UNICEF EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL OFFICE

UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office Annual Report 2018

February 2019

unicef | for every child

List of Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to affected populations
ACERWC	African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
ARV	Antiretroviral
AU	African Union
BNLES	Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini, South Africa
CARMMA	Campaign on Accelerated Reduction on Maternal Mortality in Africa
C4D	Communication for development
CPD	Country Programme Document (UNICEF)
CPMP	Country Programme Management Plan (UNICEF)
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
CRVS	Civil registration and vital statistics
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ECD	Early childhood development
ECE	Early childhood education
EMTCT	Elimination of mother-to-child transmission
ENAP	Every Newborn Action Plan
EPI	Expanded Programme on Immunization
EPP	Emergency Preparedness Platform (UNICEF)
ESA	Eastern and Southern Africa
ESAR	Eastern and Southern Africa Region
ESARO	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
EVD	Ebola virus disease
FfD	Financing for development
FGM/C	Female genital mutilation/cutting
GenU	Generation Unlimited
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HACT	Harmonized approach to cash transfers
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HPM	Humanitarian performance monitoring
HR	Human resources
HSS	Health systems strengthening
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IPC	Infection prevention and control
IYCF	Infant and young child feeding
MHH	Menstrual health and hygiene
MICs	Middle-income countries
MNH	Maternal and newborn health
NCF	Nurturing Care Framework
PBR	Programme budget review (UNICEF)
PF4C	Public Finance for Children
PPP	Public and Private Partnerships (UNICEF)
PSEA	Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
PSG	Peer support group (UNICEF)
RMT	Regional Management Team (UNICEF)
R-UNSDG	Regional United Nations Sustainable Development Group
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAM	Severe acute malnutrition
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	Sexual exploitation and abuse
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
WinS	WASH in Schools

Contents

PROGRAMMES

Developed public goods

- GAVI health Systems Strengthening
- Ebola Virus Disease preparedness
- Gender responsive pedagogy and Nutrition in Emergencies toolkit
- Micronutrient powder operational guidance
- Education in Emergencies course
- Education think pieces
- Gender tagging
- Humanitarian targeting through social protection systems
- Postnatal retention for PMTCT

Domesticated the UNICEF Global Programme Framework on Children on the Move

And initiated multi-sectoral prevention and response programming in the region; Disarmament Demobilization Reintegration in South Sudan and Somalia.

Advanced the PSEA agenda

Contributed globally and regionally to advancing the PSEA agenda; roll-out and implementation at national level.

Advanced agenda on public finance for children

Strengthened supply chain in 11 countries

Strengthened inter-sectoral programmatic collaboration, convergence and integration

One WASH, Social Protection, Reduction of newborn mortality.

Supported the generation of evidence on the situation of women and children in the region

- Evaluation reports
- Corporate evaluations
- 13 child poverty studies
- 9 PFM regional studies
- Epidemiological study on cholera hotspots

Strengthened emergency preparedness & response

EPP roll-out and improved response to health, WASH, nutrition, and education in emergencies.

Finalized Investment Case for Adolescents and Young People

REPRESENTATION, PARTNERSHIPS & ADVOCACY

Deepened global and regional strategic and innovative partnerships for programme excellence and resource mobilization

- Regional and sub-regional bodies, World Bank and UN agencies
- Global Climate Fund
- Quality assurance of 21 funding proposals for a value of USD$ 322 million (US$ 128 million worth successful to date)
- US$ 20 million with private sector partnerships
- Regional partnership with USAID for SAM response scale up.

Enhanced partnerships with the private sector and foundations

- Metropolitan
- Truworths
- Nokia
- Safaricom
- BMGF
- KFW
- NMZ
- Save the children
- HCR
- CRRF

Supported regional body collaboration

- Developed AU engagement strategy
- Key nutrition activities supported by the RO with SADC included development of regional minimum standards for food fortification and commencing an assessment on complementary feeding practices to inform SBCC and guidance document on IYCN.

Supported R-UNSDG and UN Reform and Common Chapter

R-UNSDG as acting chair and country focal point, thematic issues and UN Reform and Common Chapter as lead, convening agency.

Strong engagement with press and social media

resulting in a rise in reporting on children in the region by 65% compared to 2017.

Internet of good thing: 6.5M people reached with key people and 200,000 new users a month, in 11 country offices.

EFFICIENCY & EFFECTIVENESS

7 Country Programmes Documents finalized.

20 PBR submissions reviewed.

8 Peer reviews and 6 audits completed.

58 Partnership Cooperation Agreement reviewed.

264 IP/NO recruitments supported and multiple counselling sessions provided.

103 Strengthened capacity of 103 UNICEF staff and 35 UN staff in RBM cumulatively 1,435 and 75 since mid-2016.

BNLES hub reviewed

One-year review to identify improvements.

Technology for Development supported

eCRVS programmes and real-time monitoring initiatives supported across the region.

ICT connectivity improved

ICT connectivity and network upgrades; successfully tested Cloud Computing in South Sudan.

Management excellence initiative

Including 360 reviews and coaching; regional network meeting of all Programme Associates held in South Africa; Female talent Initiative.

PRIORITIES FOR 2019

- Continued focus on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, with consistent activities to help strengthen capacities for identification, reporting, and addressing cases across the region
- Responding to harassment and abuse of authority
- Leadership and management excellence, with focus on results, processes, staff development, culture and behavior
- Focusing on cross-cutting issues such as ECD and adolescents / young people while ensuring a continued prioritization of the unfinished business
- Public finance for children and social protection schemes that are shock responsive in nature
- Continued focus on private sector partnerships that can contribute to the global scale-up of shared value partnerships
- Consideration of the mid-term review of the ROMP, and any tweaks and adjustments that need to be made for the period 2020-2021
- Increase technical assistance to governments, civil society and implementing partners on evaluation policy and management

4

1. Situation update: regional trends that affect children and women

On average, economies in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region (ESAR) posted an impressive 14.7 per cent growth in nominal terms during 2018.[1] When inflation and population growth – two core challenges facing the region – are factored in, however, real per capita gross domestic product growth was barely positive, at 0.9 per cent. Moreover, economic opportunities did little to improve the lives of the most vulnerable populations, with the poorest deciles capturing less than 2 per cent of income, on average, compared to around 40 per cent for the wealthiest deciles.[2]

Levels of child poverty remain alarming. Data from six new child poverty studies show that approximately two out of every three children in the region were affected by multiple deprivations. This was compounded by the ongoing demographic boom, which resulted in the births of around 17 million babies in the region in 2018.[3] The constant population pressure continued to overwhelm the capacity of governments to provide basic social services, as reflected in increasing numbers of unsafe births, overcrowded classrooms and widespread open defecation in many countries.

ESAR's population remains predominantly rural. However, the urban/rural balance is changing fast. The accelerating pace of urbanization means that by 2050 over 47 per cent of people in the region will be living in urban areas, compared to about 33 per cent today. While the pace of urbanization brings with it potential for faster economic growth, formal employment, and economies of scale in social service provision, unmanaged urban growth and insufficient infrastructure and social service investment plague African cities. The growth of slums in sub-Saharan Africa's cities exposes children and young people to new health and safety risks, diminishing their opportunities to benefit from growth.

Ten countries – Angola, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania – account for over 80 per cent of stunting in the region.[4] Compared to 2017, the region reported an improved food security and nutrition situation.[5] However major disparities were noted, with some areas reporting global acute malnutrition rates above 15 per cent, especially in Ethiopia, parts of northern Kenya, Madagascar, Somalia and South Sudan.

While substantial progress has been achieved in maternal and child health over the past two decades, pneumonia and diarrhoea remain the leading causes of death, and neonatal deaths account for an increasing share of deaths among under-fives (38 per cent in 2015[6]).

Access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) continues to be a significant challenge and development impediment in ESAR: the proportion of the population with access to 'at least basic' drinking water services stands at 53 per cent, which represents an increase of 13 percentage points from 2000, while the proportion of the population with access to basic sanitation services stands at 29 per cent, an increase of only 7 percentage points since 2000. In absolute numbers, about 142 million people drink water from unimproved sources, 179 million rely on unimproved sanitation and 98 million practice open defecation.

---

[1] ESARO calculations based on International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook database, October 2018.
[2] ESARO calculations based on World Bank PovcalNet.
[3] UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs World Population Prospects, 2017 Revision, medium variant projections.
[4] State of the World's Children data (2017 data tables).
[5] Data from country level nutrition programme data: small scale nutrition surveys, IPC analysis (Integrated Food Security and Nutrition analysis), MUAC screening data and Situation Reports.
[6] UNICEF analysis using UN Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME) data.

New human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infections have declined by 30 per cent across ESAR over the past seven years and tremendous progress has been made in preventing mother to child transmission of HIV, with 93 per cent coverage of maternal antiretrovirals (ARVs). Yet these gains are fragile, with extreme challenges ahead in terms of addressing HIV infections in the context of ESAR's youth bulge and among the most vulnerable. Children living with HIV lag behind in treatment coverage while adolescents, especially girls, are at greater risk of new infections.

A little over one third of children in the region have access to pre-primary education. While a considerable proportion, 88.5 per cent, enrol in primary school, only 49.5 per cent complete the five grades of primary education. Transition to lower secondary remains low at 37.2 per cent, with only 18.2 per cent of adolescents completing the lower secondary school level.[7]

Much progress has been made for adolescents in the areas of health, HIV, protection, education, and gender equity. Adolescents and young people across ESAR, however, continue to face numerous obstacles to acquiring skills and realizing their potential to deliver on Africa's demographic dividend by 2030. The number of adolescents not in education, employment or training remains high across the region. ESAR continues to record some of the highest adolescent birth rates globally and forced sexual intercourse and other forms of sexual coercion are not uncommon in the lives of many adolescent girls. Currently, 2 in 10 adolescent girls aged 15-19 years are married or in union across the region.

ESAR continues to experience multiple and frequent humanitarian crises, including conflict and insecurity, economic shocks, climate change, natural hazards and disease outbreaks. The South Sudan situation remains critical for children, with nearly 2.3 million people (1.3 million children) seeking refuge in neighbouring countries.[8] In southern Africa, due to the evolving El Niño in late 2018, over 8 million people require humanitarian assistance.

2. Key results achieved

UNICEF's programmatic work in ESAR in 2018 was focused around the region's 2018-2021 Regional Priorities, aligned with the 2018-2021 UNICEF Strategic Plan. The five regional programmatic priorities listed below outline the shared vision, strategic approach and collective contribution of the 21 country offices and the Regional Office to the programmatic results of the UNICEF Strategic Plan.

Regional Priority 1 Enabling children to survive and thrive.
Regional Priority 2 Reducing stunting to provide opportunities for children to realize their full potential.
Regional Priority 3 Improving education quality and learning outcomes to prepare children for the future.
Regional Priority 4 Achieving adolescent development, protection and participation.
Regional Priority 5 Scaling up social protection interventions to reduce child poverty and other vulnerabilities that impede the full realization of child rights.

The key results achieved in 2018 are framed against the five Goal Areas of the Strategic Plan.

Goal Area 1 - Every child survives and thrives

Contributing to the Strategic Plan Goal Area 1, technical assistance to country offices from the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO or Regional Office) in 2018 focused on accelerating access to evidence-based, high-impact, gender-responsive health, nutrition, HIV, early childhood development (ECD) and WASH interventions, from pregnancy to

---

[7] Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary data referenced is derived from the latest Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) and Demographic and Health Survey (DHS).

[8] Source: UNHCR Situations portal (Dec 2018) and South Sudan Regional Response Plan (Dec 2018).

adolescence, enabling girls and boys, especially those who are marginalized and those living in adverse conditions following humanitarian disaster, to survive and thrive.

Progress in the region continues: new HIV infections continue to decline and there is over 90 per cent coverage of maternal ARVs; data-driven analysis and programming and real-time monitoring have contributed to strengthening health systems; support was accelerated for developing and implementing ECD frameworks and delivery; and preparedness and capacity to support nutrition and WASH in emergencies were enhanced. Yet challenges remain including addressing the youth bulge, limited human resources for health, inconsistent quality of programmes, and barriers to reaching the most vulnerable.

The quality and effectiveness of country offices' programming was strengthened through timely guidance, technical assistance, quality assurance and programmatic oversight, strategic partnerships, evidence generation, and dissemination of promising programming approaches and research.

Technical assistance, quality assurance and programme oversight

Health:
- Maternal and newborn health (MNH): Every Newborn Action Plan and reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and nutrition strategic plans were supported in eight countries.
- Community health: community platforms for integrated service delivery for primary health care were strengthened in 12 countries.
- Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI): the 10 countries with the largest numbers of unimmunized children were supported to improve routine immunization coverage through the Reaching Every District/Reaching Every Community initiative, equity analysis and improved immunization supply chain management.
- Health systems strengthening (HSS): 11 countries were directly supported at district and national level through the Equitable Impact Sensitive Tool (EQUIST), data for decision making, bottleneck analysis and real-time monitoring using mobile technology.
- Polio: communication profiles were produced to monitor evidence-based planning and results for Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.
- Improved health emergencies response in countries was supported through inter-agency coordination and building resilience in 15 countries.

Nutrition:
- Reducing stunting: deep dive consultation and programme reviews, including an in-depth analysis, were conducted in 10 high burden countries, including development of Theory of Change and country profiles.
- Severe acute malnutrition (SAM): a regional quality of SAM care review of the protocols was undertaken for all 21 countries including additional deep dive support to five countries.
- SAM scale-up: regional follow-up consultations with 14 country offices on progress in SAM scale-up took place.
- Nutrition supply chain integration: nutrition supply chain integration was improved and end user monitoring of nutrition commodities in collaboration with the Supply Section took place in three countries.
- Nutrition in emergencies: preparedness and capacity for nutrition in emergencies was enhanced in five countries, including through interagency collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and Save the Children.
- Information sharing: a nutrition information group was established for the region with quarterly information sharing calls conducted.

- Availability of nutrition information: a regional nutrition information database was established, collecting information on regional priority indicators from all 21 Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) countries.

HIV:
- Programme reviews: 12 countries were supported to undertake deep dive discussions and/or mini HIV programme reviews.
- Impact acceleration: seven countries were supported to accelerate implementation of point-of-care technology and four countries to increase efforts toward the elimination of mother-to-child transmission (EMTCT).
- Infant feeding: with the Nutrition Section, countries were supported to improve integration of HIV and infant feeding.
- Evidence-based programming: the HIV Section undertook an analysis of 2018 paediatric HIV estimates, strengthening country offices' interpretation and use of the estimates for programme improvement.
- Adolescents: eight countries were supported to strengthen comprehensive HIV programming for the second decade of life, including for adolescents living with HIV.
- Technical support: quality technical support and oversight was provided to five countries as part of the Joint United Nations initiative, resulting in successful start-up and year one implementation of the '2gether 4 Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) initiative, including a programme focus on pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers.

ECD:
- Nurturing Care Framework (NCF): seven countries were supported to develop national work plans to operationalize the NCF, which was endorsed at the World Health Assembly in May, and is focused on how to strengthen health, nutrition, education and protection systems delivery on ECD.

Guidance, evidence-generation and sharing of promising practices

Guidance was developed to inform the design and implementation of approaches / models for social accountability for health that could be scaled up: these consisted of briefs for child-friendly communities in five countries; and MNH guidelines in five countries. Guidance was provided to enhance the quality of national SAM protocols, nutrition information systems and strengthening of nutrition supply chain systems. This included integration into national systems and end user monitoring for nutrition commodities.

To support evidence-based programming, Sections contributing to Goal Area 1 leveraged learning through publications, webinars and newsletters providing the latest technical information to country offices. Among many examples is the UNICEF ESARO / United Nations Joint Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) report that documented the experience of the *All In* programme to accelerate work for and with adolescents on HIV in 15 countries.

The Health Section participated in the Immunization Regional Working Group with the World Health Organization (WHO), contributed to improved coordination in health emergency responses through the Regional Health Partners' Group, and supported the Global Financing Facility exercise and its implementation in four countries.

Alongside WHO, WFP and UNHCR, the Nutrition Section developed joint guidance on infant and young child feeding (IYCF) in emergencies in the context of the Ebola virus disease (EVD), including supply chain management of ready-to-use infant formula in humanitarian settings.

The HIV Section played a significant role in the regional joint UN HIV team by co-leading two working groups (EMTCT, and adolescents and HIV). The section supported regional partner

reviews of the UNAIDS country envelope, which has been widely distributed as a model of good practice and is contributing to a global review of this new funding mechanism for HIV programming.

For the ECD Section, WHO remains the key partner in relation to operationalizing the NCF across seven countries, with the World Bank additionally supporting efforts in Ethiopia. Further partnerships were established with Helen Keller International (HKI) and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) to strengthen regional capacity on food fortification, maternal and early child nutrition.

Civil society organizations and networks such as the African Early Childhood Development Network and the regional interagency task team for HIV care and support, among others, have been key partners to help raise awareness and demand for services.

Partnerships were enhanced through African Union (AU) advocacy events and activities, including the International Conference on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health in Africa and the Organization of First Ladies Free to Shine campaign for EMTCT. With regional economic communities, ESARO supported the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to focus on evidence-based policies, strategies and plans for reducing stunting in 13 countries in ESAR. The HIV Section supported the development of SADC's sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) Strategy (2019-2030), endorsed by the Ministers of Health in November 2018.

In 2019, ESARO sections supporting Goal Area 1 priorities will focus on primary health care and HSS, including strengthening community systems, for child survival, growth and development. For the Health Section the focus will be on: strengthening information systems, including through the District Health Information System 2 (DHIS2) to address all indicators pertaining to Goal Area 1; supporting countries with high coverage of maternal ARVs to achieve validation of EMTCT; and supporting high-quality programmes for adolescents living with HIV and comprehensive prevention programmes for adolescents at risk of HIV. The ECD Section will continue to support countries to implement their NCF work plans and use the experience of the seven countries where work plans have been developed to better inform implementation across the region. Advocacy and support for scaling up of integrated health, nutrition, HIV, ECD and WASH services will also be ESARO's focus in 2019, including building on recommendations from programme deep dives, for instance on immunization and reducing stunting, and maximizing programme opportunities to provide collective support to programmes for pregnant adolescents and their babies.

Goal Area 2 - Every child learns

Contributing to Strategic Plan Goal Area 2, ESARO supported country offices to promote early childhood education (ECE), education quality, adolescent girls' education and education in emergencies, as well as improving the inclusion of children with disabilities in education. The quality and effectiveness of country offices' programming was improved through direct technical support, quality assurance and oversight, data management and analysis, generation and dissemination of research and tools, as well as partnership building.

ESARO familiarized country offices with the global conceptual framework for pre-primary education. Angola, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Mozambique and South Sudan began using elements of the framework to support government plans for ECE expansion. ESARO brokered a partnership between the World Bank and UNICEF South Sudan to support ECE analysis. Efforts were made to coordinate with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) on ECE.

The Regional Office generated several research outputs and tools to strengthen country office programming. These included: an education in emergencies online training course; Education

Think Pieces[9]; an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Learning report; a Gender Responsive Pedagogy toolkit; guidance on safe and protective learning environments; public finance for children briefs; and the education data intranet portal.

ESARO conducted a regional WASH in Schools (WinS) status study and completed a WinS deep dive in three countries, in collaboration with regional gender and education teams.[10] Furthermore, the Regional Office drafted a WinS investment case and WinS theory of change template for use by ESAR countries. Direct technical support was extended to UNICEF Comoros for scoping studies and investment plans for WASH in schools and health facilities, and to the Kenya Country Office for theory of change and strategy development for WinS.

ESARO strengthened partnerships through: joint advocacy with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the Djibouti Declaration on Refugee Education (IGAD and UNHCR); improving preparedness and responses in emergency contexts (Save the Children, World Vision, Global Education Cluster); and enhancing the capacity of regional education institutions (African Union Commission [AUC], the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality, [SEACMEQ] and SADC). Partnerships were also harnessed for enhancing girls' participation and learning outcomes through gender-responsive education sector planning, and development of the gender-responsive pedagogy teachers' toolkit (the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative – [UNGEI], GPE, the African Union-International Centre for Girls and Women's Education in Africa [AU-CIEFFA], the UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa [IICBA] and the Forum for African Women Educationalists [FAWE]).

The major challenge to realizing Goal Area 2 relates to weak national and regional systems for measuring learning outcomes, to ensure education systems focus on improving these. In addition, few countries have robust systems in place to scale up quality ECE. With increasing populations of children and adolescents and growing urbanization, the robustness of education sectors to expand with quality to meet demand is an additional key challenge.

Key opportunities are three-fold:

i.   there is increased recognition that schools are a crucial, multi-sectoral platform to meet the complex needs of children and adolescents, and this proposition is beginning to be tested in the region;
ii. with UNICEF placing global attention on adolescents and young people, country offices in the region are well placed to advance the agenda for secondary-age education and skills for life and work for adolescents. This will be a focus going forward;
iii. there is increased focus on the importance of building human capital from the earliest years, which necessitates attention to ECE.

In 2019, ESARO will strengthen its focus on secondary-age education for adolescents, and skills for life, livelihoods and work. It will redouble its efforts to support high-quality early primary programmes to ensure all children gain foundational literacy, numeracy and life skills. The scale-up of quality pre-primary education through a comprehensive sub-sector development approach will also be one of ESARO's key focus areas in 2019.

Goal Area 3 - Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

Contributing to Strategic Plan Goal Area 3, ESARO supported country offices to address: violence against children, including harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C); civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS); strengthening

---

9   https://blogs.unicef.org/blog/tag/think-education
10 The three countries are: Ethiopia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

of social service workforces; child protection in emergencies; and children on the move. The quality and effectiveness of country offices' programming was improved through strategic partnerships, advocacy, evidence generation and technical assistance.

The Regional Office contributed to the 2017 UNICEF Global Programme Framework on Children on the Move at global and regional levels. This included contributing to the development and implementation of the Children on the Move Programme led by headquarters (HQ) and supported by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID). The programme is an innovative combination of research and programmatic activities for Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan, and aims at ending violence, abuse and exploitation of children on the move. Together with the Dutch Government, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), UNHCR and the World Bank, ESARO contributed to developing a Partnership *on Inclusive Jobs and Education for Forcibly Displaced Persons and Host Communities* that will be implemented in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.

Furthermore, ESARO worked towards strengthening regional evidence on issues affecting children on the move such as violence and exploitation, by gathering data with children and adults in South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The analysis resulting from this research (due at the end of quarter one in 2019) will guide programming to prevent and respond to violence and abuse affecting children on the move on the southern route.[11] ESARO also developed two Child Notices (Country of Origin Reports) providing information about the situation for children in Somalia and Ethiopia, including prevalence of violence and exploitation. The Child Notices may be used by partners, case workers, lawyers and other professionals in case management and determination of the best interests of the child processes for children on the move who may have experienced, or are at risk of experiencing, violence and exploitation.

Partnerships that leveraged systems development and profiles on national level programming in the delivery of child protection services were strengthened. These included a joint publication with UNHCR 'Bridging the Humanitarian-Development Divide for Refugee Children in Eastern Africa and the Great Lakes' and development of the SADC Migration Policy Framework, as well as the Framework for Strengthening Child Protection Systems in the East African Community.

In partnership with Child Helpline International, regional reporting and data collecting mechanisms for violence against children have been significantly strengthened. ESARO is exploring and repositioning its work on CRVS, including birth registration, within the context of the emerging global and regional identity management agenda and in the arena of legal identity systems. This has been through engagement with partners such as the World Bank and UNHCR on regional platforms.

In 2019, ESARO will focus on promoting the Spotlight Initiative, a comprehensive approach to ending violence against women and girls funded by the European Union. Social service workforce strengthening will be the other focus area, as this is a core building block in child protection systems to address violence against children, including for children on the move.

Goal Area 4 - Every child lives in a safe and clean environment

Contributing to Strategic Plan Goal Area 4, ESARO supported country offices to strengthen their engagement with governments to improve WASH services, including reducing open defecation and promoting good hygiene practices. The quality and effectiveness of country offices' programming was improved through strategic partnerships and resource mobilization, advocacy, guidance and evidence generation, and direct technical assistance to countries.

---

[11] The 'Southern Route' is characterized by migrant flows from the Horn of Africa, down the Eastern Corridor via Kenya towards South Africa.

The Regional Office strengthened partnerships and cross-sectoral collaboration to enhance WASH programming in the region. ESARO, in collaboration with Supply Division and Programme Division at HQ, formalized the UNICEF-Lixil Sanitation Market Shaping Partnership; implementation has started in three countries. ESARO WASH, in collaboration with ESARO's Public and Private Partnerships team (PPP), initiated many new investor-focused regional partnerships to enhance financing in the WASH sector in the region, including with the European Investment Bank, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development/Bank for Reconstruction (BMZ/KfW) and the Global Climate Fund. ESARO continued to collaborate with regional partners, particularly the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and SADC, to strengthen the enabling environment and advocate for WASH programming. Within the Regional Office, the WASH Section strengthened cross-sectoral programming with various regional teams including Gender (on Menstrual Health Management programming), Social Policy (on WASH financing studies), Communication for Development (C4D) and Health (on implementation of the Regional Cholera Framework), Education (on the WinS deep dive) and Supply on contracting (for WASH services training).

A major area of activity in 2018 relates to initiatives to increase access to basic sanitation services and end open defecation. ESARO rolled out the global game plan to end open defecation in eight countries, which between them have 79 million people practising open defecation (80 per cent of the total population in ESAR who practise open defecation). The implementation of the UNICEF-Lixil sanitation market shaping partnership was also initiated. This partnership aims to support 2.6 million people currently practising open defecation in Ethiopia, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania to access basic sanitation services in the next four years. In addition, ESARO provided technical support to regional and international sanitation initiatives, including: the Mahatma Gandhi International Conference on Sanitation; the AMCOW sub-regional meetings on the Ngor Commitments; and the south-south learning forum on rural sanitation and monitoring in Kenya.

With cholera still endemic in the region, ESARO continued supporting country offices with the implementation of the Regional Cholera Framework. An epidemiological study on cholera hotspots was completed for eight countries, and a new study launched for three additional countries. Country offices were supported to develop or strengthen national information management systems for cholera. The Regional Office also issued bi-weekly cholera bulletins and provided on-site technical response support for cholera outbreaks in four countries.

Across countries in ESAR, the Regional Office supported water climate programming. This included support on technical specifications for water programme design and incorporation of climate and resilience issues in WASH programming during the strategic moment of reflection processes. ESARO provided technical support to the Anglophone Africa WHO-UNICEF Water Safety Planning Workshop in Rwanda. The Regional Office is also supporting the design and setup of national WASH programmes (One WASH) in Angola, Eritrea and Uganda, and strengthening urban WASH programming in the region. Capacity building initiatives were conducted, with three training events for the refugee response in Angola and Zambia, and a Humanitarian After Action Review in South Sudan in collaboration with HQ and the Global WASH Cluster. ESARO participated in a number of high-profile conferences to strengthen partnerships: the SADC/Sanitation and Water for All high-level meeting in Eswatini; the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Menstrual Hygiene Management regional conference; and the 2018 Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC) conference.

On evidence generation and guidance, the Regional Office: developed three WASH in emergencies learning series notes; finalized development of the ESAR Urban WASH and the WASH and infection prevention and control (IPC) training materials for cholera; submitted three technical papers to the 2018 WEDC Conference; contributed to a comparative study on C4D approaches on WASH-related behaviours; completed a regional cholera epidemiological study in eight countries; and developed a framework to monitor the UNICEF-Lixil partnership.

In 2019, ESARO will continue to support country offices to improve WASH services in the region. With funding becoming a major bottleneck for WASH programming, the Regional Office will broaden the funding scope for the WASH sector by increasing engagement with non-traditional donors, the private sector and domestic financing. ESARO will continue to support countries to localize global game plans such as ending open defecation, strengthening monitoring and data systems and increasing emphasis on 'sustainability and resilience' in all WASH programming interventions. ESARO will also put a new focus on scaling up WASH programming in schools and health facilities, urban WASH programming, and elaboration of national cholera prevention investment plans for identified hotspots.

Goal Area 5 - Every child has an equitable chance in life

Contributing to Strategic Plan Goal Area 5, ESARO supported country offices to achieve demonstrated progress in: expanding the coverage and quality of social protection for children and their families; improving the frequency of routine monitoring of child poverty; and increasing domestic investments in child-focused sectors. The quality and effectiveness of country offices' programming was improved through technical assistance, quality assurance, capacity development, generation of evidence and knowledge and strengthened partnerships.

A regional budget transparency workshop in Nairobi and a similar workshop conducted in Portuguese led to the development of action plans in 18 countries to improve budget transparency, and national workshops in five countries; the Nairobi workshop was attended by representatives of 17 Ministries of Finance. These action plans are expected to contribute to improved 2019 Open Budget Index scores. ESARO produced nine regional public finance studies covering topics including: the state of education financing; a review of fiscal space analyses from 16 countries; the macro-fiscal outlook for children; an assessment of social sector budget execution trends; and a modelling approach to estimate the number of teachers that can be afforded by governments. Guidelines on budget briefs and development of advocacy action plans contributed to the improved timeliness and quality of these products.

Partnerships were strengthened, including continued engagement with the World Bank through joint facilitation of the Africa Community of Practice on Cash Transfers, which brought together over 100 government officials and partners from 21 countries for a discussion on adaptive social protection, and through discussion of new opportunities presented by the launching of the Human Capital Initiative. The Regional Office also continued to engage with the Transfer Project to improve the quality and uptake of evaluation work on cash transfers in Africa and contributed to the coordination of the multi-partner Transform Initiative, which invests in increased local capacity for social protection learning in three languages.

ESARO provided timely support to 13 child poverty studies in 12 countries; held a Public Finance for Children (PF4C) training event for nearly 50 UNICEF staff, leading to the development of 21 country/section PF4C strategies; and organized 14 training events or workshops for UNICEF and government staff on PF4C topics. A workshop on Social Protection in Fragile States, developed and facilitated in cooperation with Regional Office and HQ social policy and emergency teams, increased the technical capacity of 11 ESAR country offices to deliver humanitarian cash via national social protection systems. Video conference-based social protection training covered the key areas of nutrition-sensitive social protection, humanitarian cash transfers, and the Core Diagnostic Instrument to assess the strength of social protection systems.

In 2019, ESARO will continue to focus on providing technical assistance to country offices on PF4C, coupled with increased focus on work in fragile states, political economy of reforms, and financing partnerships.

2.1. Gender dimension

The enhancement of capacity for gender sensitivity in the region was a key focus in 2018, to integrate a gender perspective into regular sector programmes. Five gender focal points participated in the global GenderPRO initiative, which is aimed at developing critical gender knowledge and skills. A new cohort of gender focal points and specialists will enrol in GenderPRO from February 2019.

To improve the integration of gender sensitivity into planning at country office level, ESARO supported the roll-out of a pre-filled gender global tagging system developed by HQ. This has resulted in an increase in the selection of output indicators that provide better opportunities to deliver results against gender-related goals.

ESARO supported evidence-based gender-responsive programming and related tools, including: standards and guidance on life skills to address child marriage; a scoping report on menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) enabling environments within WASH programmes; and guidance for safe and protective learning environments. In addition, the Regional Office contributed to two media campaigns on Violence and on Education for Girls, all of which contribute to the regional UNGEI advocacy plan.

ESARO supported the first regional MHH symposium led by UNFPA, which resulted in the establishment of the Africa Coalition for MHH, that seeks to strengthen MHH programming across the region in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, governments and partners. In addition, the Regional Office supported the roll-out of regional training to government, United Nations and partner organizations on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidelines for integrating gender-based violence (GBV) in humanitarian action.

ESARO launched the Female Talent Initiative, with the overall objective of supporting the development and growth of talented women in management and leadership positions, and of further building the skills and competencies of current managers.

During 2019, the Regional Office will focus on strengthened cross-sectoral collaboration, particularly on MHH with the C4D, WASH and Education sectors.

2.2. Humanitarian situations

In 2018, ESARO provided multi-sectoral technical assistance in ongoing emergency preparedness and responses to drought-related (Horn of Africa and Southern Africa), conflict displacement-related (South Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Great Lakes countries) and health-related emergencies (cholera, typhoid, measles and EVD).

In order to further strengthen the quality of health emergency responses, the Regional Office adopted innovative communication technologies, including: real-time communication tools for the cholera response in Zimbabwe; real-time human mobility risk mapping using Big Data to understand and predict disease spread patterns for Ebola;[12] and disease threshold surveillance in Uganda.

In response to adverse climatic conditions that resulted in multiple nutrition crises in the region, ESARO provided nutrition-related technical assistance to 12 countries[13] to strengthen

---

[12] This includes geospatial/meteorological (i.e. from satellite and drone imagery), mobility (i.e. from mobile network operators) and behavioural (i.e. from mobile money providers, retail outlets) data. This data can provide new insights, including descriptive, diagnostic, predictive, and prescriptive analytics, which can be used for disaster risk reduction and response, e.g. to identify potential hot spots for waterborne illnesses or likely transmission routes of contagious diseases.

[13] Angola, Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

nutrition preparedness, response and capacity, with a focus on the prevention and management of SAM. More specifically, nutrition surveillance was supported in Somalia and South Sudan, locations with extreme food insecurity, in an effort to systematically monitor the nutritional status of children and women.

To ensure that all children have protected and reliable access to sufficient and safe WASH facilities, ESARO provided WASH technical support missions to Angola, Madagascar, Malawi, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia to support drought-, cholera- and refugee response-related activities. Three regional WASH in emergencies training events and one country-specific training event were conducted for 92 UNICEF staff and partners. The Regional Office also provided technical support to integrated water service programmes in Angola, Ethiopia and South Sudan, covering both displaced and host communities, contributing to the humanitarian development nexus.

The regional education team supported boys and girls living in situations of humanitarian crisis to access safe and secure education through strengthening the capacity and programming of country offices to deliver uninterrupted learning. Remote and onsite missions were undertaken in Burundi, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda. Furthermore, the education in emergencies e-learning course was piloted successfully with 10 country offices.[14]

ESARO also supported United Nations country teams (UNCT) to strengthen the development of HIV strategies in contexts of humanitarian crisis. Targeted support and funding was provided to the South Sudan Country Office for the development of the new United Nations Emergency Plan on HIV. The Somalia Country Office was supported to develop strategic approaches to testing and early infant diagnosis in a concentrated, low-prevalence setting, and support to the Uganda Country Office focused on integrating HIV strategies into humanitarian response.

To ensure effective provision of supplies, ESARO supported the Ethiopia Country Office with emergency supply planning, and South Sudan Country Office to mobilize stocks from neighbouring countries for the emergency response.

ESARO undertook analysis of humanitarian performance monitoring (HPM) in 10 countries[15] through the development of regional HPM dashboards for five key sectors: this improved accountability and informed the way countries modified and adapted courses of action. Emergency preparedness capacity was significantly strengthened through the roll-out of UNICEF's new online Emergency Preparedness Platform (EPP) in all 21 ESAR countries. C4D support included capacity building of country offices through onsite assistance and webinars to improve the articulation of C4D within the EPP and sharing of best practices.

During 2019, ESARO will continue to support in country efforts to build national capacities, use Emergency Preparedness Platform benchmarks to support CO readiness and strengthen risk informed programming in CPDs.

2.3. Influencing global/regional discourse and policy

Adolescents and Young People's Agenda
In 2018 ESARO provided leadership to strategically position UNICEF within the region and globally in relation to Generation Unlimited (GenU) and the Young People's Agenda (YPA). Key achievements include: the development of a regional Investment Case; strengthened partnerships with UNFPA, UN Women and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and support for country offices across the region to develop country-level investment

---

[14] Angola, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Kenya, South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
[15] Angola, Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda.

cases. A country survey and cross-sectoral data review on adolescents were conducted to map existing areas of programming, areas of technical support needed, and challenges experienced by country offices. The Regional Office also completed a robust mapping of youth organizations in ESAR to identify the basis for fostering youth-led initiatives. ESARO also completed an advocacy guide to support young people to engage with decision makers, and facilitated the participation of 45 young people in an African Youth Conference organized by UN Women.

The Regional Office provided important inputs for the development of the global *Solutions Book* for GenU/YPA programming, in order for the book to be scaled up, and to the Global Programme Guidance on Adolescents. ESARO also initiated discussions to establish a regional consortium of international non-governmental organizations to support the scaling up of GenU/YPA skills programming through education, and mapped a strategy for piloting the measurement of adolescent participation and empowerment.

In 2019 ESARO will focus on translating GenU/YPA conceptual work into concrete action at country office level, supporting partnerships for rolling out initiatives around skills, participation and empowerment, and mobilizing donor funding for investment cases. Further efforts will be made to strengthen cross-sectoral linkages around GenU/YPA programming at regional and country office levels.

United Nations reform
In order to advance the Secretary General's reform agenda and implement the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review mandates, ESARO led significant initiatives to: (i) revamp the regional approach; (ii) increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its operational activities; and (iii) support countries to achieve greater coherence in implementing the 2030 agenda.

Together with UNDP, ESARO led the development of a plan to accelerate support to national counterparts for financing their development strategies and plans (financing for development – FfD), including implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. A key objective of this initiative is for the agencies to work together with their respective governments to identify activities to monitor, increase and strengthen the quality of public and private investments to finance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As a first step, the first ever UNCT workshop was held in Botswana to develop a common United Nations country agenda on FfD. The workshop brought together representatives from UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, WHO and the World Bank. The initiative focused on understanding the country context for FfD, and learning about the FfD work of all agencies. The group also identified collaborative opportunities and prioritized a set of strategic activities to be initiated over the next year by the UNCT in Botswana. Similar support to UNCTs, for which UNICEF regional technical support was instrumental, will be rolled out to other countries in 2019.

The Regional Director has continued to lead the Regional United Nations Development Group (R-UNDG) / Regional Inter-Agency Standing Committee (RIASCO) Social Protection Platform, which contributed to formulating joint advocacy positions and increased cooperation on humanitarian response through social protection positions in several countries.

In collaboration with UNFPA, UNAIDS and WHO, ESARO supported the successful start-up and first year of implementation of a joint United Nations programme aimed at strengthening integrated HIV-SRHR-GBV services in the region.

ESARO remained an active member of the Regional United Nations Sustainable Development Group (R-UNSDG) as co-convener of the Peer Support Group (PSG). This included support for United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) processes in Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles and South Sudan. As a focal point agency for Kenya, technical support and quality assurance for UNDAF processes included facilitation of the UNCT retreat. ESARO also provided UNDAF quality assurance for

Rwanda and South Sudan (UNCT). To facilitate a standardized quality review of UNDAF in the region, ESARO led the development of a quality assurance tool for use by PSG members.

As a middle-income countries (MICs) champion and acting R-UNSDG chair, the Regional Director chaired a forum for Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa (the five BNLES countries) to share their experiences and document best practices, in Namibia in February 2018. This was part of the monitoring system for the Strategy of Support for MICs in Eastern and Southern Africa and Western and Central Africa, which responds to calls by Resident Coordinators in MICs for targeted R-UNSDG support to enable them to reposition the United Nations system in their respective countries.

Operational efficiency in Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini, South Africa (BNLES)
In 2017, operations in the country offices for Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Eswatini (all MICs) were restructured and a sub-regional Operations and Human Resources (HR) hub was established. The aim was to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness while optimizing utilization of resources. In September, a steering committee review of the functioning of this hub model one year after its inception recorded positive results.

Regarding operations, efficiency gains through improved quality of cases were reported: since the Operations Hub was established in July 2017, the Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) has returned 62 per cent fewer cases and rejected 89 per cent fewer cases for all country offices. The Operations Hub also made significant contributions to strategic documents (Country Programme Management Plans [CPMPs}/Country Programme Documents [CPDs] and programme budget reviews [PBR]) and operations documents (Business Continuity Plans [BCPs], Risk Registers, standard operating procedures [SOP]) produced by these country offices. Resources were optimized through enhanced cash flow planning, robust monitoring of outstanding harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT) direct cash transfers balances, and effective risk management practices. The Hub provided substantive support to country offices on internal audit and peer review recommendations and helped to draft responses to address audit recommendations and sustain action to prevent recurrence of audit findings. The Hub planned and hosted a successful workshop that focused on developing technical skills to enhance the capacity of operations and programme teams in BNLE country offices. In 2019, the Operations Hub will continue to focus on strengthening internal control systems in country offices and building the capacity of operations teams through strategies that support business continuity, career development and enhancement of risk management practices.

The Hub has also supported the BNLE country offices in all HR areas, using the 'RACI' role mapping tool.[16] Comprehensive HR management assessments were conducted with all BNLE country offices; as a result, practices were improved and standardized, and internal controls were strengthened. A focus continues to be building the capacity of local HR assistants and counterparts, including through orientation, training, guidance and a mid-year review team retreat in June. The HR Hub actively supported the Lesotho and Namibia country offices in preparing new CPMPs for PBR. Another emphasis of HR Hub support has been advice and support to management in handling complex human resource management cases. Recruitments were handled with increased efficiency and effectiveness, and standard operating procedures launched for special service agreements.

Policy dialogue
The African Union Liaison Office (AULO) developed the 2018-2021 UNICEF/AU engagement plan, its draft 2019-2021 work plan and its strategic partnership framework. The strategic

---

[16]   The RACI model is a tool used for identifying roles and responsibilities and avoiding confusion during a project. The acronym RACI stands for: Responsible (the person who does the work to achieve the task); Accountable (the person who is accountable for the completion of the task); Consulted (people who provide information for the task); and Informed (people who are affected by the outcome of the task, and so need to be kept informed of its progress). See: 'RACI matrix', https://www.projectsmart.co.uk/raci-matrix.php, accessed 22 January 2019.

partnership will be finalized and signed off in February 2019. These documents provide the strategic context and key priorities for UNICEF engagement with the AU.[17]

AULO also mobilized technical and financial support for the AU in the following areas: elimination of FGM/C; ending child marriage; ECD; Campaign on Accelerated Reduction on Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA); maternal and neonatal care; GenU/Demographic Diligence and African Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment; and African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC).

In addition, AULO's technical input to the CARMMA report, Social Agenda 2063 and African Girls' Summit evaluation helped to focus and prioritize children's issues. AULO also completed and disseminated several publications, including: case studies on children affected by armed conflict, child marriage and ACERWC; a partnership landscape analysis; the LEADS approach (Legislation, Engagement, Adolescents, Data and Service) accelerating efforts to eliminate child marriage in Africa; and a review of the AU campaign to end child marriage.

Partnerships
In 2018 ESARO exceeded its fundraising targets through office-wide concerted efforts and in support of country offices, raising US$400 million from public donors against a target of US$280 million, and US$19.7 million from the private sector against a target of US$15 million.

The Regional Office provided quality assurance to 21 high-value public sector donor proposals, valued at US$322 million, eight of which were secured for a total of US$128 million. ESARO also led or coordinated efforts to secure resources for large, multi-country programmes supported by the European Union, DFID and the Government of the Netherlands. Additional, ongoing regional conversations aiming to expand cooperation with public sector partners involve: BMZ/KfW on resilience in East Africa; the European Investment Bank on WASH; the Green Climate Fund on climate-resilient WASH and adaptation; the Canada on adolescent health; and DFID on children on the move and social protection.

Innovative and ground-breaking partnerships were launched with the Japanese company, Lixil, creating market demand for, and access to, affordable household sanitation in East Africa, and with Kenya's mobile network operator Safaricom, developing technological solutions to support health and education outcomes. The Hempel Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation each supported multi-country initiatives, which will strengthen health and nutrition systems, provide antenatal supplementation, and improve delivery platforms for ECD and high-quality education. Nineteen companies and stakeholders became champions of Child Rights and Business in their respective industries, committing to safeguarding children before profits in 10 countries in ESAR.

Partnerships were established with UNHCR on refugee response and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). During the course of the year, UNICEF's focus has been on supporting governments to increase refugees' access to national social systems and services, and on an equity approach to areas hosting refugees.

ESARO undertook a stocktaking exercise of UNICEF's partnership with Save the Children through a review of the established Regional Collaboration Framework. Agreement was reached on priorities and ways forward for 2019 in the areas of child protection, education, nutrition and social policy.

---

[17]   Key priorities for 2019 include implementation of the AU engagement strategy, particularly to support the Commission and relevant organs to: (i) roll out the ending FGM/C and child marriage campaign; (ii) strengthen the work of the ACERWC including state party reporting on the African Charter, follow up of concluding observations and preparing for ACERWC@30 celebrations.

Public discourse
Communication and Public Advocacy were at the heart of influencing public discourse around UNICEF's regional and global priorities. This was achieved through:

i. robust media engagement with top tier mass media, coupled with high-quality content and new partnerships for broadcast. Together, this saw a 65 per cent increase in coverage of children's issues from 2017;
ii. development of multi-country communication and advocacy tools;
iii. establishment and strengthening of platforms to ensure truly regional conversations, meaning enhanced public engagement, with a focus on youth. Ten million people were reached through television and social media, significantly influencing public discussion.

2.4.   Implementation Strategies

Programme planning and monitoring
ESARO supported country programme planning processes for seven country offices, with Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia and Rwanda introducing integrated programming and Burundi and South Sudan addressing challenging situations within a humanitarian-development context. ESARO continued to monitor the region's progress against Regional Priorities during the Regional Management Team (RMT) meeting, and conducted deep dives where needed, as identified by the RMT. ESARO's Regional Priority indicators are largely aligned with those of the global Collaboration for Results (C4R) initiative, allowing the region to contribute effectively to streamlined monitoring of the Strategic Plan. Availability of data for child rights monitoring was improved as Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi and Zimbabwe implemented multiple indicator cluster surveys. With ESARO oversight, the region has complied with HACT, with the full roll-out of mandatory adoption of eTools.

Evaluation
The Regional Office's capacity to undertake effective evaluations was strengthened in 2018 with the establishment of an evaluation section headed by a Regional Evaluation Adviser. In terms of coverage, a review of the nutrition programme was completed, as well as a multi-country evaluation of HIV-sensitive social protection programmes covering Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. ESARO also supported corporate evaluations including the South Sudan L3 evaluation, the Evaluation of Innovation and the Evaluation of Coverage and Quality in a Complex Humanitarian Environment, managed by the Evaluation Office at HQ. Quality assurance was provided for: 23 terms of reference from Angola, Burundi, Kenya, Lesotho, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe; five evaluation inception reports from Eswatini, Madagascar, Rwanda and Zimbabwe; and 12 draft final evaluation reports. To inform the capacity development plan for evaluation in the region, a meta-analysis of all evaluation products that had been quality assured by the Regional Office was conducted, yielding key findings identifying areas of capacity strengthening.

Communication for development (C4D)
ESARO C4D technical support and oversight in 2018 focused largely on the design of evidence-based and measurable C4D strategies to support development and humanitarian programming. This included strengthening interventions for emergency preparedness, crisis/risk communication and community engagement (CCE) for disease outbreaks and vaccine-related events in 14 country offices. In addition, evidence-based C4D strategies and plans were developed across 19 country offices in the areas of:
i. Reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health;
ii. ECD;
iii. Child protection;
iv. Demand for immunization;
v. Adolescent development and participation;
vi. Harmful practices and social norms; and
vii. Education.

A C4D in emergencies capacity assessment was completed to inform reinforcement of plans in 2019. Eleven countries were supported to reinforce evidence generation to inform C4D strategies. Ten case studies and a four-country comparative assessment of promising interventions for the promotion of hand washing with soap were completed.

ESARO supported various in-country initiatives, including the Data Must Speak plan in Namibia, cholera prevention initiatives in Kenya and Tanzania, and a review of cholera epidemiological studies for the Horn of Africa, Great Lakes and Zambezi regions.

To strengthen accountability to affected populations (AAP), ESARO supported capacity development for key offices. Key insights including results from a mapping of AAP initiatives in ESAR and new global benchmarks will inform development of a regional AAP toolkit.

2.5. Normative Principles

ESARO programming was guided by the following main normative principles:

Human rights-based approach to cooperation
In 2018, 103 UNICEF and 35 United Nations staff in Angola, Eswatini, Mozambique and Namibia received training in the human-rights based approach, a core component of capacity development within results-based management. During these sessions, participants used the country's situation analysis to identify the causes of deprivations which UNICEF has chosen to address, and to ensure that due consideration is given to human rights, equity, gender, and bottlenecks and barriers to equity-based programmes and risks. The principles were then applied through strategic responses built around theories of change and results frameworks.

ESARO supported seven country offices[18] to develop CPDs underpinned by human rights principles. The Regional Office also concluded a review of country-level mechanisms for monitoring and reporting to the treaty bodies, to improve the follow-up to concluding observations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in the region.

Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)
ESAR has achieved a significant breakthrough in strengthening mechanisms to address sexual exploitation and abuse, through a combination of intensified interventions focusing on reporting and access to services for victims. Country offices that benefitted from specific technical assistance from the Regional Office include Botswana, Malawi, Somalia, South Sudan, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, as well as Uganda and Ethiopia through targeted training sessions for PSEA focal points.

Support for region-wide roll-out of the United Nations Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, which sets forth obligations for UN entities when implementing programmes with partners, helped raise the profile of PSEA. The obligations encompass reporting, training, investigations, victim assistance and risk assessment.

As of November 2018, approximately 50 per cent of ESAR country offices have sent letters on the United Nations Protocol to government implementing partners, and 67 per cent have informed their NGO counterparts about UNICEFs zero-tolerance policy of child safeguarding violations and sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by employees, personnel and sub-contractors of UNICEF and implementing partners. This was achieved through a letter on PSEA and amended terms and conditions in Project Cooperation Agreements. Five country offices have also started training implementing partners on PSEA[19].

---

[18]   Burundi, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda and South Sudan.
[19] Eritrea Ethiopia Somalia Uganda Zambia

2.6. Internal management

During 2018, the Regional Office supported and coordinated PBR submissions for 18 country offices, including through targeted advance support to offices and timely feedback and processing of requests to the Division of Financial and Administrative Management (DFAM).

ESARO analysed risk mitigation practices, as well as office management practices, systems and structures. Eight cross-sectoral peer reviews were conducted with country offices, providing recommendations to simplify and improve the effectiveness of internal office processes. Recommendations arising from the peer reviews and a few regional risks that need to be addressed will be prioritized for implementation in 2019.

In line with UNICEF's commitment to improving accessibility and reducing environmental impact, and in support of UNICEF's Accessibility Improvement and Environmental Impact Reduction project for UNICEF premises, ESARO recruited a consultant to conduct a water and energy assessment in 15 countries in ESAR. The results will guide investments in 2019 to 'green' programming and improve accessibility efforts.

The main focus of ICT work in ESARO in 2018 has been the promotion of management structures for technology investments, innovative partnerships with technology companies, capacity building in technology for development (T4D) business analysis skills, and evidence generation and knowledge sharing. Additional emphasis was placed on the 'cloud readiness' of country offices in the region to improve the availability and performance of core services as per industry standards, enabling improved staff productivity and mobility, collaboration platforms, process automation, cost efficiency, security and business continuity of systems.

Fourteen country programmes were supported to strengthen government management information systems, including real time monitoring systems and bottleneck analysis tools for district health systems. UNICEF continued to invest in and advocate the adoption of global goods, including for CRVS, survey tools, and child helplines, and produced research and guidelines covering education technology (EdTech), humanitarian cash transfer programmes and mobile network operation engagement.

Country offices' management performance was closely monitored in 2018, leading to an improvement of the regional management performance index (used to evaluate how countries are performing in key areas) from 0.82 (green) in January 2018 to 0.90 (green) in December 2018. During the whole of 2018, the region performed highly in all five performance areas[20] and remained the highest performing region overall (a position it has held since 2017). Additionally, in December 2018, all ESAR country offices are in the green (high performing) category. This result was achieved through leadership from the country teams and strong oversight from the Regional Office team. ESARO has been in regular contact with country offices to alert them on upcoming issues and provide technical support on specific areas.

The regional security team provided support through technical assistance missions, security training for staff and promoting compliance with the relevant security standards and procedures, as well as the provision of regular analytical reports.

Key achievements in ESARO human resources management included support to a 65 per cent increase in international professional recruitments at the Regional Office, with a significantly improved performance indicator of 39 days to finalize the process, compared to 51 days in 2017, and a 26 per cent increase in international professional and national officer appointment reviews in ESAR, completed within an average of 3.5 working days.

---

[20] Performance areas are: quality assurance, performance management, financial management, people management, partnerships management.

In addition, the HR team provided strategic support for learning and development across the region through participation in the regional Human Resource Development Committee and the Regional Office Staff Development Committee, and through capacity building of HR professionals in the region in 2018. The team also coordinated requests for surge personnel, contributed to strengthening internal control systems and supported a conducive working environment in the ESARO Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) and the regional JCC.

With the aim of mitigating work-related and traumatic stress, and promoting staff well-being, ESARO significantly increased access to psycho-social support services for all staff and their dependents, managers and offices through 45 on-site missions undertaken in 2018. This was accomplished through provision of counselling sessions, direct staff support following critical incidents, well-being and emergency missions to country offices, workshop sessions and activities informed by a well-being approach, and technical support and advice to leadership and senior managers on staff well-being in 21 country offices and the Regional Office.

Twelve ESA countries are utilizing supply chain strengthening strategies, with a view to building the capacity of governments and updating relevant policies. Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Ethiopia are following the example of Kenya in optimizing national health systems, by using nutrition and immunization as entry points towards integrated health supply chains. Jointly with UNICEF's Supply Division, ESARO concluded case studies on nutrition supply chain integration into the health systems in Kenya and Malawi. Five Eastern African countries were supported with a training needs assessment aimed at strengthening capacities for supply chains within governments.

In total, ESAR country offices spent US$ 727 million on programme supplies and services, of which US$360 million, or close to 50 per cent was through UNICEF's procurement services, including those funded through GAVI.[21] Major achievements in regard to the supply function in the region are: reduction of goods in transit beyond 90 days for over 66 per cent of country offices; an 81 per cent reduction in opened contracts; and reduction of over 95 per cent in estimated demurrage costs. Peer reviews of the supply function in seven ESA countries and the review of BNLES function provide the basis for optimized supply management.

3.   Constraints and lessons learned

3.1.   Constraints

Technical capacity in select areas
Technical capacity at country-office level in social policy, gender and C4D remains uneven, including among counterparts and implementing partners, resulting in the need for intensive technical support from the Regional Office. Staff turnover and key vacant positions in these areas continue to pose challenges for programme continuity.

Surge capacity
While ESARO has invested in developing its own rosters for both development and humanitarian needs, sourcing available and suitable candidates for short-term surge deployments and temporary assignments in the region has been a challenge, due to the high number of protracted emergencies globally.

Ad-hoc requests (HQ and COs)
Ad-hoc requests and requests at short notice from both HQ and country offices continue to impact on planning. Regional office programmes have also had to cope with multiple global initiatives with competing timelines and alignment, such as social and behaviour change communication to support breastfeeding interventions by faith-based organizations,

---

[21]   The GAVI Alliance, formerly known as the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI).

community engagement, social accountability, AAP, Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) guidelines, immunization road map, immunization demand hub and adolescent participation.

3.2. Lessons learned

Leveraging Funding
UNICEF has a key role to play in leveraging larger donor funding for children and adolescents. For example, dwindling funding and staff trained to work on HIV, both in numbers and capacity, have increasingly proven to be a challenge to keep HIV visible as an organizational priority in the region with the highest epidemiological prevalence. Yet, as a small donor on HIV, UNICEF can still play a significant role in ensuring that global funds for adolescent girls and young women are invested in evidence-based, high-impact HIV interventions. Another example is nutrition, where partnerships with regional economic communities and other entities can help to bring about action at Member State level. ESARO engaged with SADC, IGAD and the AUC to highlight the need to prioritize actions to reduce stunting and increase public financing for nutrition.

Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)
UNICEF can play a key role in realization of the CRRF vision, given its mandate across the humanitarian and development spectrum, its relationship with line ministries, and its work toward strengthening district capacities. Lessons learned from the CRRF experience in Uganda and Ethiopia will continue to inform ESARO's engagement with emerging CRRF countries (primarily Kenya and Rwanda, the new CRRF pilots), as well as the approach with other refugee-receiving countries in the region including the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. A key lesson is the importance of an integrated multi-sectoral approach. UNICEF has worked with child protection, education, health and WASH towards the progressive inclusion of refugee children in national systems, and the integration and harmonization of basic services for both refugees and host communities at the district level, as successfully rolled out in Uganda for the Education sector.

Good coordination and integration
Increased coordination, convergence and integration across sectors in the provision of the Regional Office's technical support can help deliver results for children more effectively. The ESARO nutrition team made concerted efforts to strengthen both cross-sectoral and inter-agency engagement in developing regional guidance tools for IYCF in emergencies, nutrition in emergencies and guidance on IYCF in the context of EVD, strengthening country-level capacity, and enhancing effectiveness of interventions on stunting reduction. Similarly, integration of nutrition supply chains into national health supply chains showed significant gains in terms of timely, cost-efficient and cost-effective access to nutrition products. Integration of gender sensitivity, on the other hand, requires further efforts; it needs to occur at country-office level during critical programme cycle processes, such as the development of Strategy Notes. If this opportunity is lost, it hampers robust gender-sensitive and gender-responsive programming.

In addition, cross-sectoral collaboration has leveraged resources and knowledge to improve WASH outcomes. For example, collaboration with the Health and C4D teams in ESARO has enhanced implementation of the Cholera Regional Framework in the region. Thanks to the Social Policy team, there is now a better understanding of the WASH financing landscape in the region. Work with the PPP team has strengthened partnerships and mobilized resources for WASH programming.

Leveraging and making domestic resources work better for children through a region-wide public finance for children (PF4C) agenda
The RO has played a catalytic role in institutionalizing strategic engagement on public finance issues at country level. In terms of the "how," three building blocks were instrumental to take the PF4C agenda forward in a systematic manner. First was getting Regional Management

Team (RMT) commitment to this agenda through an Action Plan for implementing the Addis Ababa/FFD commitments, as well as developing a simple and common framework to identify opportunities and prioritize activities at country level: (i) measuring and monitoring, (ii) maximizing impact and (iii) increasing social sector investments. Second was equipping ESARO with public finance expertise and concurrently changing the profile of social policy staff in COs through rigorous recruitment standards. And third, was constant monitoring and keeping the public finance agenda as a high priority, including through stock-taking exercise by the RMT.

Turning to the "what," this included agreeing on a set of standard activities to be conducted by country offices (e.g. budget briefs, fiscal space and political economy analyses, budget transparency engagement), developing practical guidance products, providing timely remote and in-country technical assistance, organizing regional and country-based trainings on PF4C, and creating strategic partnerships (e.g. International Budget Partnership, UNDP, World Bank).

As a result, in just four years, the region went from doing very minimal, ad hoc work on public finance issues to one where all offices systematically engage in budget analysis and advocacy to make domestic resources work better for children. This includes nearly universal production of budget briefs, fiscal space analyses and investment cases, advocacy by all country offices to strengthen government budget transparency practices, the ongoing application of more than 40 tools to improve the impact spending, and a dozen initiatives to train budget officials and Parliamentarians on PF4C. At the child level, the impacts are beginning to show with force. To cite just one example, advocacy around the budget briefs in Angola contributed to a nearly US$400 million increase in the approved budget for education and health in fiscal year 2018, which likely benefited more than 16 million children.

4.   ESARO Priorities for 2019

In 2019, ESARO will focus on the following priorities:

1. Leadership and management excellence divided into four areas:
   i.   management excellence for results;
   ii.   process-related management excellence;
   iii. management excellence for staff development and investment in growth; and
   iv.   culture- and behaviour-related management excellence, especially with regard to prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).
2. Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, with consistent activities to help strengthen capacities for identification, reporting, and addressing cases;
3. Responding to harassment and abuse of authority;
4. Focusing on cross-cutting issues such as ECD and adolescents/young people while ensuring continued prioritization of the unfinished business of primary education;
5. Shock-responsive public finance for children and social protection schemes;
6. Private sector partnerships that can contribute to the global scale-up of partnerships;
7. Mid-term review of the Regional Office Management Plan (ROMP);
8. Technical assistance to governments, civil society and implementing partners on evaluation policy and management;