development Framework. In Viet Nam too EAPRO helped set up a common ICT infrastructure for the one ‘UN green house’. The RO commissioned a Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey to assess its own performance – the survey results were positive, especially on technical assistance and representation.

During 2014, country office (CO) private sector fundraising in Asia – in China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand – delivered a total of US$53.5 million in gross revenue, of which US$13.2 million went to global regular resources and US$1.2 million to the EAP Regional Thematic Fund (RTF). The RO also supported corporate engagement in nine countries on
corporate partnership with a financial component with seven of them materializing corporate social responsibility.

Deeper partnerships were an intrinsic part of all achievements in 2014. UNICEF signed a framework of cooperation with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in December 2014. Partnership with the UN Special Representative on Violence Against Children was invaluable for high-level advocacy efforts. UNICEF and UNESCO co-hosted the Asia-Pacific Regional Education Conference (APREC) which agreed on the post-2015 education-for-all strategies. ADB, UNESCAP, UNICEF, WHO and PATH co-hosted a regional intergovernmental meeting on civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) which helped chart a framework towards universal birth registration.

In terms of effectiveness and efficiency, EAPRO provided expert support to ensure quality costed evaluation plans in country programme documents. Strategic evaluations on the Reach Every District (REDS) strategy in Mongolia and on decentralization in Indonesia were carried out. In human resources, key achievements included reducing average recruitment times, support to change management in offices going through strategic shifts, and the successful roll out of learning plans. EAPRO also took steps to strengthen risk management in the RO and in COs. By the end of 2014, EAPRO had closed all audit recommendations. The RO contracted an Independent Panel Review to identify and recommend strategic shifts for UNICEF in East Asia and the Pacific focusing on improved efficiency and effectiveness. The Panel’s recommendations included new ways to manage technical expertise, which led to ongoing discussions and arrangements to share technical capacity between Country Offices. One example of these recommendations was the establishment of an evaluation post shared among three country offices.

1.2. TRENDS AND PROGRESS RELEVANT TO CHILDREN AND WOMEN

   a) Key regional economic and political developments

Calculated in purchasing power parity, currently about a fifth of global GDP and two-fifths of the world’s GDP growth originates in the region, mainly in China, which grew by 7.5 per cent in 2014. However, the ASEAN block and China’s growth rates slowed in 2014. Within ASEAN, one reason for slower growth (on average 4.5 per cent growth in the bigger economies) was political upheaval in Thailand, which posted zero growth in 2014. While the ASEAN economies are expected to post stronger growth in 2015, the continued slowing down of the Chinese economy is likely to impact much of emerging Asia.

Income inequality continues to be high across most of the region, and major disparities exist in access to basic services and vulnerability to disasters. On the positive side, inflation, including in food prices, was contained in 2014 and no major hikes are foreseen for 2015. The current slack in oil and other natural resource prices is expected to give a boost to economies, which rely on imports of these commodities. However, the fall in international commodity prices could destabilize public finances in such countries –Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, Mongolia, Malaysia and Indonesia – where these commodities are important for exports and revenue collection.

Several countries presented their Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) reports to the Child Rights Committee, including Indonesia and Fiji. The CEDAW Committee issued their Concluding Observations to China, Solomon Islands and Brunei and noted serious concern on the implication of Shariah law to Brunei’s international commitments. The Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights issued its Concluding Observations to China and Indonesia. The Special Rapporteur on Myanmar released its Human Rights Report, highlighting the situation of the Rohingyas. Eleven countries, mostly Pacific Island countries, have overdue CRC reports. Four
countries (Brunei, Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia) have not removed their reservations to the CRC. Viet Nam, Vanuatu, Cambodia, DPR Korea, Fiji and Brunei went through the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2014 while the final UPR report for China and Malaysia were adopted in 2014.

b) Maternal and Neonatal Child Health (MNCH)
Regional Maternal Mortality Rates (MMR) have steadily declined from 170 per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 74 in 2013, notably below the MDG 5 target for most countries. Timor-Leste carries the highest MMR in the region (270/100,000) followed by Lao PDR (220/100,000) and Papua New Guinea (220/100,000). Indonesia’s situation is of concern with the 2012 estimate MMR at 359 per 100,000 live births compared to 228 in 2007. The under-five mortality rate in the region is 19/1,000 live births in 2014 as compared to 58/1000 live births in 1990. Disparities on the basis of residence (rural and urban slums), remoteness, ethnicity/language and financial access still pose a challenge. New-born deaths comprise more than half of all under-five deaths, followed by pneumonia (15 per cent), diarrhoea, malaria and child injuries.

The last decade witnessed a steady decline in the number of cases of vaccine preventable diseases in the EAP region; and in 2013, 17 out of 27 countries/territories reported at least 90 per cent national coverage for DPT3. However, occurrence of large measles outbreaks in at least 6 countries (Indonesia, Lao PDR, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu) during 2014 were a reminder that full coverage remains a challenge. In addition, the continued emergence of rubella poses both a problem as well as a risk, prompting the need for the phased introduction of combined measles-rubella vaccine in countries. Immunization supply chain systems are overstretched and, in a number of cases, sub-optimal, posing risks for vaccine potency. Several important life-saving vaccines have been introduced in recent years, including pneumococcus (PCV 10 & 13), rotavirus and other combination vaccines.

c) Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
Several countries have achieved commendable progress in access to drinking water and sanitation over the past decade. According to the 2014 Joint Monitoring Report\(^1\), an additional 864 million people accessed improved sanitation between 1990 and 2012 – the majority of them in China – and an additional 721 million people gained access to improved drinking water. Furthermore more than half of the population of the region now have safe water piped into their homes and premises. However, pronounced disparities between the rich and poor, urban and rural populations, and disparities based on ethnicity and geographic regions, particularly in sanitation and hygiene, continue to mark the region and remain one of the main contributing factors to high child mortality and under-nutrition (stunting and anemia) rates.

Around 91 million people, or 5 per cent of the EAP population, continues to practice open defecation, posing a serious threat to child survival and development with three countries in the region being among top-twelve with the largest burden in the world: Indonesia (59 million and 2nd highest in world); China (14 million); and Cambodia (8.6 million). Four countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, PNG and Timor-Leste) are unlikely to meet the MDG water target. Four countries (PNG, Cambodia, Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands) report less than 40 per cent sanitation coverage. The 2014 Joint Report shows that PNG made virtually no progress between 1990 and 2012. The high risk of disasters (recurrent high intensity typhoons and floods) and increasing climate change events are impacting the quality of WASH services.

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\(^1\) Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water, WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program for Water Supply and Sanitation, 2014 Update
d) Nutrition

Maternal and child malnutrition rates remain high, with eight countries reporting stunting prevalence of above 30 per cent (Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste). An estimated 28 million children under five years old are stunted. Published stunting data in 2014 showed a decrease in stunting in Timor-Leste (from 58 per cent in 2009/10 to 50 per cent in 2013), while no change was recorded in Thailand and Malaysia (still at 16/17 per cent); and an insignificant decrease in the Philippines (from 32 per cent in 2008 to 30.3 per cent in 2013). In terms of the underweight target of MDG-1, while the region overall is on track to achieve the target with a decline in underweight from 20 per cent in 1990 to 5 per cent in 2013, results are very mixed. Five countries have achieved the MDG target (China, Malaysia, Mongolia, Thailand and Vietnam) and two countries (Cambodia and Indonesia) are on track to achieve the target by 2019/2020, while four countries are off track (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Philippines)².

Progress towards the global stunting target by 2025 has been slow, with only China, DPR Korea and Mongolia currently on course. Only four countries (China, DPR Korea, Mongolia and Vietnam) are on course to meet wasting targets. Only Cambodia and Lao PDR are on track to achieve the overweight target and only Vietnam is on course to achieve the target for anemia in women of reproductive age³. The annual estimated caseload of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) remains unacceptably high at over 6 million cases in 2013. The extremely low reported coverage (<1 per cent) of treatment is of great concern. At the same time, the “double burden” of malnutrition (where over and under nutrition co-exist) is a critical growing issue in the region, with close to 8 million children under five overweight. Maternal nutrition is characterized by high rates of anaemia in many countries. Adolescent nutrition has received almost no attention to date. Data on infant and young child feeding practices shows a mixed picture, with six countries recording exclusive breastfeeding rates above 60 per cent and another four above 40 per cent, but also some very low rates, notably in Thailand (12 per cent) and in Myanmar (24 per cent), for example.

e) HIV and AIDS

While the AIDS epidemic tends to be low and concentrated, there are significant variations in HIV prevalence between and within countries. China has the highest HIV burden in the Asia-Pacific with over 780,000 people living with HIV. Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand have nearly halved the number of new infections between 2005 and 2013 and are on target to achieve MDG 6. However, new HIV infections are increasing in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand mainly due to intravenous drug use. Infection levels among Men having Sex with Men (MSM) are high in major cities (Bangkok, Hanoi and Jakarta). An estimated 22,000 children under 15 years in Asia-Pacific were newly infected with HIV in 2013; a 16 per cent drop compared to 2009, but the pace of decline is insufficient to reach the 2015 target of a 90 per cent reduction. Adolescents (aged 10-19) comprised 15 per cent of all new HIV infections in Asia-Pacific in 2013. While the number of AIDS related deaths fell by 27 per cent between 2005 and 2013, adolescents’ deaths increased by over 140 per cent during the same period. Treatment for children still lags behind that of adults with only 38 per cent of children who needed antiretroviral treatment receiving it in 2013. Adolescents are being diagnosed and treated too late, and many are not being tested and treated at all. In 2013, about 58 per cent of the region’s AIDS response was funded domestically with a 30 per cent increase between 2010 and 2013.

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* Timor Leste has new data which would increase its AARR.
f) Education

Progress against the **early childhood care and education outcomes** (EFA Goal 1) has been achieved, with substantial increases in the pre-primary education gross enrolment ratio (from 39 per cent in 1999 to 67 per cent in 2012\(^4\)) particularly in China and Vietnam by 24 and 33 percentage points respectively. However, **large inequalities remain**. In Viet Nam, the attendance rate in early childhood learning programmes among 3-4 year olds in 2012 was 91 per cent for the richest quintile and 59 per cent for the poorest. In the Lao PDR, 73 per cent of the richest, but just 5 per cent of the poorest, attended such programmes\(^5\).

The EAP region is close to reaching the goal for **universal primary education** (EFA Goal 2). 96 per cent of children of primary school age were enrolled in 2012. Lao PDR increased its primary adjusted net enrolment rate from 77 per cent in 1999 to 96 per cent in 2012\(^6\). The number of out-of-school children fell by 66 per cent in Cambodia and by 91 per cent in Vietnam between 2006 and 2011. The survival rate to the last grade in the region increased by eight percentage points between 1999 and 2012 but remains at 92 per cent. Several countries will struggle to meet the MDG2 completion target.

The gross **lower secondary enrolment** ratio in EAP increased from 78 per cent in 1999 to 97 per cent in 2012\(^7\). Despite progress in reducing the number of out of school children, inequalities remained high. In Cambodia, the percentage of richest males completing lower secondary school increased by 19 percentage points (from 50 per cent in 2000 to 69 per cent in 2011\(^8\)). By contrast, the percentage of poorest females who achieved the same over the period increased by eight percentage points (from one per cent to 9 per cent). Poverty and geographic location remain key determinants of exclusion.

While **gender parity** in primary education was reached in 1999, countries such as Malaysia and Thailand now face the challenge of improving enrolment in secondary education, for boys. Boys are also disadvantaged in Pacific countries, such as Fiji, Samoa and the Cook Islands.

The **pupil teacher ratio for primary education** decreased from 24 to 18 to 1, over the period 2000 - 2012, putting the region well below the global average (EFA Goal 6). However, quality of education varies across the region. This is often attributable to low teacher quality, out-dated curricula and poor pedagogical approaches.

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\(^5\) ibid  
\(^6\) Global Monitoring Report 2014, Education For All  
\(^7\) ibid  
\(^8\) UNESCO Education For All, 2014 Global Monitoring Report
#Endviolence multimedia initiatives were launched in China, Mongolia, PNG, Viet Nam, Indonesia, and in some Pacific Islands.

Progress was also achieved on justice for children with specialized courts for children established in Viet Nam and new juvenile justice laws adopted in Indonesia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam. Important increases in coverage of birth and civil registration took place in Kiribati, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, while the online system in Thailand reached 73 per cent of targeted hospitals.

h) Private Sector Fundraising and Partnerships

In 2014, private sector fundraising in the region generated a total of US$53.5 million in gross revenue (a 5.3 per cent increase over 2013). Country offices secured 265,000 active pledge donors. Steps were taken to improve the monitoring of pledge donors through the introduction of a new framework that facilitates more systematic and regular monitoring of progress. In close consultation with COs, EAPRO is attempting to diversify fundraising channels to include SMS fundraising, telemarketing, corporate fundraising, and major gifts. EAPRO also strengthened COs capacity to raise funds through an internal knowledge sharing system which optimizes various platforms.

EAPRO actively supported nine countries on corporate engagement and partnerships. Major advances in the region include a partnership between Thailand CO and the Thaiapit Institute for raising awareness about children’s rights among Thai businesses and to train company officials on the Child Rights and Business Principles (CRBP). The Malaysia CO launched a training module on child rights for Malaysian companies under the Companies Commission of Malaysia (SSM) partnership, the Indonesia CO conducted a CSR mapping exercise in partnership with Save the Children. The Viet Nam CO organized CRBP events and launched the Zero Workplace initiative in which companies committed to target employees and their families with key messages on health, nutrition and WASH. Internal discussion on the engagement with the extractive industry also took place among several countries in the region.

1.3. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

EAP remains one of the most hazard-prone regions in the world. The situation is aggravated by the effects of population growth, climate change and urbanization in several countries. Countries such as Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Solomon Islands face more frequent and intense natural disasters, which significantly affect children and women. UNOCHA estimates that 85 million people were affected by natural disasters during 2014 in the Asia-Pacific region. On a positive note, the trend in increased investments in national preparedness and response capacity, helped by economic growth and increased national budgets, have resulted in strengthened national systems and increased self-reliance.

Hundreds of thousands of people in the region have been displaced within or across borders due to internal conflicts, ethnic violence or a lack of social cohesion in countries like Myanmar and Philippines. In Myanmar, UNOCHA reports over 480,000 people displaced due to conflicts in 2014. Tensions remain particularly high in Rakhine and Kachin states following inter-communal violence and fighting between Government forces and troops. Over 240,000 people, nearly a half of them children, remained displaced at the end of 2014.

The impasse between the DPR Korea and the international community continues. This, plus limited national investments in social development have a negative impact on child wellbeing with 28 per cent of the country’s children under 5 suffering from chronic malnutrition and 4 per cent suffering from acute malnutrition.

UNICEF increasingly focused its technical support on preparedness and capacity building, adopting a holistic approach that bridges development and humanitarian efforts. Advocacy for standard-setting and innovation in emergency response like cash schemes in the aftermath of
typhoon Haiyan, continue to be a priority. Stronger focus on resilience building is defining UNICEF humanitarian action efforts in the region.

In 2014, UNICEF mobilised a total of US$4 million to support efficient and effective response to humanitarian crises and to enhance emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction. In collaboration with humanitarian partners, UNICEF assisted governments in Tonga and the Solomon Islands with effective WASH, nutrition and education responses to floods. Although there was no official request for international assistance, the governments of Cambodia, China, Indonesia and Malaysia welcomed technical support from UNICEF for emergency response and preparedness capacity building.

PART 2: DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

2.1 MATERNAL, NEW-BORN AND CHILD HEALTH

a) Programme strategies and results
UNICEF EAPRO intensified its efforts towards reduction of new-born mortality by supporting country specific action planning, capacity building and monitoring strategies. National workshops were organized to develop action plans in seven countries while orientation for key stakeholders on priority new-born interventions was conducted in Vietnam. Follow-up actions by the regional office contributed to the elaboration of plans to address deficits in new-born care in Vietnam and is already showing results.

The joint regional action plan with WHO/WPRO was launched in May 2014, and is designed to achieve cohesion of approaches, coordinated assessments and follow-up actions. Since the launch of the action plan, intensive progress tracking is already underway and this has enabled joint support from WHO and UNICEF. Following the launch of the document, a joint planning meeting was organized with WHO SEARO for the five overlapping countries in November 2014. Advocacy efforts in line with Global Action Plan on Pneumonia and Diarrhoea (GAPPD) included formative research in selected countries and development of country fact sheets. GAPPD country fact sheets on The Status of Pneumonia & Diarrhoea across the Asia-Pacific were completed.

It is imperative that the momentum gained during 2014 is not lost as a result of diminished human resource capacity at the regional level which has largely served as the catalyst for country office actions. The use of a composite index to assess child deprivation was extremely useful and, when combined with qualitative (and limited quantitative) bottleneck analysis, proved to instrumental in the development of sub-national action plans for targeted interventions. A clear gap in the development of costed plans has been identified and specific support in this area will be needed as we continue to evolve beyond service delivery.

In immunization, EAPRO worked closely with WHO and COs to improve iSCM and immunization equity. Despite the progress over the past two decades, pockets of population still have inadequate access to life-saving vaccines on a regular and predictable basis. Through additional technical assistance, the RO contributed to accelerated progress in implementing EVM Improvement Plans in seven priority countries. EAPRO actively supported 21 out of 22 target countries on decision-making to introduce IPV – part of the Polio end-game strategy – leading to the gradual removal of OPV and eventual 100 per cent use of IPV in all countries. As part of the support towards the introduction of IPV, the RO supported countries to complete the preparation of vaccine introduction plans in 2014. EAPRO was also able to support national counterparts in seven priority countries to overcome resource constraints accelerated progress in the field of iSCM and achieved an ambitious target of developing IPV introduction plans in all 11/11 GAVI countries and 9/10 non-GAVI countries in 2014. The regional office also supported the
implementation of national measles and rubella campaigns in five countries (Philippines, Lao PDR, Solomon Islands, Viet Nam and Myanmar).

The regional YCSD network meeting in August strengthened knowledge sharing among COs and identified opportunities to enhance the role of health sector in Early Childhood Development (ECD), adolescent well-being, gender mainstreaming, disaster risk reduction, preparedness and resilience. Through special sessions, COs capacity on cross-sectoral integration, innovation and MoRES were strengthened.

b) Lessons learned

In a region that is increasingly characterized by expanded fiscal space and classification of countries as ‘middle-income’, significant gaps in the delivery of basic services remains. With positive national fiscal growth comes a reduction in Official Development Assistance (ODA) and a reduction in flexible funding through multilateral sources. EAPRO has identified the following lessons across the region:

- **Focused planning and support** led to successful completion of national new-born action plans in seven countries.
- **Formative research on child health care seeking practices** in Mongolia and Timor-Leste provided a framework of inquiry to address barriers at policy, health system, community, and family levels.

Further, in the midst of the vast needs for technical support, it became clear that a **high-level of technical agility is required** in order to satisfy new and emerging needs for short-term support. EAPRO now works much more closely with countries based on ‘demand’ for support as this tends to be a good indication of future country-level intense engagement.

Due to human and financial resource constraints at both RO and CO levels, **significant challenges to support immunization at national level** are becoming evident. For the COs without dedicated immunization staff in place, there appears to be a gap in ground realities between UNICEF and relevant national counterparts. In the area of new vaccine introductions (IPV), good coordination with relevant partners in the region (mainly WHO) has led to clear division of roles and responsibilities for each organization and eventually adequate and timely support to EAP countries, given that both organizations have distinct responsibilities to support all countries in the uptake of IPV and cessation of the use of OPV.

### 2.2 NUTRITION

a) Programme strategies and results

Programming focus on nutrition across the region included upstream support for national, multi-sectoral nutrition policy and strategy development, coordination, capacity strengthening, surveys data analysis, support for design, planning, implementation and monitoring of nutrition interventions and emergency preparedness and response. EAPRO’s key areas of support include i) policy advocacy, ii) technical advice, iii) nutrition in emergencies, iv) strengthening evidence and v) partnerships.

In 2014, two additional countries (the Philippines and Cambodia) signalled their political commitment to nutrition by joining the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement. One additional country (PNG) is preparing to join while Timor-Leste aims to apply the principles of SUN to the stunting pillar of the Zero Hunger Challenge commitments made by the Government. UNICEF plays a lead role in all countries by supporting the focal points, convening the UN and donor networks, and assisting governments to move forward. However, most SUN countries have reported slow progress, more advocacy and capacity development is needed to move towards actual implementation.
The regional office completed and disseminated the *Regional Strategic Approach to Nutrition*. In line with the principles of SUN, the strategy underscores the two major strategic shifts that UNICEF and governments work on: from a focus on health sector direct nutrition interventions to addressing nutrition more broadly through multiple sectors; and from mainly small-scale downstream project implementation to fully institutionalizing, strengthening systems and scaling up the implementation of direct nutrition interventions. A number of countries are making these shifts, including Lao PDR, Vietnam and Indonesia.

Major opportunities for multi-sectoral engagement include aligning planning, implementation and monitoring of nutrition and WASH interventions to reduce under-nutrition, as well as nutrition-sensitive social protection and addressing both under and over-nutrition through ECD interventions and in the education system. A joint WASH-Nutrition session of the regional network meeting was successfully conducted and concrete actions identified. Indonesia is a good example of joint planning and action, including at the decentralized planning level. In Lao PDR, the RO supported a joint workshop on articulating the theory of change for stunting reduction and the respective WASH and Nutrition contributions.

Management of severe acute malnutrition (SAM), received significant advocacy attention in 2014 in an attempt to convince governments to integrate SAM management into health systems and budgets and to scale up treatment efforts. Significant work was undertaken to support the eight countries in developing or updating treatment and operational guidelines.

Most countries have national infant and young child feeding (IYCF) policies and/or strategies and plans, and seven are implementing IYCF counselling using adaptations of the UNICEF package. A Letter of Understanding was signed with Alive and Thrive to support IYCF policy and systems strengthening in eight countries and joint plans were developed and initiated. Ongoing Code development and monitoring support was provided to four countries through the International Code Documentation Center (ICDC) with which EAPRO signed an "umbrella" Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA).

Multiple micronutrient powder (MNP) distribution continued in ten countries, with around 2.5 million children targeted in 2014. Data is not yet available but it is likely that the target will not be reached due to budget shortfalls and issue of product quality with the manufacturers. Full institutionalization and Government budgeting is needed for this intervention, as well as expansion of social and commercial marketing. Technical support for USI also continued through the RO, and opportunities for rice fortification and analysis of the landscape were jointly pursued with WFP and other partners. Building on the implementation of the EU-supported MYCNSIA programme, EAPRO supported a total of nine countries through RO visits and remote support provided to all countries.

UNICEF continued engagement with ASEAN to advocate for nutrition and obtain endorsement for the FNS Country Profiles, Volume 1 of a joint ASEAN nutrition report and the outline of Volume 2 (analysis, case studies, and recommendations). FNS profiles for a total of 29 EAP countries were completed in collaboration with FAO. In 2014, the NutriDash annual online information platform provided updated nutrition programme data for SAM treatment, IYCF, USI and MNPs for 13 of the countries for the previous year. Country profiles were produced for all countries (an EAPRO initiative), including bottleneck analysis for SAM treatment and enabling environment scores for IYCF and USI.

b) Lessons learned

Financing for nutrition: while it is assumed that the relatively low scale and coverage of nutrition services and outcomes is associated with low investment in appropriate, evidence-based interventions, analysis of the current level of investment or fiscal space has not been systematically undertaken, and the existing financial tracking systems are not well-adapted to
give a comprehensive picture of the level of expenditure in both nutrition specific and sensitive interventions.

Multi-sectoral engagement remains mostly on paper and in discussions at national-level fora but is not yet translating into significant practical initiatives at decentralized level. The perception that nutrition is about food security persists, with much larger fiscal space and investment in agriculture and limited investment in nutrition-specific interventions. UNICEF needs to work with various sectors and partners to make relevant sectors more nutrition-sensitive. Nutrition in EAPRO and countries sees increased collaboration with social policy on nutrition-sensitive social protection as a major opportunity and plans to advance WASH-Nutrition joint work in seven countries. Tools are being complied/developed for integration of nutrition and ECD and addressing both under-nutrition and over-nutrition in school going and school-age populations.

Systems strengthening: There are clear needs to shift from the implementation of SAM treatment as an emergency response to integrating it as a standard treatment in health care settings. The challenges arising from efforts to apply MoRES principles and the many gaps in NutriDash have highlighted the need for nutrition indicators in routine information systems.

Emergency preparedness for nutrition emergencies must be focused on strengthening resilience in the nutrition systems at country level, coupled with strong government-led preparedness planning processes. Region wide investments are needed to ensure that adequate national nutrition programs, nutrition in emergency policy frameworks, staff capacity and resources are available at country level to respond effectively to emergencies. EAPRO is developing a Nutrition in Emergencies Toolkit to guide nutrition sectors at the country level and address preparedness in a systematic and comprehensive manner.

2.3. WATER SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

a) Programme strategies and results

Programming focus across the region encompassed WASH in Schools, building national capacity in planning, monitoring, as well as emergency preparedness and response. Twelve countries are also implementing Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) as a main approach to reduce open defecation and achieve community sanitation and hygiene behaviour change. EAPRO support focused on increasing priority and capacity for scaled-up efforts towards elimination of open defecation and sanitation in disadvantaged communities, with key areas of support organized around i) technical advice, ii) promoting networking and learning, iii) strengthening advocacy and partnerships, and iv) strengthening evidence and knowledge base.

Regional office technical support was prioritized to countries going through critical programming stages such as MTR, and CPD. EAPRO guidance and advice helped to strengthen programmes equity focus on key areas as i) scaling-up sanitation and WASH in Schools in Indonesia, Cambodia and Philippines; ii) positioning of WASH in Schools in Mongolia; iii) developing a large scale and multi-year research project proposal to DFAT in Lao PDR; and iv) strengthening UNICEF lead support role to Government in undertaking a comprehensive WASH Sector Review in Myanmar and Cambodia. Support also continued to 12 countries implementing CLTS and ODF, which is now part of national policy in Indonesia and saw good progress in China, Myanmar, Vietnam and the Pacific. Ten countries were guided in accessing global and regional thematic funds and ensuring that community sanitation remain a focus area in these programmes.

For example, EAPRO was significantly involved at key stages of a new Indonesia country programme; this included technical advice on the implementation of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grant for UNICEF’s support to the national community led total sanitation programme. Support also included mitigating the challenges faced in implementing planned activities caused
by the new financial channelling regulation enforced by the Government of Indonesia on ODA. Fund transfers to implementation level were significantly delayed and continue to pose serious challenges with implications on results and fund utilization at the country level, and indirect impact on the RO. For PNG and the Pacific, advice aimed at greater programme focus on sanitation. EAPRO also facilitated COs in sharing their lessons at regional or global events such as the 37th WEDC Conference, the Global Community Approach to Total Sanitation (CATS) Evaluation or the international WASH conference.

EAPRO supported Indonesia, Vietnam and Mongolia to initiate studies on financing and expenditure in WASH at national and sub-national levels. These studies will provide detailed mapping and analysis of planning and budgeting processes, financial flows, and the allocation criteria at various levels as well as spending levels for equitable WASH services. As a necessary ingredient in upstream WASH programming work, these studies will inform how allocations are prioritized towards addressing priorities (i.e. sanitation, hygiene promotion, capacity building, monitoring, poorest and most disadvantaged) and some of the key bottlenecks (i.e. in WASH in School (WinS) toward funding for operation and maintenance of WinS facilities and soap), to ensure quality and sustainable access to these services for disadvantaged communities, schools and health centres.

EAPRO trained 26 staff and stand-by partners in WASH in Emergencies to enhanced COs knowledge on risk-informed and gender-sensitive emergency preparedness and response, and resilience building. Surge support was provided to Solomon Islands after the floods and the Philippines for Typhoon Haiyan recovery. Technical advice to Myanmar (including for the State of Rakhine), Cambodia, and Vietnam helped improve national capacity building, contingency planning and DRR programming. Furthermore, the regional YCSD network meeting was used as a platform to discuss integrated approaches, innovations, and MoRES application to WASH.

b) Lessons learned

Knowledge of financing and expenditures on sanitation and hygiene is a critical and necessary component in evidence-based advocacy for addressing service gaps that persist across the region despite LMIC or MIC status. UNICEF’s current research and analysis suggests that persistent shortfalls in sustainable and equitable WASH services often stem from inadequate or inappropriate investments in the WASH sector. WASH expenditures often favour urban over rural areas and capital investments in infrastructure over funding for operation and maintenance, monitoring, capacity building, and social and behavioural change communication. For example, a synthesis of bottleneck analyses of WASH in schools carried out by UNICEF showed that operation and maintenance and budget allocation are critical bottlenecks. Similarly, in promoting community approaches to sanitation, the role of local-level monitoring is critical to ensuring that communities reach open defecation free status and maintain that status over a prolonged period of time.

The scarcity of documentation on budgeting and financial flows in the WASH sector makes it very difficult to monitor WASH investments or assess equity, efficiency, and effectiveness of current financial arrangements and on-going programmes. National financial reporting on WASH expenditures is often fragmented in different sectors and limited overall (WaterAid, 2008). Public Expenditure Tracking exercises are also very limited in the WASH sector. Generally, there is no comprehensive assessment of WASH financial flows from national to sub-national levels and down to the operational level (i.e. schools or health centres) in EAP countries that includes core WASH components (i.e. urban/rural water supply and urban/rural sanitation).

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9 WaterAid, 2008. Think local, act local. Effective financing of local governments to provide water and sanitation services. Report.
2.4. HIV AND AIDS

a) Programme strategies and results

In EAP, UNICEF spearheaded efforts to eliminate parent-child transmission of HIV and syphilis, address HIV vulnerabilities of sexually exploited children, improve reporting on HIV prevalence among adolescents and to strengthen equity-focused monitoring and reporting. COs were supported to build their capacity of mHealth strategies to support HIV and other programmes. Learning sessions contributed to better understanding on the entry points and opportunities to apply the MoRES approach in the country context. In adopting an integrated approach, the RO continued to address critical HIV staffing issues and programme management challenges.

Eliminating parent-to-child transmission of HIV: Progress towards the elimination of parent to child transmission of HIV gained significant momentum since the regional office – through the Asia-Pacific PPTCT Taskforce – established a regional mechanism for validation of EPTCT of HIV and Syphilis to guide regional and country validation efforts. EAPRO facilitated cross-country learning of experiences from China, Indonesia and PNG on HIV and MNCH integration to strengthen referral mechanisms. EAPRO participated in the consultation organized by the Thailand Department of Health (DOH) and MOPH – U.S CDC to strengthen the understanding of the national, regional and global validation processes. This consultation resulted in the assessment of the validation tools and a series of actionable next steps in 2015 to examine Thailand’s readiness to achieve the Elimination of Mother-To-Child Transmission (EMTCT) goal. Finalized tools will be shared with COs to assist in the validation process.

Addressing HIV vulnerabilities of sexually exploited children: EAPRO convened an expert’s group meeting which resulted in commitment to develop a UNICEF global programme guidance note, a review of Asia-Pacific regional legislative compliance, and an technical brief on applying the CRC “Evolving Capacity and Best Interest of the Child” principles on sexually exploited boys and girls. A report on adolescents and HIV, which will be launched in early 2015 as part of the All In! campaign, will help shape country and regional advocacy on adolescents at higher risk of HIV.

Better age and sex disaggregated data (10-14 and 15-19) and country reporting on HIV indicators on adolescents: There was a renewed push for HIV prevention, testing and treatment and collection of better age and sex disaggregated data for adolescents at risk of or living with HIV. EAPRO continued to support countries in data collection and strengthening strategic information on adolescents to drive policy and planning. It also initiated a guidance note on strategic information collection on adolescents/young key populations (YKP) at higher risk of HIV. Experience sharing among COs included Indonesia’s experience on secondary data analysis of IBBS for adolescents and Thailand’s use of Respondent Driven Sampling in their situational analysis of A/YKAP. A handbook on understanding data for adolescent/YKPs was introduced into the regional New Gen leadership training course, with support for adaptation and roll out of the course in Cambodia, China and Thailand, which led to strengthened young people’s leadership and capacity to engage meaningfully in the HIV response.

Strengthening linkages and referral management: EAPRO support to efforts in Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar and PNG helped foster strong linkages between MNCH, paediatric, reproductive health and HIV programmes and engagement of communities through decentralizing testing, counselling and case-management and outreach to address operational bottlenecks.

Harnessing digital trends in support of HIV and other programmes: EAPRO built COs’ capacity to understand and identify key actions needed to introduce and implement mHealth strategies. Orientation on Big Data and analytics for health promoted awareness of opportunities in countries. In China, EAPRO supported the launch of an Android App for Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health and in Mongolia the use of ICT for HIV prevention among young MSM. Other innovations supported included Cambodia’s efforts to address weak follow up in Prevention of
Parent to Child Transmission (PPTCT) and Antiretroval Therapy (ART) by linking disparate databases (HIV/TB/ART) using unique IDs and the assessment of mHealth in Fiji and Solomon Islands (Open Smart Register Platform for data collection and reporting on HIV, Sexuality Transmitted Infections and MCH).

**Application of MoRES for PPPCT and adolescents at higher risk of HIV in low and concentrated epidemics:** organized learning sessions contributed to better understanding of the entry points and opportunities to apply the MoRES in the country. Follow up support and capacity building was provided to COs to implement MoRES and the determinant analysis framework.

**Leveraging funds:** EAPRO advised Myanmar and the Pacific in leveraging funds for PMTCT from the Global Fund and other funding mechanisms. EAPRO also provided funding for PMTCT scale up in Viet Nam and for a Pacific study understanding HIV risks and vulnerability among young people.

**b) Lessons learned**

Addressing prevention of HIV among adolescents most at risk and treatment for HIV positive adolescents as they transitioned from paediatric to adult regimens remains a challenge. Service delivery mechanisms for adolescent key populations remained a major gap for both UNICEF internally, and for national partners in ministries of health, child welfare/social protection and education.

Overall resources for HIV programming are dwindling across the region and impact the structure and scope of HIV programmes at country office. In adopting an integrated approach, implementing the outputs and utilizing the budgets within this programme arrangement has been a challenge. Premature abolishment of HIV positions and the loss of key staff is an immediate concern. HIV related outputs are not reflected adequately or completed left out in the country work plans therefore leading to limited or no joint accountability for HIV results.

### 2.5. EDUCATION

**a) Programme strategies and results**

EAPRO guidance and advice helped to strengthen the equity focus in education prioritizing countries going through critical programming stages such as MTR, CPD development and other national reviews (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Timor-Leste, Myanmar, and Lao PDR). EAPRO support included peer review of the education programme strategy in Lao PDR, advice on the education sector coordination mechanism in Vanuatu, participation in the MTR of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) and help in strengthening national capacity with education decentralization in Myanmar.

In knowledge generation, EAPRO supported Myanmar to enhance its own documentation following the review of the MDTF. It supported the Cambodia CO in undertaking study of the Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI) and other COs with analysis and use of relevant studies. In Vietnam, EAPRO assisted the office with the finalization of the school readiness study for children with disabilities. Knowledge on ECD and peacebuilding/social cohesion was strengthened through a regional desk review, webinars, and side-sessions at regional conferences. EAPRO also assisted the China office to conduct an adolescent situation analysis and the Philippines with a study on adolescent pregnancy.

Beyond knowledge generation, EAPRO supported adolescent programming including guidance and advice for multi-sectoral approach to adolescent development in Indonesia, support in advocating for sexuality education in the Philippines and for HIV and YKAP in Malaysia.

In ECD, EAPRO technical support included the implementation of Early Learning Development Standards (DPR Korea), identification of ECD implementation modalities based on the new ECCD
policy in Myanmar, facilitation of selected sessions of the Pacific Regional Council for Early Childhood Care and Education meeting in the Pacific, revision of the ECCD policy and development of an ECCE curriculum in PNG, creation of Early Learning Demonstration Centres in Thailand, and identification of alternative pre-school models in Timor-Leste. EAPRO and NYHQ also organized a session on ECD at the Regional Management Team (RMT) meeting sharing the latest evidence on neuroscience and facilitating exchanges between COs on various innovative approaches and challenges faced.

In Education in Emergency and peacebuilding, technical advice was provided to 12 countries in the areas of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and safe schools, preparedness, Climate Change Education and peacebuilding curriculum. EAPRO also provided active support to the emergency response in the Philippines after typhoon Haiyan and in Myanmar for Rakhine. As part of the Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy (PBEA) initiative, several countries guided on equitable, inclusive and conflict sensitive language policy development and planning, preliminary guidance on planning and programming for ECD and peacebuilding in PNG as well as for policies and programmes on resilience and risk-informed programming. EAPRO also disseminated four publications exploring the relationship between education, conflict and social cohesion in the region. One publication looks at ‘peace-promoting’ themes in education reform, while the others include a regional desk review and two case studies of Thailand and Solomon Islands.

In order to strengthen gender in education, EAPRO supported PNG to conduct gender mainstreaming in education and a follow-up gender audit and facilitated the participation of five countries to the regional gender forum and provided relevant technical advice to Myanmar and Lao PDR.

b) Lessons learned

Advocacy strategies to influence senior level decision-makers are most effective if properly timed, supported by strong evidence and using targeted approaches. It is crucial to be knowledgeable and prepared to take advantage of critical windows of opportunity in governments’ planning and budgeting cycles and be prioritized over internal regional initiatives to fund timescales. Working through a regional body like SEAMEO provides excellent access to key decision-makers.

2.6. CHILD PROTECTION

a) Programme strategies and results

In 2014, EAPRO support in child protection focused on i) technical advice, ii) evidence generation, iii) policy advocacy, and iv) partnerships particularly in terms of child rights, violence against children, child justice, civil registration and vital statistics and child protection in emergencies. In Laos, Philippines, Cambodia and Indonesia, support planning and implementation of Violence Against Children (VAC) national surveys, which led for example in Cambodia, to a public declaration of commitment amongst 13 government departments to prevent and respond to VAC. Assistance was also provide for the development and approval of a national plan of action on VAC (2014-2017). The regional office also provided technical advice on the study on knowledge, attitude and practice in the health sector (as the first sector that often comes into contact with battered children) in China, the national household survey in Cambodia, and a system assessment in Lao PDR.

In seven countries (Lao PDR, Timor-Leste; Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, and Thailand) as well as the Pacific Island Countries, EAPRO supported the legislative reform and policy advocacy efforts on justice for children, including inputs to draft laws, especially to ensure compliance with international human rights instruments. EAPRO met with parliamentarians and constitutional law reform commissioners and other partners in PNG, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Pacific, and Mongolia, to discuss the provisions that have to be included and
the reasons behind as well as good practices from other countries. In Malaysia, EAPRO provided inputs to the call for the removal of corporal punishment and advised on issues of child marriage. EAPRO also trained around 120 judges, prosecutors, social workers and police officers from 16 countries were trained as trainers at a regional workshop on justice for children. These trainers are now conducting local trainings. The training manuals developed were translated in four regional languages and have been integrated in the curriculum of the training institutions of the mentioned professionals.

EAPRO also assisted in the development of a national action plan on child safeguarding in three countries (Thailand, Cambodia and Mongolia) and in refining the indicators and incorporating best practices on child-friendly cities. The RO continued supported CRC/CEDAW reporting in Brunei. Child protection programming was strengthened in Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, China, and Indonesia through support to programming review and development. A fact sheet for governments to ratify CRC OP 3 was also developed and disseminated in various forums.

To strengthen capacity for child protection in emergencies (CPIE), EAPRO trained counterparts. Pacific Islands, Philippines, Papua New Guinea and Myanmar received technical assistance for improving the quality of the CPIE programmes in both strategy development and refining implementation. The Philippines CO was helped to strengthen CPIE systems research and lessons learned in the context of post-Typhoon Haiyan. EAPRO served as co-facilitator of the regional training on child protection sub-cluster coordination. A short analytical paper on climate change adaptation and child protection was developed, which acted as a catalyst to research to be led by the Pacific islands multi-country office.

2.7. SOCIAL INCLUSION

a) Programme strategies and results

In 2014, technical support to COs focused on knowledge generation and dissemination activities, strategy development and exchange of lessons learned, best practices and policy recommendations as well as capacity building efforts, primarily in the field of social protection, child poverty and Public Finance Management (PFM).

EAPRO support contributed to the explicit incorporation of the needs of children in national and subnational policies. For instance, EAPRO contributed to the conceptualization and launch of a child poverty monitoring system as part of the Hubei Rural Poverty Reduction Initiative in China; a rural development plan aiming to reduce poverty in rural areas. In Malaysia, EAPRO assisted the office in data analysis for social protection and the development of a national intervention strategy to ensure that poor and vulnerable children will be protected under the upcoming reforms in the proposed national social protection plan. The regional office also provided technical support to an analysis resulting in detailed recommendations on how a monitoring system of child-related public expenditures could be created and sustained in the Pacific Island countries. In a number of countries, good practices and lessons learned were documented and used for decision and policy-making. An example is Malaysia, where EAPRO supported the CO to identify good practices on child-sensitive social budgeting and sharing these with the Ministry of Finance. Both logistical and programme support was provided to the Viet Nam conference on the Social and Economic Development Plan and Public Finance for Children (PF4C), where the Regional Advisor of the Social Policy Section was the keynote speaker.

Besides direct support to COs, a PF4C learning initiative was undertaken. EAPRO developed a practical and theoretical framework of PFM to EAP UNICEF COs the regional expanded Health Network Meeting in Bangkok.
b) Lessons learned
Country-specific studies and analyses supported by EAPRO throughout the region yielded important recommendations, best practices and lessons learned that could serve to inform decision – and policy making. For instance, the good practices on child-sensitive social budgeting identified in Malaysia are of high relevance for other countries aiming to undertake similar efforts in social budgeting.

2.8. STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT (RBM)

a) Programme strategies and results
In 2014, EAPRO supported eight country offices involved in key milestone processes, four of which were conducting MTR (Mongolia, Pacific, Thailand, and Viet Nam), processes and four preparing new CPD for Board approval (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, and Malaysia). COs received the updated guidelines and participated in webinars organized by the RO to provide feedback and guidance on the processes. EAPRO staff also participated in the SMRs.

The new guidelines integrating the application of RBM, MoRES and Theory of Change have been useful in particular for the CPD countries to ensure that the newly designed country programmes are tackling the issues that constrain progress on key children’s rights. COs have struggled with several issues including mutual UNCT agreement on the timing of CPD submission to the Executive Board. Further guidance on issues like how to effectively integrate cross sectoral outcomes that reflect several of the Strategic Plan Outcomes will be necessary in the immediate future, as well as strategies to strengthen RBM in COs.

EAPRO seized the opportunity of the Deputy Representatives and Operation Chiefs (DROps) meeting held in June 2014 to take stock of MoRES implementation in the region. EAPRO elaborated and shared a capacity development strategy for MoRES with HQ and country Offices to strengthen the application of this approach. The joint Health, WASH, Nutrition and HIV network meeting organized in August was also excellent platform to discuss, share country experiences and to update all COs on the importance of MoRES, for equity refocus and as a systematic way for improving programme design.

MoRES orientation and guidance helped the MTR and CPD development processes. EAPRO continued to work with CO identifying key entry points and opportunities in the different countries, and supported engagement of government authorities and other stakeholders at national and subnational levels. In 2014, EAPRO started documenting the evidence of equity and MoRES implementation in the region.

b) Lessons learned
COs were reminded that for effective situation analysis, it is essential to conduct quality bottleneck analysis and apply a Theory of Change. Even where the country has social sector studies and research that impact children, it is still necessary to apply a child-rights, equity lens to ensure that these are useful for building a UNICEF country programme. New CPD countries are being encouraged to conduct new, or update existing Situation Analyses using the MoRES determinant framework.

2.8. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

a) Programme strategies and results
Acknowledging that many governments in the region have accrued considerable capacity in emergency response and increasingly address needs of material assistance, UNICEF continues to invest in technical cooperation and capacity building with a focus on preparedness and
resilience building. UNICEF increasingly ensures synergies and complementarity of development and humanitarian programming, particularly through risk informed approaches to programming.

In 2014, EAPRO supported five COs and counterparts in the region (Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Thailand, and Viet Nam) with a focus on countries going through strategic programming processes, providing technical support on **risk-informed programming, DRR, and mainstreaming preparedness and resilience building.** The regional office also contributed to strategic humanitarian country planning and simulation exercises, particularly in Cambodia, Myanmar, and the Philippines. In China, the EAPRO supported country-level workshops on risk-informed planning, DRR and humanitarian performance monitoring.

In terms of **resilience**, through knowledge sharing and facilitating exchanges among countries, EAPRO supported strengthening of risk-informed programming and efforts by partners to more systematically adopt resilient approaches. EAPRO also supported and promoted innovative approaches to humanitarian action, such as the cash schemes in the aftermath of typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines building onto the existing conditional cash transfer programmes. The experience sets an example for countries where shortage of supplies is not a bottleneck and provision of cash can boost local economies and rebuild lives.

With regards to **policy development**, EAPRO contributed to policy and strategy discussions ensuring regional perspective were included in the SHA agenda and the WHS Regional Consultation. Contributions to various global platforms have helped ensure that global policy, guidelines and tools for emergency preparedness and response are contextualized to Asia where the governments have significant accountability, capacity and resources for humanitarian action. The UN’s emergency coordination mechanisms are still largely based on experience from large-scale responses led by the international community in other regions, which are mostly inappropriate in East Asia.

A Regional Humanitarian Action Workshop helped to generate discussion on key work streams of the SHA with 12 out of 14 Country Offices’ participating (excepting PNG and Timor-Leste). The effort also resulted in highlighting child rights perspectives at the regional dialogues and platform discussions with other partners, such as the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, WHS Regional Consultation and UN-ASEAN cooperation framework in humanitarian action.

In order to deliver on its Core Commitments for Children, UNICEF continues to work closely with governments and inter-agency partners and to contribute to regional frameworks and platforms for global initiatives such as the Post-2015 framework on DRR and the WHS. The recently signed Framework of Cooperation with ASEAN will contribute to strengthened regional collaboration in humanitarian action. UNICEF fully remains committed to its cluster leadership role, which provides an avenue for advocacy on standards and technical cooperation, through sectoral capacity building efforts (cluster coordination trainings in WASH, Nutrition & Child Protection) at the regional level.

**b) Lessons learned**

**Limited dedicated human and financial resources to humanitarian action** (staff and finance) is the main challenge despite this being the most disaster prone region. A pragmatic approach to dovetail regular and humanitarian programmes by which short-, mid- and long-term priorities are combined to ensure different parts of the UNICEF mandate complement each other is a promising way forward.

There is an increasing need to **promote exchange of experiences and best practices** among COs. More evidence, lessons learned and knowledge need to be collected and shared in a
systematic manner. This is a valuable exercise for continued critical visioning as much as partner capacity building.

PART 3: EAPRO REGIONAL PROGRAMME

3.1 REGIONAL PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

a) Generation of evidence to improve policies and programmes for children

In health, the formative research for childcare seeking in Mongolia and Timor-Leste provided a useful framework of inquiry and analysis using socio-ecological model for C4D. Country fact sheets to support advocacy efforts in line with GAPPD have highlighted stagnation in key indicators for care seeking and preventive and promotive practices. A concept note on the need for age disaggregated data to map adolescent health needs was prepared including a brief on adolescent pregnancy issues in the region.

In nutrition, the FNS profiles for 29 countries were compiled. These profiles show national data on nutrition status, practices, and services, food security, economic growth, and key health and WASH indicators in a standardized format that enables cross-country comparisons. The six-page profiles also describe the current enabling policy environment for each country. It is expected that this information will help to facilitate country level, evidence-based, multi-sectoral dialogue, planning and action to improve nutrition. The FNS profiles of the ten ASEAN member states were compiled into the Regional Nutrition Security Report Volume 1, which was launched in e-copy at the ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting in September 2014. In addition, the regional analysis of global NutriDash annual reports on SAM, IYCF, MNPs and USI were completed and disseminated. These regional analyses highlight progress and critical gaps that require attention and hence help policy dialogue and advocacy for improved and equitable coverage and quality of nutrition interventions. The situation analysis for the EAPRO strategic approach to nutrition and the summary of evidence (Volumes 2 and 3) also makes a significant contribution to the knowledge and evidence base for nutrition in the region, encompassing the status of nutrition and its main determinants, the causes and consequences of malnutrition and evidence-based interventions in multiple sectors to address it.

In WASH, the annual regional analyses of global Joint Monitoring Programme reports: Sanitation & Hygiene in East Asia and Pacific and Water Supply in in East Asia and Pacific and Regional Review of CLTS were completed and disseminated. These regional analyses highlight progress and critical gaps that require attention and hence help policy dialogue and advocacy for improved, equitable and quality WASH services. A separate analysis of the situation in the Pacific sub-region helped deeper understanding and advocacy for WASH. EAPRO also undertook multi-country studies on public financing (allocations and expenditures in WASH), equity analysis on WASH in Schools programming and country case studies on sanitation. These will help fill knowledge gaps in some critical areas for identifying appropriate remedial actions and for advocacy. EAPRO initiated a literature review of perceptions on disposal of child’s faeces to strengthen joint programming in addressing stunting.

In HIV/AIDS, EAPRO in collaboration with Asia-Pacific Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) for HIV Young Key Populations is finalizing a report: Adolescents: Off the radar in the Asia-Pacific AIDS response. The report highlights the HIV quandary for vulnerable adolescents in Asia-Pacific, the lack of data and how we can better collect evidence to better support them.

In education, fact sheets on education in the region were produced capturing the strategic approaches used across the programme. The EFA reviews provided evidence for the development of the regional agenda on Post 2015 in the education context as evidenced in the
Asia-Pacific Statement on Education Beyond 2015 (Bangkok Statement) and influenced other regional education reviews for post 2015. In addition, in partnership with the University of Melbourne and the Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education working group, the multi-country research LESC Initiative, which included a regional knowledge sharing workshop, contributed to evidence generation, influencing language policies in the countries (especially in Myanmar and Malaysia) and knowledge exchange among countries in the area of language and social cohesion, mother tongue based-multilingual education and language policy planning. EAPRO also undertook a school grants research with UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning across 10 countries leading to enhanced understanding of the decentralization.

In **ECD**, research briefs were produced in collaboration with Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC), Hong Kong University and Open Society Foundation, which contributed to the development of ECD capacity in assessment and metrics in five countries. On **adolescence**, EAPRO produced eight two-page summaries on adolescent issues, including participation; violence; pregnancy; road traffic accidents, HIV; social media; mental health; and nutrition. On **Children with Disabilities (CwDs)**, EAPRO commissioned a regional review of the situation of CwDs and organized a regional consultation involving seven countries, major INGOs and UNICEF HQ, which resulted in stronger guidance on programming for CwD.

In **child protection**, evidence on the scale and consequences of violence against children in the region has become more widely available. A meta-synthesis of existing regional research on the prevalence and consequences of violence against children was published and disseminated. This synthesis supplemented new data from national surveys, such as the survey results launched in Cambodia. EAPRO demonstrated an alternative approach to the national survey that has been able to develop region wide statistics on the prevalence and consequences of violence against children. Moreover, EAPROs regional costing model on violence against children, which was named one of the best UNICEF research of 2014, estimated the minimum direct and indirect costs of child maltreatment in the region and developed a model that can be used to estimate the economic burden of child maltreatment at country level. It thus advances regional efforts to situate child protection as a public policy issue critical to social and economic development. In 2014, the model was replicated by China and Cambodia to develop their own national-level estimates.

In **social policy**, using an innovative approach for linking social protection, climate change and disaster risk management, EAPRO produced a report summarizing multi-country research and facilitated policy dialogue at a regional symposium involving government and academic partners from China, Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines. The report *Protecting Children from Poverty, Disaster and Climate Risk* focuses on identifying mechanisms to integrate disaster and climate risks into social protection to strengthen resilience of children and their families. The publication was shared at the official meeting on the Plan of Action to implement the 2013 ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection. The draft plan of action includes reference to the role of social protection in emergencies. The publication also informed a World Bank organized multi-country consultation. EAPRO initiated discussions with ILO and other development partners on integrating this approach into the ILO’s Social Protection Assessment Based National Dialogue tool. Furthermore, research in collaboration with UNRISD generated an evidence base for advocacy on utilizing government revenues from extractive industries for children. EAPRO is developing regional synthesis and advocacy products to support regional and national outreach. Findings are expected to inform an international consultation on extractive industries in Mongolia in 2015.

In **humanitarian action**, a joint study on C4D is ongoing in which both development and emergency will feature. This is meant to generate evidence to improve policies and programmes, including humanitarian action, for children in the region.
b) Influencing regional policy and partnerships

In health, joint action planning on new-born care with WHO WPRO and SEARO and UNFPA has helped galvanize critical support required to mobilize political commitment from ministries of health for national action planning and early implementation. Using ‘centres of excellence’ approach to equip national level health facilities with necessary knowledge and skills and engaging key policymakers in the process have proven to be a useful strategy for a rapid rollout and adoption of new practices.

In nutrition, UNICEF EAPRO staff contributed to four ASEAN meetings in 2014: Post-2015 Agenda consultation with development partners (June 2014); Senior Officials meeting for Health and Development (June 2014); ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting (Sept 2014); and the ASEAN Task Force on Maternal and Child Health meeting (Dec 2014). Member States are demonstrating a growing interest in nutrition as evidenced by the fact that the Joint Regional Report on Nutrition Security has been endorsed and completion planned for 2015. Further, 7 of the 10 MCH advocacy objectives of the MCH Task Force are related to Nutrition. The Task Force has also expressed keen interest in strengthening the Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes in ASEAN, in light of economic integration. Furthermore, the Regional Nutrition Security Coordination Committee met once in 2014 and the membership has expanded from six organizations in 2011 (UNICEF, WHO, WFP, FAO, REACH, SAFANSI/World Bank) to about 15 organizations (adding universities, research institutes, and NGOs) in 2014. Regional Coordination has led to better relationships and some joint initiatives at regional level, as well as more coordinated support to countries (MOU’s, joint visits, etc). The RO continued to work closely with HQ to support and monitor progress and impact of CO participation in the SUN.

In WASH, concrete actions undertaken to strengthen advocacy and partnerships for sanitation and hygiene include: i) EAPRO participation in the World Bank Group’s Water & Sanitation Program (WSP) regional Business Planning meeting; ii) successful advocacy to ADB to include rural sanitation in its programme during the Asia Water Week and the joint presentation with WHO of a regional WASH update; iii) presentation of EAPRO analysis of regional WASH data at the Brisbane WASH Conference, which generated Australia DFAT interest with subsequent funding support availed to UNICEF for improving monitoring capacity in the region with particular focus on the Pacific sub-region including PNG. EAPRO also remained actively engaged in the post 2015 consultations process. Significance of joint WASH and nutrition linkages was presented at the Inter-parliamentarian seminar for nutrition in Asia, the 37th WEDC Conference and the 1st WASH in Health Centers Conference.

In HIV/AIDS, Regional advocacy was strengthened through partnerships with UNICEF ROSA, WHO WPRO and SEARO for the Asia Pacific PPTCT Task Force. To establish a regional mechanism for validation of EPTCT of HIV and Syphilis and to support regional and country activities, an Asia-Pacific regional core group meeting was jointly convened with WHO, which resulted in drafting of a terms of reference to guide the Asia-Pacific regional validation committee for eMTCT of HIV and Syphilis. A UNICEF-UNDP joint study on intimate partner transmission of HIV with the IATT on young key affected women and girls was finalized and the executive summary released at the 2nd Men Engage Global Symposium in New Delhi, India in November 2014. As part of the efforts to move forward with the elimination of parents-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis, UNICEF and WHO Regional Offices participated in the global technical partners meeting for the validation of the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis and presented the regional progress in Asia-Pacific, providing inputs into global tools for validation. Following the global technical partners meeting, WHO and UNICEF jointly organized the Asia-Pacific regional core group meeting for the validation of EPTCT of HIV and syphilis, which was convened to establish a regional mechanism for validation and to discuss next steps to support regional and country activities in Asia-Pacific. In addition, the Regional metrics for
monitoring the cascade of HIV testing, care and treatment services in Asia and the Pacific were launched. Finally, EAPRO supported the Asia-Pacific eHealth Information Network (AeHIN) and participated in the Asia-Pacific Conference on eHealth for Universal Health Coverage: Evidence and Innovation, sponsoring several member states to attend. AeHIN is committed to capacity building in the region for the adoption of eHealth and strategic investments in system strengthening, Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS), UHC and better outcomes for HIV.

In education, as co-chair of the EFA technical working group, EAPRO supported EFA reviews and the organization of the Asia Pacific Regional Education Conference, which concluded with the Bangkok Statement setting the basis for the development of the Asia-Pacific roadmap for 2015. As part of the Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group, EAPRO contributed to regional evidence based advocacy on language and mother tongue based education. As member of the UNGEI partnership for gender equality, EAPRO contributed to organize a Gender and Education Forum which led to the elaboration of various work plans. Within the ECD and Peacebuilding Working Group, the regional office contributed to develop guidance on how peacebuilding should start with ECD. As an active member of APCSS, EAPRO advocated for comprehensive school safety in regional events and in countries. Through collaboration with APCSS and Children, Youth and Child-Centered Organizations Stakeholder Group the Section also contributed to the 6th Asia Ministerial Conference on DRR’s official Bangkok statements towards the global Post-2015 DRR framework and inclusion of safe schools and children and youth within. The partnership with SEAMEO and UNESCO led to guidance on Resilience and Education; ARNEC continued to be a major partner for ECD in Asia as a whole. EAPRO also continues engagement with the interagency working group on youth, including planning and preparation of the regional report on youth, as well as joint advocacy for inclusion of sexuality education in education curriculum and in developing tools for assessment of the effectiveness of on-going comprehensive sexuality education (with UNFPA and UNESCO).

In child protection, EAPRO contributed to a major milestone achieved towards universal birth registration with the declaration of an Asia-Pacific Decade for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics at the November Ministerial Conference. The regional office also contributed to the establishment of a regional network of registrars. With partners, EAPRO ensured specific links between civil registration and protection of girls from early marriage and on youth participation. A framework was established for country level work in developing targets and indicators. In term of juvenile justice, UNICEF and UNODC brought together 89 justice actors from the judiciary, law enforcement and social welfare in a regional meeting to address violence against children in justice settings (the first time for many of the 16 participating countries). The UN Model Strategy on Justice for Children was introduced to participants, who returned to their countries with inter-sectoral action plans for implementation. The meeting also provided opportunities for South-South cooperation. Thailand has already expressed interest in supporting Lao PDR in building the capacity of their justice professionals. Through its participation in the regular meeting of the South Pacific Council of Children and Youth Courts, EAPRO was able to reach out to more judges in the Pacific. In addition, EAPRO convened the Regional Inter-Agency Child Protection Working Group comprised of CSOs and UN Partners to ensure joint analysis and advocacy. As part of its efforts a regional Review and Analysis of Mappings and Assessment of Child Protection Systems was published and disseminated.

In social policy, as a direct result of EAPRO advocacy at key meetings, the Draft Plan of Action on Strengthening Social Protection accepted by ASEAN member states now includes an action point on ECD and the first 1,000 days (where UNICEF is noted as key partner), as well as an action point to monitor government budgets for social protection at the disaggregated/programme level (which fits with EAPRO PF4C strategy). From the viewpoint of child rights, the draft document shows other remarkable progress; however not all members internalize the lifecycle
approach and address protection issues related to external migration. In addition, EAPRO formalized its partnership with PEMNA (a community of practice of ministry of finance officials) as a forum to raise children’s issues in regional dialogue on public finance. UNICEF was granted observer status and recognized as a stakeholder in public finance in EAP, enabling regional and country-level policy dialogue on leveraging public finance for children. Negotiations for a dedicated session on Public Finance for Children at the PEMNA event in 2015 are ongoing.

c) Multi-country programme initiatives

In nutrition, the Maternal and Young Child Nutrition Security Initiative in Asia (MYCNSIA) in partnership with the EU concluded its fourth year, with one year remaining following a contract revision and one year extension. Technical support was provided to all five countries (Nepal, Bangladesh, Philippines, Lao, and Indonesia). Regional products included a series of five advocacy briefs outlining the evidence and linkages between Nutrition and Education, Social Protection, Agriculture, and Public Health/WASH; these materials were used extensively at regional and country level. The UNICEF-GAIN USI partnership continued its focus on ensuring gains in USI will be sustained, with a focus on China, Indonesia and the Philippines, all of which have high coverage of iodized salt but need to strengthen quality and ensure that gains will not be lost. This project winds up in mid-2015 and a multi-country workshop proposed to take place in the 3rd quarter of 2015 capturing the lessons learned and defining the way forward. The Alive and Thrive-UNICEF partnership on IYCF policy and systems strengthening focuses on addressing barriers and advancing IYCF policy and legislations, as well as strengthening systems and implementation of IYCF interventions in eight target countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam).

In education, EAPRO expanded the Out of School Initiative (OOSCI) to ten participating countries. In phase one countries, Viet Nam, Timor-Leste and Indonesia strengthened data management systems, while Philippines and Viet Nam strengthened inter-sectoral coordination. OOSCI now incorporates the MoRES approach and several countries are following up with more in-depth analyses. The South East Asia Primary Learning Metrics is a major regional initiative in collaboration with SEAMO aiming at providing a common measurement of literacy, numeracy and global citizenship. Progress included strengthened partnership and commitment to pilot the new approach in three countries (Lao PDR, Cambodia and Brunei). The Peace-building Education and Advocacy programme supported Language, Education and Social Cohesion research in Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand and is influencing national policy discussions around language, conflict, equity and social cohesion. A multi-partner/multi-country regional consultation in the Philippines involved other regions and UNICEF HQ, influenced global and regional agendas around resilience and education and produced a guidance document social cohesion and school safety. In terms of gender equality, EAPRO as part of UNGEI initiated two multi-country initiatives on School-Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV), including a regional desk review followed by the Regional Gender Forum, and a regional Curriculum template on SRGBV.

In child protection, the Child Protection Governance Indicators Framework was piloted in four countries in the region. Fiji, Vanuatu, Indonesia, and Philippines. This framework was established by EAPRO to assist Governments in the monitoring and assessment of the enabling environment or “governance” of national child protection system. The pilots have allowed UNICEF to adopt the tool to be more practical and relevant to Governments. It also provided a comprehensive analysis of the functioning of their child protection systems in each country according to standardised benchmarks, and identifying priorities for systems development.

In social policy, EAPRO initiated a series of training sessions and organized a regional Workshop on Theory of Change and Results Based Management for Social Inclusion Outcome Area of UNICEF’s 2014-17 Strategic Plan. This aimed to sharpen UNICEF’s upstream policy work in EAP. While it is too early to draw lessons from this initiative which is being rolled out in early
2015 it is expected that this RBM for Social Inclusion initiative will represent an innovative and forward looking approach to quality assurance for and technical guidance to COs and upstream policy programmes by a RO. As such, if successful, the approach could be replicated including in other regions with positive impact on development cooperation efficiency and leveraging resources for child outcomes.

d) Facilitation of learning across countries through knowledge exchange and horizontal cooperation

In immunization, participation of national immunization managers and CO staff in programme review or monitoring in other countries was helpful in exchanging experiences, increasing motivation and capacity of managers in addressing common challenges in their own country settings.

In nutrition, the World Bank jointly with EAPRO organized a learning programme on understanding linkages between rural sanitation and nutrition and operational implications. Several country examples were integrated into the latest evidence and lessons on implementing interventions focused on addressing the linkages between sanitation and stunting. Furthermore, EAPRO in collaboration with Asia Disaster Preparedness Centre facilitated an 11-day Nutrition in Emergencies Regional Training in Thailand with participation from Ministry of Health, non-government organizations and UN.

In WASH, the WinS learning exchange in Lao PDR brought together 87 participants from 14 countries from Asia to showcase WinS initiatives and brought experts presenting evidence-based papers, which helped countries in the development of country plans for implementation of WinS at scale.

In education, EAPRO facilitated several high-level regional meetings which foster knowledge exchange and horizontal cooperation in education, including the Regional OOSCI Forum, the SEA PLM regional meetings, the Regional Gender Forum, the Regional Forum on CwD, the ARNEC Asia-Pacific Regional ECD Conference and side session on ECD and Peacebuilding, side session on Gender in Education at the Beijing+20 Review, the regional consultation meeting on education and resilience, and the regional knowledge sharing workshop on MLE and LESC.

3.2. NORMATIVE PRINCIPLES

a) Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to cooperation

EAPRO reviewed country programming documents and initiatives using an HRBA lens and provided feedback to strengthen rights-based programming, including strategies for developing the evidence base on social and political dimensions of underlying inequities and discrimination. This took place through mid-term reviews and new country programme development. In the provision of technical assistance to countries on draft legislation, compliance with international human rights standards is emphasized in the comments.

In partnership with the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children, EAPRO supported alignment of regional and national initiatives with ASEAN inter-governmental targets for children. On the commemoration of the 25th anniversary to the CRC and as a prelude to the signature of the ASEAN-UNICEF Framework of Cooperation, a ground-breaking dialogue was organised between child rights experts, religious leaders, and official representatives of ASEAN member states on cultural and religious practices in the region impacting on child rights. EAPRO also contributed to the review of the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights recommending a stronger protection mandate. It also participated in the sharing of lessons learned and good practices on UPR
UNICEF is cooperating with ASEAN countries to build national and local capacity for children’s and women’s rights and in relation to the national and regional human rights mechanisms, such as to support national reporting to the CRC and CEDAW Committees, with RO contributions as appropriate. Partnerships with UN agencies have been strengthened through ongoing engagement in inter-agency technical working groups and strategic initiatives. There has also been increased cooperation with research institutes and academia and with the corporate sector on child rights, in a number of countries and regionally, including expanded engagement and training around Child Rights and Business Principles in several countries. In addition, the EAPRO dedicated significant efforts to address the issues of Children with Disabilities through a regional review and a regional meeting including reference to a regional review on compliance to the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. In education, cultural rights were addressed through the work on Language Education and Social Cohesion. The OOSCI played a major role in addressing the rights of children to education; the SEA/PLM allows the focus to broaden from participation to the right to learn; and the work on ECD contributed to levelling the playing field in terms of readiness for school, but also other rights associated with early childhood. In social policy, HRBA to cooperation is a major component in trainings and upstream policy model exercises embodied in the ‘RBM for Social Inclusion’ initiative to be rolled out in 2015 with a focus on five countries.

b) Gender equality
EAPRO, through its newly established cross-cutting working group on gender provided comments to the Indonesia gender review and advised COs on mainstreaming gender equality into programming, with a focus on newly agreed UNICEF Gender Action Plan. The ASEAN engagement is hopefully replicated with the Pacific Islands Forum. An initial meeting was already made with the Human Rights section of PIF and UNICEF Pacific Office is working with PIF on some of the overdue human rights reports, as well as in following up implementation of recommendations. EAPRO supports gender equality through strengthening disaggregated evidence, technical advice for gender-based programming, and enhanced regional partnerships.

EAPRO is actively collaborating with United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) to generate evidence on SRGBV through two multi-country studies, and a regional Curriculum template on SRGBV; raising awareness on gender issues, through the Regional Gender Forum; and supporting capacity building efforts of UNGEI’s members. EAPRO regularly ensures the inclusion of gender issues in regional initiatives. EAPRO also contributes to a better understanding of gender and rights issues through formative research. In health, participation of key beneficiaries in the formative research to identify local solutions to identified problems has been useful to generate feasible options and empower local stakeholders. The study also explored gender dynamics for household decision-making and found that fathers had limited knowledge about danger signs for newborn complications and childhood pneumonia. A greater focus on understanding local cultures, practices and realities is often needed to support the realization of rights.

c) Environmental sustainability
Environmental sustainability is a continuing priority for the region. Specific attention is given to climate change, DRR and the wider principles of resilience. Technical support was provided to COs to mainstream environmental awareness, DRR, climate change adaptation (CCA) and resilience in country programmes. Child-centred risk assessments were further developed and promoted in country, introducing risk-informed and climate-sensitive action. Several Country Offices worked at the policy level to advance child-centred approaches to DRR and CCA and to integrate climate change and disaster risk management into local development planning.

In education, EAPRO contributed to the environmental sustainability agenda through a regional UNESCO meeting on climate change education where regional recommendations on climate change education towards Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) were developed and
will feed into the global ESD programming and action plan from 2015 onward. EAPRO also partnered with APCSS on advocacy and technical support to countries on DRR, safe schools and climate change education. WASH interventions throughout the region addressed environmental vulnerabilities through behaviour change, policy guidance and increased technical knowledge. EAPRO continues to participate in regional interagency processes towards the Sustainable Development and Post-2015 agendas, promoting the interests of children and future generations. In addition, EAPRO conducted an externally-led Environmental Footprint Assessment of its premises and, based on the finding, a Carbon Reduction Action Plan was developed.

3.3. LESSONS LEARNED

**MoRES:** While COs have made significant advances in the implementation of the MoRES approach, this is not even across countries and programmes, and is more often used in CO milestone processes. EAPRO strengthened its technical support to countries focusing on tailored programme support rather than generic capacity building. Considering the various approaches applied in different sectors, EAPRO is strengthening cross-sectoral cooperation within the regional office, with each programme section further defining guidance and technical support to countries within their sector.

**‘Telling our story’:** It is critical to strengthen the ability in each sector to clearly articulate the narrative of UNICEF support to strengthen the enabling environment including improving policies, help develop strategies and standards, capacity building, and improving M&E systems. This implies better articulation of the theory of change linking UNICEF intervention at upstream level to results for children, and more clearly demonstrating UNICEF added value in leveraging results for children.

**Shrinking donor funds in changing country context** impact both regional initiatives and country level capacity. Funding remains a key challenge in most sectors. With growing economies and more countries classified as middle income countries, ODA in the region is shrinking and traditional donors are phasing out their presence in some countries. This directly impacts UNICEF’s capacity in country, especially with growing demand for high-level expertise from UNICEF.

**Integrated approaches** are essential in addressing children issues in the region. EAPRO increasingly reflects this need for a cross-sectoral focus in its approach to regional programmes and technical support to COs. Cross-cutting working groups and joint initiatives between sectors have enhanced synergies and results for the EAPRO team. This is also increasingly reflected in country programming as defined results at country level integrate several programming sectors.

**Challenge of regional partnerships:** EAPRO is involved in numerous regional partnerships either at inter-governmental level, UN inter-agency efforts, or regional networks (academic, non-governmental, etc.). While it is recognized that these partnerships are essential to leverage resources and expertise, EAPRO aims to prioritize its engagement with a focus on strategic contributions to results for children at country level. For some sectors, EAPRO plans to refine its approach to engaging in regional partnerships by encouraging joint work plans to guide and monitor progress. For instance in education, EAPRO has insisted that key EFA partners share work plans and requests for support early in the year to avoid last minute requests where UNICEF has less opportunity to influence the agenda.

**Cross-sectoral issues:** The increasing buy in to cross-sectoral work around ECD, adolescence, and CwD will be a challenge especially in smaller COs which have less capacity to broaden their areas of coverage. Integrating evidence-based advocacy across the range of cross-sectoral child rights issues across the programmes in such countries may be a more appropriate approach.
4.1 EVALUATION

Creating an enabling institutional environment for evaluation, providing capacity development support to EAP country offices and partners; and improving the quality of evaluations remain the central focus of evaluation function in EAPRO. In 2014, the Regional Office redoubled its efforts to ensure compliance and an effective implementation of UNICEF’s Evaluation Policy and the decisions of the Executive Board Sessions of February and June. In line with the Executive Board decisions, EAPRO provided support to COs to include costed evaluation plans in new CPDs and to ensure a predictable budget for the evaluation function. As per the Evaluation Dashboard, the number and the quality of evaluations in EAP have significantly improved.

EAPRO substantially contributed to the design, management, identification and successful completion of Reach Every District (REDS strategy) evaluation in Mongolia, the evaluations on HIV/AIDS, child protections systems, and decentralization in Indonesia, mother tongue-based bilingual education in Viet Nam, and to the real time evaluation on UNICEF’s response to Typhoon Haiyan in Philippines. EAPRO also provided support to the design of ten evaluations initiated in the last quarter of 2014 (i.e. evaluation of child protection system in Cambodia, evaluation of child friendly schools in Timor-Leste and the Philippines, equity-focused evaluation of Malaysia, conditional cash transfer evaluation in China, two evaluations on education in Myanmar, WASH evaluation in Lao PDR, evaluation of pre-school modality in Cambodia, evaluation of the National Child and Youth Development Plan of Thailand, and evaluation of Global Fund in DPR Korea).

To increase the CO’s capacity to use evaluation results, EAPRO vigorously followed up the development of management response to recommendations in evaluation results and monitoring of required actions. The RO ensured that completed evaluation and management response are uploaded in the Evaluation Database and in the Evaluation Management Response Tracking System.

The region systematically pursued the enhancement of staff capacity to conceptualize and manage evaluations particularly in COs where evaluation capacity of staff is low. Internal capacity development included equity-focused evaluations with UNCTs. This was undertaken through face-to-face interactive staff training during country visits, online support and sharing of relevant documents and training opportunities. Orientation on improved IMEP processes introduced in 2013 reinforced strategic planning of evaluations for 2015. The EAPRO Evaluation Unit’s visits to COs resulted in a number of planned evaluations in majority of offices.

UNICEF continued to play a lead role in inter-UN evaluation activities organized by the United Nations Development Evaluation Group for Asia and the Pacific. EAPRO and ROSA strengthened its coordination to widen the readership audience of two major evaluation products: Evaluate and the Regional Evaluation Roster.

Results for 2014 include, among others:

- Most countries planned evaluations for 2014 with complete TORs, some of which have been commissioned and are ongoing. All of them are expected to be completed in 2015.
- Four planned evaluations have been completed. The Management Response in two of these evaluations have been completed and uploaded in the Evaluation Response tracking System. The development of management response for the other two evaluations are underway.
- Evaluation findings are reported to be utilized and driving programme planning and programming and policy development.
4.2 MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

a) Key results achieved 2014

The Regional Office organized two Regional Management Team (RMT) meetings which included participation of senior UNICEF HQ staff. The RMTs provided an opportunity to: discuss and reach agreements on strategic programme outcomes within the regional context; share updates on UN Coherence, Performance Management, and Leveraging of resources; and discuss innovation, changes and potential shift including working differently and sharing resources. RMT working or steering groups facilitated the convening and analytical work of EAPRO as well as follow-up on country management plans and oversight issues. CO requests for technical support were obtained at the beginning of the year, and used to guide sector work planning, prioritization and follow-up, including with adjustments and additional requests throughout the year. The RO received a total of 485 requests in 2014 and responded to 85 per cent of them, including completed responses and others that are still on-going. Regular virtual debriefing sessions are held with all Representatives and the Regional Staff Association Chair following Executive Board and global management team meetings.

Human Resources (HR) Actions and Achievements 2014

Achievements in ensuring timely resourcing for offices with competent staff, filling senior level positions on time, monitoring vacancies and developing workforce plans to minimise gaps in filling key positions have contributed in meeting our objectives this year. There has been a further improvement in reducing the time of International Professionals recruitments to 85 days and also reducing approval times for National Professional Officers (NPOs) to 1.6 days. Efforts will continue for more capacity building and introduction of the newly developed regional recruitment tools and guides to share with country offices in the next reporting period.

Global Shared Service Centre roll out resulted in reviewing operations structures, streamlining processes and preparing for global PBR. Strategic shifts in programmes through MTR and CPD processes also resulted in changed staffing structures in many offices. Continuous support was provided to offices in preparing CPMP and managing change as well as facilitating staff support during the transitions. HR mitigation strategies were applied transparently with full consultation with staff and staff associations. In addition to the efforts to build awareness on managing change effectively and ensuring smooth transitions through training in previous years, a resource booklet in facilitating change was developed and shared with country offices.

Strategic shifts across the region triggered discussions on changing profiles of programmes and staff with new sets of skills and knowledge to deliver results effectively. All COs were encouraged and supported to develop learning strategies and to strengthen the required skills and competence. Common learning themes were mapped in the region and plans put in place. Empowering and developing management capabilities in staff was given a priority and coaching support.

Enhancing UNICEF values and creating an enabling environment was also achieved through various training provided in ethics, peer support volunteers (PSV), managing performance for results and coaching. The number of PSVs in the region increased to 42 staff members. Twenty Ethics Dialogue facilitators were trained to carry out training, and ensure that ethical values of the organization are constantly reinforced. Staff in five countries were provided ethics training.

b) Success factors and constraints

The regional HR Forum reviewed the key risks and identified priorities and developed strategies in addition to enhancing capacities of HR team. Growing programme demands and depleting funding reduced UNICEF ability to get the required expertise through regular staffing. Hence use of consultants has increased, and workload increased for the teams with reduced staffing. This also triggered continuous changes in staffing structures. 69 staff were impacted as their positions
were abolished. Mitigation measures included matching abolished staff against available positions when suitable, career counselling and development support. Ensuring a process to get the right expertise from consultants and managing their performance are new challenges emerged. New models of staffing and sharing staff positions between offices have been encouraged.

c) Risk mitigation practices

Several steps were undertaken to mitigate the risks identified in the 2013 Risk Control Self-Assessment. As a result, three risks indicated in the 2014-2017 Regional Office Management Plan (ROMP) were lowered from “Medium-high” to “low” namely: knowledge management, supply and logistics and ethics and compliance. For 2014 we still have three high risks: (1) aid environment and predictability, which was also identified by the 2013 Audit as a medium priority (2) Systems and ICT infrastructure and (3) Natural disasters & Epidemics. The safety and security was rated as a medium-high given the political developments, which took place in 2014 in Thailand generating an activation of the Business Continuity Plan. Even though staff safety and security remained a management priority, appropriate mitigation measures were applied in close collaboration with Department of Safety and Security to low the risk.

By end 2014, all audit recommendations were closed. Nonetheless, the implementation of the fundraising strategy as presented in the concept paper will remain a priority for 2015 and the regional office will always ensure that all bids and vacancy announcements are following a competitive process. A comprehensive risk assessment will be conducted in 2015 as part of the MTR of the ROMP.

d) Office management systems and practices

Internally, the Regional Office utilized advance planning and coordination of travel schedules to facilitate meetings of Regional Office statutory committees, such as the Programme Management Team, the EAPRO Management Team, the CRC and an Emergency Management Team as needed. The weekly ‘What's Up’ meeting has continued for all interested staff. Multi-day mid-year and annual review processes were held, bringing together senior management, professional staff and research assistants from EAPRO to review progress against stated objectives. Participation of the Staff Association in regular management meetings and task teams has ensured that staff concerns are addressed and has resulted into high staff morale. EAPRO maintains a programme focal point on HIV/AIDS and participates in a UN-Cares advisory cluster.

e) Supply management systems and practices

Summary from the regional office (EAPRO) perspective: In 2014, Eastern Asia & the Pacific Regional office (EAPRO) procured different range of products and service acquisition for the Thailand CO and RO and on behalf of other country offices in the region including Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Timor, Vietnam and Thailand. Presently, the Regional Office is not providing strategic support to Governments and other implementing partners via Procurement Services or through procurement collaboration with other UN agencies.

The supply component consisted largely of clean delivery kits, IT equipment/accessories, office equipment and printing publications. The total value of procurement for goods amounted to approximately US$2.3 million whilst the total value of institutional service contracts amounted to approximately US$5.5 million.

EAPRO also maintains Long-Term Agreements (LTAs) for office supplies and logistics support. Due to high volume and increased demand on printing, the office conducted a countrywide market survey for offset lithography and digital printing in which a number of printers were pre-qualified and shortlisted. Thailand has a comparative advantage on high quality printing in the region. To support the in-country logistics for both inbound and outbound shipments, EAPRO has maintained
LTAs for a clearing and freight forwarding to handle the import/export, customs clearance for both air and sea shipment including overland transportation mainly to Lao PDR.

**Summary from the region (EAPR) perspective:** Overall supply management in the region is summarized as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EAPR</th>
<th>Programme Supplies</th>
<th>Operational Supplies</th>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Total value of supplies (goods &amp; services)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>204,287,968.02</td>
<td>4,419,650.91</td>
<td>38,690,976.86</td>
<td>247,398,595.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source – Supply Division*

Out of programme supplies, Procurement Services totalled US$148.5 million in 2014 (including GAVI), up from US$67.6 million in 2013. In 2014 Procurement Services provided strategic and essential supplies for immunization, HIV/AIDS, malaria and pharmaceuticals. Vaccines comprise the largest share in the region (over US$120.3 million), followed by pharmaceutical (US$19.6 million) and test kit (US$ 3.2 million). In 2014, five countries accounted for 91 per cent of EAPR procurement services: Philippines (over US$59 million), Viet Nam (over US$26 million), Cambodia (over US$21 million), Myanmar (over US$20 million) and Papua New Guinea (US$7 million). The major funding sources for procurement in the region were national governments (US$74.5 million) and GAVI (US$60 million), the Global Fund (US$13.5 million) and UN & NGO (US$0.5 million).

**Summary of Procurement Services in EAPR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>21,230,470.65</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>24,943.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>20,556.93</td>
<td>Bednets/Insecticides</td>
<td>21,684.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji (incl. Solomon Islands &amp; Kiribati)</td>
<td>1,520,066.14</td>
<td>Clinical Laboratory</td>
<td>805,628.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>4,795,916.38</td>
<td>Cold Chain Equipment</td>
<td>1,264,340.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea, DPR</td>
<td>4,997,046.99</td>
<td>Diagnostic Test Kits</td>
<td>3,153,820.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lao, Peo. Dem. Rep</td>
<td>1,861,046.02</td>
<td>Education Supplies</td>
<td>8,425.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>20,462,807.60</td>
<td>Medical Equipment</td>
<td>31,002.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>7,104,002.62</td>
<td>Medical Kit</td>
<td>3,683.14</td>
</tr>
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<td>Pap. New Guinea</td>
<td>59,624,780.23</td>
<td>Medical Renewable</td>
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<td>Philippines</td>
<td>469,071.54</td>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>354,623.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>26,409,115.85</td>
<td>Pharmaceuticals</td>
<td>19,579,826.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>469,071.54</td>
<td>Vaccines/Biologicals</td>
<td>120,258,854.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (EAPRO)</td>
<td>148,522,170.55</td>
<td>Water Sanitation</td>
<td>17,855.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source – Supply Division pipeline data of 6 January 2014*

UNICEF China continued to support the management of the Regional Logistics Centre in Shanghai, where 100,385 educational kits were packed and delivered to Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and other countries. UNICEF China also negotiated with GOC to simplify the export process.
Procurement for other country offices reached US$15.70 million, 20 per cent higher than 2013. UNICEF China also managed complex shipments of goods for UNICEF Afghanistan and DPR Korea, provided rapid support to the Typhon emergency in Philippines, and trans-shipped US$2.6 million worth of vaccines and supplies for UNICEF DPR Korea.

4.3 OVERSIGHT FUNCTION AND OVERSIGHT-RELATED ACCOUNTABILITIES

a) Methods and indicators used for monitoring and assessing performance of COs

Management oversight forms a key responsibility of the Regional Office, and this function continues to be exercised via various mechanisms. In early 2014, a 3-day annual review and work planning exercise examined CO annual reports to extract highlights, challenges and priorities and identify priority areas for technical support for individual countries, as well as for the region as a whole. The outcomes of these reviews were summarized in letters sent from the Regional Director to each Representative with follow up during country visits or during PER/PAS discussions in the sideline of the RMT meeting.

A primary tool for monitoring performance is the quarterly EAP Performance Management Report, which contains an agreed set of 18 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for programmes and operations oversight. The revised and updated (new) set of key management results (clustered in eight areas) were implemented in 2014 following RMT approval. The inSight Regional Dashboard data was enforced for the quarterly monitoring to strengthen quality of data. A revised and updated set of core performance management indicators was also developed and included in a new template for AMPs which was disseminated to COs to frame 2014 and future AMPs.

The KPI results for 2014 show steady progress despite continued challenges to improve data quality and performance on active outputs without performance, Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) Implementing Partner (IP) data, donor reports and recruitment.

b) Programme and operations management gaps in the region

A notable programme and operations management gap in the region was the lack of a dedicated staff member for Performance and Risk Management, despite the consultancy services used for some risk management activities during 2014. As a result of this staffing gap, some activities on the “Strengthening Management for Results Rolling Action Plan 2014-2016” could not be completed. In 2015, the two HACT staff members in the Regional Operations Team will also focus on Performance and Risk Management under the guidance of the Regional Chief of Operations. The DROPs meeting in June 2014 focussed on HACT and Performance and Risk Management, with facilitation of key sessions from HQ Chief, Field Implementation Modalities, Field Results Group. The RMT in October also included a session on Performance Management.

c) Quality assurance over CO donor reporting

Continued monitoring of timely submission of donor reports is accomplished through the Quarterly Management Report. There was no overdue donor report from the third quarter onwards. The Deputy Regional Director provided oversight on quality assurance for the donor reports being prepared at regional level. EAPRO provided continued follow up on donor reporting particularly regarding the actions identified in the 2012 review of donor reports. Completing publications as outlined in the IMEP continues to be a challenge, with COs generally planning more studies, surveys and evaluations than can be completed on time and at an adequate level of quality. Regional Advisers will continue to work with COs to develop plans that can be realistically achieved within a given year.
d) Initiatives taken by EAPRO to obtain feedback on its own performance

In early 2014, EAPRO contracted an externally-led Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey (SSS) to assess the performance of EAPRO during 2012-2013. The web-based survey targeted all professional staff of the 14 COs in the region and ran from February to March 2014 with a response rate of 54.7 per cent. Overall, the SSS shows mostly positive results on the perceived performance of EAPRO by CO staff, especially on technical assistance and representation. This positive picture is contrasted by the fact that performance benchmarks have not been defined in greater detail, which would facilitate assessing feedback and monitoring it over time. CO stakeholders perceive technical assistance as the strongest role of the RO, recognizing the added value brought to country programming. Feedback on the service experience is largely positive, especially on timeliness (including responsiveness) and clarity of information and explanation received from the RO on decisions. EAPRO staff are mostly viewed as knowledgeable on the topics needing assistance and COs are satisfied with the mix of modalities used by the RO to support them. Capturing country-specific needs is an area with lower ratings.

e) Efficiency gains and cost-savings

A key action undertaken during 2014 related to efficiency gains and cost-savings was the Independent Review of UNICEF East Asia & Pacific Core Resources and Structures. In June 2014 the EAP Programme Budget Review (PBR) Committee, based on their understanding that core financial resources are decreasing and this trend is likely to continue, proposed that an independent review be carried out to look at the human and financial resource situation in the Region, and develop recommendations on how best to adapt UNICEF’s way of “doing business’ to meet these ever increasing challenges. The RO commissioned three consultants to undertake an “independent review of CO structures, core resources and options for working arrangements across EAPR, towards the development of a comprehensive strategy for ensuring UNICEF’s future positioning, effectiveness and financial sustainability in the Region.”

The findings of the review were at a strategic regional level, and were presented to the RMT in October 2014 for discussion, with decisions and six key actions agreed. These agreed actions were: i) develop options to save 10 per cent of IB for distribution in alignment to current and future needs with draft proposals for discussion at the next RMT; ii) Outline alternative ways of working, including sharing of posts between COs, outsourcing key tasks/functions, in-country HR and ICT functions to provide sub-regional support, and establishing technical LTAs; iii) Review the role of EAPRO Advisers to find improved ways to ensure that active technical support can be provided whilst fulfilling key accountabilities; urgent action to map technical expertise and reviewing/managing additional regional LTAs; iv) Review the PBR process; v) Draft regional guidelines for use of IB/RR budgets for staffing and operational costs; vi) Approach DFAM and other ROs to promote change in global policies including retaining IB post savings in the regional envelope; use of IB for multi-CO/areas offices/ project offices; retaining GST/VAT refunds at CO level; and clarify the definition of IB.

4.4. HARMONIZED APPROACH TO CASH TRANSFER (HACT)

Regional HACT capacity was in place by October 2014, with two dedicated staff. Prior to that date, consultancy services were used for some HACT and risk management activities. 14 out of 15 offices prepared Implementation Plans (94 per cent improvement of the indicator during 2014) and 11 out of 15 offices briefed staff on the new HACT Framework, with all offices having designated focal points. PBR approved the establishment of six dedicated HACT posts in the COs made possible through preparations for the Global Shared Service Centre. In addition, job descriptions of posts in the five COs were revised to include significant responsibilities for HACT. A session on performance management was organized both at the DROps meeting and the RMT, with also a dedicated session on HACT at the DROps meeting.
HACT SharePoint was established with resources for capacity development, macro- and micro-assessments, policy and background reference documents, good practices, and HACT documents from COs. A Support Team developed a Self-Assessment Checklist, based on relevant policy, procedures and findings from internal audits in the region.

Quality assurance was provided to every CO in the region to develop and improve their HACT Implementation Plans and their Assessment and Assurance Plans, ensuring that all COs had some form of assurance plan in place. COs faced challenges in developing an integrated Assessment and Assurance Plan received guidance in order to achieve a more holistic plan.

A set of performance monitoring reports for HACT and DCT were developed, published monthly and used as the basis for follow up with selected COs. Guidance was provided with respect to IPs receiving >$100,000 without completed micro assessments. Close follow up in the final quarter of 2014 showed that all but one CO were on track regarding this indicator. However, DCT releases in December led to a worse status by year end in some COs as IPs not previously requiring micro assessment rolled over into that category with DCT >$100,000. This outcome points to a challenge which several COs referred to during earlier consultations with RO: the difficulty of establishing and maintaining realistic Planned DCT amounts for IPs in the VISION Vendor Master record.

4.5. INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

EAPRO, in coordination with ROSA, contributes to the leadership and substantive work of a number of strategically important regional mechanisms including the United Nations Development Group for Asia-Pacific (UNDG-AP) and the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) at Regional Director level (including regular meetings, country support and the RC Assessment). At working level through the Peer Support Group; the UN Agencies working group on ASEAN human rights mechanisms, and thematic working groups and sub-groups of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM - ESCAP) and the UNDG-AP including on urbanization, youth, MICs, evaluation and the Post-2015/SDGs agenda. The RO also participates in relevant regional interagency programmes and in regional inter-governmental meetings convened by the RCM.

The regional office supports UN Coherence at country level through providing technical guidance and oversight to COs in relation to UNDAF preparation and implementation, joint programming, common operations and UNCT participation. As the chair of the interagency Peer Support Group for 3 years, EAPRO contributes to quality support and assurance of UNDAFs, UNCT results reporting and other common programming initiatives. UN Coherence is progressing at the country level, as well as implementation of Delivering as One (DaO) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across the region. The RO helped to facilitate the introduction of guidance for implementing the DaO SOPs (applying to all countries) and other recommendations made by the QCPR. As Convening Agency on behalf of the UNDG-AP for Indonesia, UNICEF EAPRO provided support to the UN Development Partnership Framework (UNPDF) preparation process, including a technical mission to facilitate a UNCT strategic retreat, lead UNCT training on results-based management and HRBA and support alignment of the UN results framework with the national development plan.

Substantive achievements of UN Coherence at the country level include joint UN programmes and policy actions through evidence-based advocacy, and supporting aid effectiveness, as outlined in CO annual reports. Shared commitment to advocacy and effort on five DaO UNDAF areas has also resulted in strong exchanges of information and clear advocacy messages. Particular attention during 2014 was given to engagement in Post-2015 processes, including support as co-convenor of regional thematic discussions on inequalities in cooperation with UN Women and the Millennium Challenge initiative; participation in regional interagency meetings on health, WASH and education; preparation and participation by UNICEF Pacific in the SIDS
meeting in Apia, Samoa; and contribution to the RCM-UNDG initiative on means of implementation for a side session in the Open Working Group process at the General Assembly.

Funding limitations for UN Coherence remain a challenge in the region. Budget uncertainties, donor fatigue and the process at global level to reach agreement on modalities for funding the 10 common functions of the Resident Coordinator at country level as well as HQ alignment of business processes all made progress difficult. Additional clarity was achieved but UNCT budgets remained unfunded. At the same time, UNCT procedures limit the ability of some country offices to approach donors bilaterally for funding for UNICEF programming. Progress was made on moves to common UN Houses in Viet Nam. Operational challenges in UN coherence include developing countries’ capacity in national supply and procurement, standardization of audit definitions and ratings, and full harmonization of cash transfers.

4.6. LESSONS LEARNED

EAPRO took steps to improve the internal communication mechanisms to ensure that there is regional consensus on the advice and recommendations going to country offices. The last RMT agreed to integrate peer-review of CPDs. This has been taken up for the review of the 2016 CPDs. Cross Cutting Working Groups (CCWGs) were introduced around Adolescence, Children with Disabilities, ECD, Gender and Resilience.

The RMT also developed and agreed on five Priorities for the Region under the headings: 1) A head start through the first 1,500 days; 2) The Second Decade – Ensuring Child Rights in Adolescence; 3) Quality Basic Education Outcomes; 4) Expanding Social Protection and Resilience; 5) Expanded protection environments for children, women and families. These priorities will guide interventions and strategies and are incorporated in the results frameworks at country and RO level to facilitate monitoring of progress. New additions to the RO team, specifically a regional Innovation Lab Lead, the Approval of a Regional Gender Adviser and strengthening capacity to mainstream resilience are planned to improve the mainstreaming of these issues in country programmes, and to demonstrate how programme results can be enhanced as a result.

As countries achieve middle-income and upper middle-income status, the demands for support from UNICEF has not reduced, though they might change and require a different set and profiles and skills at the country and regional level to remain relevant. Although OR funding to the regional office becomes increasingly scarce as countries achieve higher income status, the support needed by countries, i.e. high level technical expertise, is more costly. Regionally, efforts to identify strategic shifts to promote efficiency and effectiveness are critical and should lead to changes in the way UNICEF operates.

Tackling cross-sectoral issues through the formation of CCWGs is more effective if countries are also establishing internal mechanisms to address these issues across the programmes.

Although efforts can be made to think creatively about working more strategically and efficiently, it is important that our internal rules and procedures are conducive and flexible enough. Sharing technical resources across offices will require a more dynamic HR framework.